

Reader Response for Peer Review

A poisonous mix of inequality and sluggish wages threatens globalisation

Globalisation is under attack by protectionist governments in response to disgruntled voters who are disillusioned by the growing income disparity they are experiencing. The author asserts that businesspeople and policymakers who enjoy the prosperity brought about by globalisation should act to defend it despite the impact on those who are affected adversely. They believe that the economic benefits outweigh the social drawbacks.

I disagree with their stance that a mobile society is better than an equal one. Class conflict will exist as long as the large wealth gaps between the rich and the poor exist. It is wrong that a person should live in poverty regardless of their willingness or ability to work while the wealthy should live wasteful and extravagant lives. The authors believe that this should be tolerated as it is good for the economy as a whole.

According to Easterling (2003), 'capitalism is an economic system that is inherently crisis-prone'. It is a system that necessitates conflict. Particularly, conflict between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' which is further exacerbated by the fact that the wealthy wield control over the resources the poor require for survival trapping them in a cycle of wage slavery. Thus, I argue that the societal mobility the authors support does not imply mobility for all but only the select aristocratic elite and is hence destructive.

However, I do agree with the authors' suggestion that the implementation of compassionate and egalitarian policies that cushion the impact of globalisation on the working class is a step towards a progress even if the goals of the author are motivated by the desire to protect globalisation. These progressive policies such as re-training programs, the decoupling of pension schemes, and the persistence of medical benefits after retrenchment will definitely help to equalise society. Nevertheless, it is dubious that corporations would adopt such a stance as the drain on their profits would be substantial.

The sentiment is not only shared by the authors of the article but also by Claudia Juech, Associate Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, a philanthropic organisation working to 'improve the well-being of humanity around the world'. In an article published in the World Economic Forum, she posits that these shifts in the labour market is not entirely a crisis, but an opportunity to revise the paradigm of employment in modern society (Juech, 2015). She asserts that the detachment of benefits can provide safety nets for the economically vulnerable and improve the efficiency of the workforce.

In conclusion, social and economic equality should not be compromised in favour of societal mobility as large market movements that widen the gap between the rich and the poor is inherently destructive. Instead, upper management of

corporations and policymakers should be acting with the the interests of society as a whole by implementing progressive programs and policies to ensure that globalisation improves the standard of living for everyone in all tiers of society.

Sources

1. Easterling, S. (2003, November/December). International Socialist Review. Retrieved February 11, 2016, from http://isreview.org/issues/32/crisis_theory.shtml
2. Juech, C. (2015, January 18). The opportunities of the changing workforce. Retrieved February 11, 2016, from <http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/01/the-opportunities-of-the-changing-workforce/>
3. The Economist,. (2007). Rich man, poor man. Retrieved 11 February 2016, from <http://www.economist.com/node/8554819>