

CAPITALISM: A SYSTEM THAT DESTROYS THE HUMAN SPECIES A SYSTEM THAT NEEDS TO BE BROUGHT DOWN

By Luc Thibaut, June 2020

Two horrible pieces of news have appeared in the last few days, but the history of capitalism is nothing but a trail of blood and horror!

The first concerns the state of slavery in the world, when our defenders of the rule of law choke at the sight of statues of "illustrious" figures from the history of slavery or colonialism falling to pieces, by the anger of the demonstrators.

The second is the news about lead in the blood of children, it is mentioned in the report of 800 million! In times of "peace" or war, capitalism destroys for its own interests! A few days ago, documents appeared on the Rai3 concerning the use of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange is a defoliant that was first used in 1950 by the British during the unrest in Malaysia during Operation Trail Dust. In 1962, the herbicide came back into fashion and was exploited by the Americans in Operation Ranch Hand, during which up to 71, 20 million gallons (over 75 million liters!) of various herbicides were sprayed throughout South Vietnam. We could talk about depleted uranium weapons... and so on and so forth.

More than 40 million "slaves": Asia and Africa are the most affected Traffic data around the world is becoming increasingly dramatic. On World Anti-Trafficking Day tomorrow, humanitarian organizations have highlighted more than 108,000 cases in 164 countries in 2019. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), (<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang--en/index.htm>) the victims of trafficking and exploitation number more than ...40 million, although in many cases this abominable phenomenon is still unknown. Of the reported cases, 23% involve minors and in 1 in 20 cases even children under 8 years of age. Asia and Africa are still the most affected regions.

The crisis triggered by covid-19 has undoubtedly aggravated the already serious situation, pushing the sexual exploitation of street children in homes and online, with a drastic increase in child pornography in Europe. The lack of freedom of movement caused by lock-ups and travel restrictions adopted in many countries has reduced the chances of escape and help for victims of trafficking. During the pandemic, cases of violence against children and the number of child victims of online exploitation to which they have been exposed have increased, and are exported when they take distance learning courses without parental control.

In Italy, in particular, among the 2,033 persons in the anti-trafficking system in 2019, the most widespread form of exploitation remains sexual exploitation (84.5 per cent), of which women and girls (86 per cent) are victims. Although the emergence is much more difficult in the case of minors, up to 1 in 12 victims is under 18 years of age, with 5% under 14 years of age. The nationality of origin of minor victims is mainly Nigerian (87%), Ivorian (2.5%) and Tunisian (1.9%). This is a worrying reality for increasingly vulnerable people. In general, trafficking is defined as a criminal activity aimed at the capture, abduction or recruitment, as well as the transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of one or more persons, using illegal means and for the purpose of their exploitation.

Killer capitalism

One in three children - nearly 800 million worldwide - has a blood lead level of more than 5 micrograms per decilitre! About half of these children live in South Asia. This is according to a

new report jointly developed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the international organization Pure Earth (<https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/The-toxic-truth-children-s-exposure-to-lead-pollution-2020.pdf>).

"With few initial symptoms, lead silently destroys the health and development of children, with even fatal consequences," said Henrietta Fore, Unicef's Executive Director. "Knowing the spread of lead pollution - and understanding the destruction it causes to individual lives and communities - we must inspire urgent action to protect children once and for all.

The document, entitled "The Toxic Truth", the first of its kind, is an analysis of children's exposure to lead, carried out by the Institute for the Evaluation of Health Measures (Ihme), and thus highlights how lead poisoning affects a massive and previously unknown quantity of children.

Children's exposure to lead has also been linked to mental health and behavioural problems and an increase in crime and violence. Older children suffer serious consequences, including an increased risk of kidney damage and cardiovascular disease over the course of their lives.

In low- and middle-income countries, this exposure of children to lead has been estimated at about \$1 trillion due to the potential economic loss of these children over a lifetime. While blood lead levels have dropped dramatically in most high-income countries with the elimination of leaded gasoline and most lead-based paints, blood lead levels in children in low- and middle-income countries have remained high and in many cases dangerously high even a decade after the elimination of leaded gasoline.

"People can be educated about the dangers of lead and equipped with more tools to protect themselves and their children. The return on investment is enormous: better health, increased productivity, higher IQ, less violence and a better future for millions of children around the world," said Richard Fuller, President of Pure Earth, a non-profit organization that has been working since 1999 to identify, clean up and solve pollution problems in low- and middle-income countries where high concentrations of toxic pollution have devastating health effects, especially for children, during the presentation of the report.

"Lead is a powerful neurotoxin - something communities, especially in poor countries, often ignore - that causes irreparable damage to a child's brain. It is particularly destructive for very young children up to the age of five and damages their brains before they have the opportunity to develop fully, resulting in neurological, cognitive and physical disabilities," said Unicef Italia President Francesco Samengo.

Technology and the advancement of modern scientific knowledge, combined with production that is planned according to the real needs of the world's population and not subject to the profit motive of individuals, would make it possible to find effective and sustainable solutions in a short period of time. The very serious problem of climate change and global pollution, as well as the total inability of the current ruling class to deal with it, are the most immediate and obvious proof of the obsolescence and anachronism of the social system in which we live. Capitalism is incapable of keeping up with the times, incapable of adapting to the enormous technological development we are witnessing. It is clear that in order to face the potentially extraordinary future that awaits us, we need tools of social organization that are much more advanced and rational than those that humanity has so far equipped itself with.

Capitalism must be brought down!