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SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IS NOT DESIRABLE

We write this to live in a world against misery and false hope. Politics in our world come in 10 second sound-bytes spun to obfuscate truth, and we seek to reach out our hands to those who are trying to see past illusions. Social democracy (as opposed to "democratic socialism" or "actually existing socialism") as a political goal has been gaining popularity in American politics since the onset of the #Occupy movement in 2011.[1] This phenomenon of demanding social and economic reforms comes as no surprise to us with one simple look at the current climate of America. People are fed up with the contradictions of "the billionaire class" while the rest of us work most of our waking lives for sub-par housing and sub-par nutrition if we're "lucky" enough to find work at all. Meanwhile, others still are pushed into prisons or deal with the trauma induced by wars at home and abroad.

To want a better world, one free from capitalist misery makes perfect sense to us, but we need to critically examine the political and social movements involved in trying to change the world in order for us not to end up in this same mess all over again. We are not writing this to say that social-democrats are the enemy, but rather that social democracy falls into the trap of structuring itself through a capitalist nation-state. We understand that those involved in social-democratic organizations and movements have been comrades alongside us in recent years, particularly in the struggle against fascism, authoritarianism, exploitation, and hate, but we must take the opportunity to show why social democracy as a political system is fundamentally undesirable.

Social democrats would like to believe that we can use electoral power to vote these monsters out. It's a belief that if we rally, protest, lobby, and vote enough times, then we will win our demands. The problem with social democrats is not necessarily only in their long-term idea of how they want the world to be, but also with the fact that on the one hand they say capitalism is wrong/socialism is right, and on the other hand, focusing their damnedest of efforts into a losing battle– a battle of electoral politics that has already been decided by the parties of the ruling class.

The game has been rigged, and we working people have no need to play it. How many hundreds of years of bourgeois elections will it take for us to realize that this stage is a farce, and that our time would be better spent breaking that fourth wall from the audience rather than begging our way on stage? The liberals and conservatives know this stage well, and their deliberate maintenance of capitalism is only more proof that the arena they built is the arena on which they, and only they, will win. To be a social democrat in this world is to ignore the fact that lines have been drawn, the stage has been set, other working people have their places, and so do you.

[7]We are primarily referring to Capital and excess here, but most "unproductive land" can apply as well.
[8]To paraphrase from the Chumbawamba song "The Candidates Find Common Ground"
[9]"Chop From The Top" being one of the main slogans used by the New SDS during the anti-war and anti-austerity movement.

within, the larger social structure of global capitalism and nation states. Rather than demanding measures that "work" for this or that population, we need to organize ourselves as workers *against* our work being seen and experienced as a commodity form.

We need to damn the nation-state form which pits one nation's workers against another. We need to eschew attempts of representation; such attempts are a falsehood. A properly organized proletariat needs no representation in government. We need to end the relationship of property and capital- that relationship which realizes land, labor, and capital to be held privately for profit rather than for a recognition of communal organization. And for us to be true to ourselves through our needs, we *must* take an organizational attitude which refuses class collaboration.

We need revolution now, lest people keep suffering and the world keeps burning.

[1]We understand that Marxist-Leninist thought also lays claim to the term "democratic socialism" which sounds a lot like "social democracy", so we need to differentiate what we mean. This is not a debate of terminology nor one leveled against Marxism-Leninism.
[2]International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization
[3]We use "party" here, not to refer to a "political party", but the party of a socio-economic class.
[4]We use the term "imagined community" in reference to the book/concept Imagined Communities by Benedict Anderson which identifies the social construction of nations.
[5]"If God were real, it would be necessary to abolish him." - Bakunin (God and The State)
[6]"The working men have no country."- Karl Marx (Manifesto of the Communist Party)

Some who gravitate towards the social-democratic position genuinely want a better world. Why then, does this better world come through the same channels of government? Why then, would this better world maintain the roots of private property? Surely the soft-anti-capitalists are misunderstood!

