

We have received a message to our conference from Peter McLaren, the leading American educational theorist and practitioner whose groundbreaking work constantly challenges the status quo of global capitalism. Peter, who is a Professor in the Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles, wrote the foreword to A World to Win. He is now on his way to Venezuela for meetings with the Chavez government, whose policies and actions have made him a target for the Bush administration.

Brothers and sisters in struggle, I want to extend words of encouragement and hope to all of you at this important launching of A World to Win. As all of us know, life is going from bad to worse for those who bear the brunt of exploitation under the merciless sword arm of neoliberal capitalism and the class-racialized inequalities that continue to follow in the wake of colonial history. State violence and corruption-fuelled domestic policies are a common threat.

Capital's extensive and intensive growth, the increasing fluidity and changeability between capital and the state, the non-territorial domination of underdeveloped countries by developed ones through brute market power and integrated processes of capitalist production), the dispossession of peasants from their land, the frenetic policing of all territories where capital is accumulated by the attack dogs of the military industrial complex -- all of these features weigh heavily on the brains of the living, on the global shoulders of the poor.

Today, in a world that has witnessed leaders of the dominant capitalist states declaring a permanent war on terror, what were once exceptional conditions are now the rule, as normal legal arrangements have been turned upside down. Anti-democratic laws, which grant extra-judicial powers to hold citizens and immigrants without trial, are moving modern democracies towards capitalist sovereignty congealed in the shape of totalitarianism.

Marx revealed how the formal equality of political rights can exist, hand-in-hand, with brute exploitation and suffering. The separation of economic rights and political rights is the very condition of the impossibility of democracy. Property and the market must be served by ensuring that there is too little, not too much, democracy and this cause can be advanced by leaders by making sure that the world exists in a constant state of conflict.

We must learn to see ourselves as active social agents willing and capable of intervening in history so that one day the capitalist exploitation currently driving humanity into an abyss will be seen as the prehistory of a socialist present.