

## Greed & Gluttony; Is Socialism the Solution?

For decades, the Western mind has been trained to react to the word “socialism” with a visceral, instinctive fear. Socialism has turned into a word that is not just linked to an economic framework, but a political ghost story, a sort of “boogeyman” designed to conjure images of radical mobs’ intent on the destruction of Western civilization. From political rallies to talk shows, the rhetoric stays the same: capitalism is equated with freedom and national identity, to the point where an attack on the capitalist economic framework is framed as an attack on countries themselves.

As the gap between executive offices and factory floors widens into a chasm, a question arises: are we being protected from the “dangerous” ideologies of socialism, or are we being conditioned into the silence capitalism provides?

To understand the predecessor ideology of capitalism, we must take a step back to examine a system that was neither capitalist nor communist, but rather feudalistic. The feudal system functioned as an ideology in which lords and vassals maintained a social bargain: “you do something for me, I do something for you.” As the feudal system was overthrown by the merchant class, we now find ourselves entering an era in which the same may be happening to capitalism. Amid a relentless “business cycle” of booms and busts that leaves millions behind, the housing crisis stands as a clear example of this dysfunction. There are over 17 million vacant homes in the United States, while roughly 600,000 citizens sleep on the streets. Logically, it would make sense to house them with plenty left over, but because these homes cannot be used for profit, capitalism says no.

Greed and Gluttony are no longer just moral failings, but systematic outputs of tools that may have outlived its usefulness.

### **The Evident Flaws of Capitalism**

Capitalism has been sold under the false pretenses of being a gateway to freedom, most commonly advertised as the means to achieving the “American Dream.” Yet many fail to realize that, in the twenty-first century, capitalism does more harm than good. Marketed as a meritocracy, capitalism instead functions as a closed loop that rewards ownership over effort.

Under capitalist ideology, labour is treated as an expense to be minimized, reducing workers to “numbers on a sheet” and stripping them of their humanity. As a result, workers are offered little to no protections (such as maternity leave or living wages) because these measures are seen as threats to profit and shareholder value.

Noticing that high unemployment rates? Its harming you way more than the corporation’s, if anything its making them more money! High employment rates create a desperation for populations to work for minimum wage, no benefits and living with constant fear. Capitalism creates an infinite growth paradox, in which every company is expected to

outperform the previous year, and the year before that, and so on. This trajectory is intended to continue indefinitely; on a small scale, that may seem beneficial. However, the paradox becomes clear when infinite growth is expected on a planet with finite resources.

### **Why Capitalism Has Become A Weak Foundation of Support**

Looking over all the evident flaws, capitalism just can't support its people the way its imagined to. Capitalism perpetuates artificial scarcity, producing enough food to feed over 10 billion people while 815 million still go hungry, and maintaining more vacant homes in the United States than there are homeless individuals; because resources are distributed not according to need, but profit.

As wages stagnate, this system drives people into a debt trap, forcing reliance on predatory loans for basic necessities such as housing, education, and healthcare. When these financial bubbles inevitably burst, as seen in the 2008 crisis, the wealthy are shielded through government bailouts while the working class is left to lose their homes and livelihoods. On a global scale, capitalist nations frequently deploy military force to secure access to oil, minerals, and markets in weaker states, fueling "forever wars" justified under the guise of economic stability and market supremacy.

### **The Rise of Socialism**

With the fall of one system, another must rise, and this is what we have been witnessing in recent years. As younger generations increasingly reject what they view as the toxic ideology of capitalism, socialism has emerged as an economic framework in which many seek refuge.

In 2025, New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani has contributed to the growing visibility of socialism in the United States. Though only a mayoral candidate, Mamdani, a democratic socialist with progressive and left-wing views, ran a campaign grounded in explicitly socialist principles where placing the needs of ordinary citizens above those of profit-driven corporations. Such rhetoric was almost blasphemous in what is arguably the largest capitalist hub in the world. Yet, on January 1, 2026, Mamdani was sworn in as the 112th Mayor of New York City. His victory signalized that the "American Dream" is being redefined by a working class that is no longer afraid of the labels once used to terrify their parents.

### **What Makes Socialism So Appealing?**

Where capitalism places wealth before the individual, socialism does the opposite. At its core, socialism is not about "government control," but about workplace democracy; the belief that workers, who are the ones creating value, should have a democratic say in how that value is distributed.

This framework prioritizes humanity over markets, treating essentials such as healthcare, housing, and education as human rights rather than commodities to be bought and sold.

Through automation and fair distribution, socialism seeks to liberate people from “survival labor,” allowing them to pursue art, science, and community instead of working solely to stay alive. The resurgence of modern socialism reflects the collapse of the so-called “American Dream,” as today’s younger generations confront underemployment where 41% of recent graduates work in jobs that do not require their degree. The realities of hyper-capitalism, in which CEOs like Jeff Bezos earn millions of times more than the average worker despite not working millions of times harder.

### **Socialism at Work**

Contrary to the common claim that “socialism never works,” several historical movements demonstrate significant success (prior to external intervention). Under Evo Morales, Bolivia’s first Indigenous president, the nationalization of natural gas profits allowed the state to dramatically reduce extreme poverty by over 50 percent, eliminate illiteracy through nationwide education programs, and sustain the highest economic growth rate in South America for several consecutive years.

Under Thomas Sankara’s leadership from 1983 to 1987, Burkina Faso transformed from a destitute nation into a model of self-sufficiency. Sankara’s government vaccinated 2.5 million children in a single week through the “Vaccination Commando,” ended famine by implementing agrarian reforms that made the country food self-sufficient without reliance on foreign aid, and launched environmental initiatives that planted over 10 million trees to halt the spread of desertification.

### **"Socialism Can Never Work!"**

A frequent claim is that socialism stifles innovation by removing the profit motive; however, many of the most transformative inventions including the internet, GPS, and vaccines, were developed through publicly funded research rather than private profit-seeking. Another argument holds that free markets are responsible for making nations wealthy, yet economists such as Ha-Joon Chang note that nearly all industrialized countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States, relied heavily on protectionism and state subsidies during their development, only later advocating free-market policies to the rest of the world. Critics often argue that socialism contradicts “human nature,” assuming greed to be an innate trait; the counterpoint is that human behavior is shaped by social structures. When systems reward competition and accumulation, people behave greedily, but when cooperation is rewarded, collaborative behavior emerges.

Moving beyond capitalism does not mean the end of progress; it means the start of a progress that includes everyone. It means a world where automation leads to leisure rather than unemployment, and where “success” is measured by the well-being of the many rather than the bank accounts of the few. History did not end with the fall of the Soviet Union, nor will it end with the decline of neoliberalism. We are simply turning the page to a chapter where greed is no longer the law of the land.

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