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY REAFFIRMS THE NATION-STATE

Social democracy as an ideology is one *primarily* concerned with domestic policy, i.e. the distribution of resources and legislation of individuals and morality within an established nation-state. Thus, it is unable to address a particular nation state's role in upholding imperialism and global power dynamics. Individual social-democrats may pay lip service to decolonization movements and anti-imperialism, but as a whole, social democracy fails to challenge the overarching structures of global capitalism. Even the Scandanavian socialists, who are talked about so much and loved so dearly are contributors as nation-states to global capitalist and imperialist institutions such as the IMF, WTO, and NATO.[2]

The ideology and implementation of social democracy fundamentally relies on the state form as an agent of social change. Citizens within the state territory work (or own businesses) and pay taxes much like our current system; they are then afforded quality food, shelter, education, and healthcare with less corruption in government. The idea is that if we rightfully tax the capitalist class–those idle financiers and titans of industry–their fair share, then we can start living a life of comfort rather than toil. Those who are part of the state, which is viewed as a citizen's public entity from the social-democratic point of view, can simply do their part for society through labor or capitalist innovation, and they can rest assured that all of their needs and more will be met.

The issue again, is not necessarily that we don't believe our lives would materially be better under social democracy, but that we cannot and should not ignore the base structure providing the framework for our needs to be met. Any state, even a friendly happy social democracy, relies on borders. Borders are nothing more than imaginary lines drawn by those with the power to enforce them in order to divide and define humans according to who pays taxes to which ruling party.[3] Borders, as well as the complications and misery which accompany them, are necessary for social democracy as the state still needs some way to territorially define who is paying into the system and who is reaping the benefits. Such an enforcement of a state's definition of both their territory and their citizenship can only be accomplished through a hierarchical and stratified armed organization operating under the implicit understanding that they hold a monopoly on legitimate violence- be it called an "army", "police force", or "Department of Homeland Security", etc.

Though social democrats engaging in activism may have pragmatic beginnings of campaigns on a local level, the campaigns themselves as well as the end-goals of the campaigns are all contained within and reach no further than the nation-state as a form. We see this evidenced by their calls for clean water which neatly fit into pre-existing municipal state forms, their demands for universal healthcare which also contain themselves to the particular American nation-state, various school board races as a "bottom-up" approach for a more honest and credible way to enter politics, and the promotions of other such state-run and state-funded programs which unfortunately are unable to be envisioned as programs that could exist in a reality of a society beyond the state. They fail to see that the nation-state form–the political form which takes the imagined community, rather than class solidarity or humanity itself, as its primacy– is the exact

carry with them, not just the labor of those who worked and provided the raw materials we deal with, but the labor of the entire history of humanity and earth which provides us the materials to work with in the first place. So long as you speak a language, any at all, your being in this world is at least partially a product of who and what came before you.
The land we toil and rest upon, the knowledge we crave and learn, and all of the various consumer goods which allow the continuation of our existence as we know it, are all products and developments of those who came before us. There is no possible way to quantify such a thing– this is why property is impossible. I may say that I will defend what is proper to me, that which I find in this world to be of my belonging and will, and hold truth to my rights as an individual, but we would be fools to pretend we are alone in this world.

This is why we do not settle for simple reforms of "tax the rich," but why we struggle for nothing less than a full-scale social revolution–a revolution which understands that everything we have has been made possible by others, and everything others have, has been made possible by ourselves and people like us. Social democracy's insistence on maintaining even a sliver of private property is a maintenance that is either ignorant of, or refuses to acknowledge the facts which have been stated prior.

WE WANT IT ALL

We hope our message above properly illustrates that social democracy is not only not feasible as a revolutionary ideology, but more importantly, is undesirable in itself because the only cure for the social ills in this world is nothing less than full-scale social revolution. Even the most "humane" societies that fall under the umbrella of social-democracy are either participants of, or trapped

to resource extraction in their localities under capitalist and "socialist" governments alike), but it also relies on the basic hierarchy and power discrepancy of boss and subordinate, owner and worker, producer and consumer. Apart from a gamble on potential material benefit, what good could come from having "one big boss instead of lots of little bosses. Someone will be in control of course, and either way, you will be working."[8] This system is surely not cut out for any desirable way a free being would choose to live their life.

The slogans of "tax the rich," "tax the 1%/we are the 99%" and even "Chop From The Top" from more radical groups engaging against austerity at the time (pre-and circa #Occupy), are still slogans which demonstrate the needs for changing processes *within* the system and what the system can offer us, rather than the acknowledgement that we, as working people, simply do not *need* this system nor its playbook, however creative and accommodating it may be.[9] When we say "we need to tax the rich," of course, in our current nation-state's way of doing things, that is the best option. When we say "we need to tax the rich," we also lend ourselves to the belief that we are not able to access the resources and wealth which we've created and are rightfully entitled to; the demands themselves imply that such power implicitly lies within either governance or markets, rather than in our human activity itself.

