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Facts Disprove Socialist Claims Of Capitalism Exploiting Workers

SOCIAL reformers and critics of free enterprise continue to claim that capitalism exploits working people, denying them opportunities for advancement and a share of the profits.

Appeals are made to workers that they should have "more dignity" and a stronger voice in management. Actions suggested take many forms, including demonstrations, strikes, labor-management confrontations, lawsuits, political campaigns and delegation of workers' rights to labor bosses.

Such methods have been implemented by workers in other countries. More often than not, they discovered later that they had ruined free enterprise without bettering themselves and that bureaucrats are worse despots than businessmen.

American workers have more opportunities to better themselves, to obtain higher pay and to become part owners of the companies they work for than ever has occurred under socialism.

It has been possible for a long time for anyone with funds to invest to buy shares of companies on the stock market. Estimates show there are upwards of 31 million stockholders in America's corporations, and a large part of these are employees who own shares in the companies that provide their jobs.

In addition to stock employees might buy on the open market, many companies are establishing employees' stock ownership plans. Trusts are set up to allocate shares of stock to workers at no cost, amounts varying by jobs and wage levels.

Gains in rates of pay achieved by

American workers have been well publicized, and they rank among the best in history.

Nation's Business reports that employee benefits paid by employers now amount to \$300 billion a year, and equal almost one-third of total payroll dollars.

Wages paid for time not worked (vacations, holidays, sick leave, coffee breaks and rest periods) average \$29.71 per employee per week. Non-wage payments (pensions, insurance premiums, Social Security taxes, unemployment compensation, profit sharing payments, etc.) average \$46.91 per week per employee.

Just as important as the higher pay is the fact that American workers have better jobs through technology. Nonfarm laborers have declined since 1950 from 6.7 per cent to 4.9 per cent, while professional, technical and kindred categories have risen from 8.7 per cent to 15.2 per cent of employees.

In a featured article, Fortune magazine notes that as late as 1900, four-fifths of American workers "still toiled in the sweat (literally) of their brows." By the 1960s, less than half of them remained in the blue-collar category.

"To say that more people have better jobs means they are paid for using their knowledge, reason, judgment, communicative skill, or sensitivity to other people's needs and problems," says the Fortune writer.

With better jobs, higher pay and opportunities to become part owners of America's corporations, it is hard to understand why workers would listen to the socialist propaganda. Yet some do, endangering freedom and security for all.