Our call is not to take such an easy task as to beg for crumbs among the billionaires and millionaires; our call is for us and every other working person to take the whole damn pie! There might even be agreement among us and social democrats regarding such a statement, but we need to understand that any wealth which is created, is *never* created by any individual. All wealth, all society, everything which exists is a product of all living activity which came before it. All goods and services produced and exchanged

enemy of their goals ,yet they wish to use it as a political carriage for delivery.[4]

No doubt, the social democrats are largely against war, concentration camps, and violent border disputers, but they fail to see that the more-humane system they promote will lead to similar issues as the fundamental structure remains unchanged even under the new form. Social democracy is beholden and specific to the modern capitalist nation-state. Their desired political form still requires a documented citizenry, inclusion/exclusion to and from the republic, and quite literally, above all else, a police apparatus (separate from the workers themselves) to oversee and enforce such a territory-based economy. They want a better world, but fail to see that the system of the nation-state cannot and will never provide all that can be offered.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY RELIES ON REPRESENTATION

Before every positive structural change to the world is a mass movement. Mass movements start from collective demands, in our cases, material collective demands, to seek direct and immediate change to conditions while resulting in opening further social dialogue. Mass movements against capitalist structures or entities do just that, and the solution requires nothing less than a total restructuring or abolition of current socio-economic relations. Social democracy seeks and achieves mass movement and engages with collective demands, yet the movement becomes separated from its own foundational power by turning to state power and political figures for the end solutions.

It should be seen as fact that the question of Bernie Sanders' presidency and the United States as a social democracy could have only been made possible by the political conditions created by the

#Occupy movement. What started from a simple call and sporadic recent history of radicals using occupation as a tactic, quickly became a massive grassroots movement of "have-nots" (and the occasional conspiracy wingnut or small business owner who was unhappy with the financial system). We attempted to disrupt Wall St., question public and private property relations, and bring the question of class to the front of the American political landscape. By no means were the camps and ideologies of the movement monolithic, but actions to freely distribute resources, provide mutual aid, fight evictions, and disrupt commerce were direct, concrete, and targeted. Undoubtedly, some in the movement sought right off the bat to channel the movement into electoral politics, and we recognize that was one of its downfalls. Electoral politics through the Democratic Party is "the graveyard of social movements" as the saying goes.

The movement for social democracy, by having a long-term goal of functioning through democratic statehood relies on a representation of the 'will of the people' so to speak. Once again, to say this is not to challenge that their demands are popular or materially beneficial to the working class; instead it is to point out that when we as individuals or collectives entrust our needs and desires to a political figure, or 'higher power' if you will, we functionally separate ourselves from our own power which initially created the conditions for such a representative or statesman to thrive in the first place.[5] If one is elected for a full time position to represent your interests against those billionaires while no longer (if ever) living the way you do and knowing your day-to-day struggles, how can they possibly be entrusted to represent you not only accurately, but effectively?

For these reasons, we recognize political representation as fundamentally false. One, or even a reasonably sized group of people, may entrust a person with a political, economic, or moral responsibility and delegate to them a task to engage in politics with others who are delegated. A difference between delegation and representation, we should point out, is that a delegate is one who is elected to carry out tasks for the collective while a representative is one who is elected to derive will/power from a group and then be entrusted to legislate freely as an individual regarding policy and stakes. To rely on a system of territorially-based elections in which one person would then represent that territory/state/locality and engage in politics on your behalf with other territorially-based representatives will either be laden with corruption or be a series of follies at best. "The workers have no country."[6]

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY RELIES ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

The movement for social democracy fails to challenge property as a system. We might have such a better world where some property is held in common, while other property is privately owned.[7] This notion is fundamentally capitalist/liberal as it recognizes that the means of production and distribution are still able to be profitable for individuals or small groups of individuals. Certainly under social democracy, the "essential workers" would be under industries owned by "the public," but there is no question raised as to why any *non-essential* industry should be profitable. Moreso, what is considered "essential" (literacy, internet, public transportation, etc) is continuously shifting through both the demands of Capital and the demands of workers. In this regard, social democrats mediate between the two parties using state-based politics to offer "essential" services as if such wealth and services weren't already a collective product of the workers ourselves.

The nationalization of industry not only reaffirms the nation-state form which we discussed earlier as being undesirable (lest we also forget about the many indigenous people who are opposed