Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Socialist Equality Party

AI and the fight for socialism

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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We are publishing here "AI and the fight for socialism," the fifth of six resolutions adopted unanimously by the Ninth National Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (US), held from August 2 to 7, 2026. The resolution was introduced by a report by Evan Blake.

1. The Ninth National Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) places the development of artificial intelligence (AI) at the center of its analysis of the world capitalist crisis. In no other technology are the contradictions of the capitalist system so sharply concentrated. Produced by the collective labor and accumulated knowledge of humanity, AI possesses an immense liberating potential; owned and controlled by a financial-corporate oligarchy, it is being turned into an instrument of exploitation, surveillance and war. The development of AI raises the decisive questions the working class confronts with every great advance in the productive forces: Who owns it? In whose interest is it developed? To what end is it deployed? On these questions hangs whether the immense powers now assembled become the means of humanity's liberation or of a new barbarism.

2. Under capitalism, AI is being introduced not to lighten the burden of labor but to cut it as a cost—the realization, for the corporations, of a long-cherished dream of drastically reducing the workforce. In the first five months of 2026, US employers announced nearly 400,000 job cuts, with AI cited as the leading reason. Studies project the displacement of hundreds of millions of workers worldwide by 2030. For the first time, automation is striking directly at intellectual and professional labor—higher-paid layers of the working class whose jobs were long thought secure. In the same period, the technology oligarchs have enriched themselves as never before, with the fascist Elon Musk becoming the world's first trillionaire.

3. At the same time, AI has been forged into an instrument of repression. Governments and corporations deploy it for mass surveillance, censorship and the monitoring of political opposition. In the United States, Trump's ICE Gestapo uses AI to track, hunt and deport immigrants. Access to the technology itself is being made an instrument of control. Governments are imposing digital ID and age-verification regimes that condition the use of these tools on the surrender of personal identity to the state, while the Trump administration moves to restrict open-source AI models. Above all, AI has become central to the new imperialist redivision of the world. In the US-Israeli war on Iran, Palantir's Maven Smart System—incorporating the Claude model built by Anthropic—generated some 1,000 bombing targets in the first 24 hours of the assault, part of a campaign of many thousands of strikes that killed thousands of civilians, including children. The same class of systems directs the genocide in Gaza, where the Israeli military employs AI-driven targeting and mass facial recognition. US imperialism is waging an economic and military offensive to dominate the technology, directed above all against China.

4. None of these reactionary uses flow from the technology itself, but from the social relations within which it is developed—private ownership, the profit system and the division of the world into rival nation-states. This distinction—between a technology and the social order that wields it—is the foundation of the Marxist attitude, stated by Leon Trotsky in his 1927 essay "Culture and Socialism":

> Technology is a basic conquest of mankind; although it has indeed served until now as an instrument of exploitation, it is at the same time the basic requirement for the liberation of the exploited. The machine strangles the wage-slave. But the wage-slave can only be freed through the machine.

5. In the absence of a mass socialist movement fighting to clarify these issues, hostility to AI is widespread and growing. The socialist movement is by no means indifferent to the devastation now underway, and this anger is understandable. But to conclude that the technology itself is the enemy is a profound error—a modern form of Luddism. The *World Socialist Web Site* has warned that this "anti-AI phobia appears as the political first cousin of the anti-vax hysteria." Both respond to the crimes of capitalism—the profiteering of the pharmaceutical giants, the devastation wrought by the AI oligarchs—by turning against the scientific advance itself rather than the social order that abuses it. Nor is this hostility merely spontaneous; it is consciously promoted by virtually every pseudo-left tendency and by broad sections of the political establishment. The revolutionary position is the opposite. It approaches technology objectively and materialistically, and insists that the working class cannot turn its back on the most powerful productive forces ever created. It must take hold of AI technologies, as it must take hold of the factories, the mines, the data centers and the banks, and wrest them from the class that has monopolized them.

6. What is called "artificial intelligence" is better understood as *augmented intelligence*, a term the party has advanced to cut through the mystification surrounding the technology. The intelligence in these systems is not artificial, but rather the automation and amplification of human intellectual labor, produced by training vast statistical models on the digitized inheritance of human writing, science, art and code. To present AI as an alien mind arisen independently of humanity is a mystification that serves its owners. The party rejects both the uncritical awe promoted by the industry's apologists and the irrational fear of the technophobes, grasping the genuinely revolutionary and contradictory character of the technology.

7. On December 12, 2025, the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) launched Socialism AI, placing augmented intelligence at the service of the political education and organization of the international working class. Conceived, built and maintained by the cadre of the ICFI, Socialism AI makes the heritage of Marxism—the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Plekhanov and Trotsky, and the vast archives of nearly three decades of the World Socialist Web

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Site—available at once, in any language, to workers and young people entering into struggle all over the world. It is an instrument of, not a substitute for, revolutionary leadership. As the ICFI's statement coinciding with the release of Socialism AI explained:

> The decisive significance of Socialism AI lies in its ability to bridge the gap between the objective movement of the working class and the subjective level of socialist consciousness.

8. Just as the Enlightenment prepared the ground for the French Revolution by placing the knowledge of the age in the hands of the rising revolutionary class, so Socialism AI places the accumulated theoretical and historical experience of the Marxist movement at the disposal of the working class of the 21st century. The same advance that threatens workers under the profit system becomes, in their hands, a weapon for the development of revolutionary consciousness. The party must fight to make Socialism AI known as widely as possible and to bring it into the daily political activity of workers and youth.

9. AI is the latest and most powerful product of the scientific and technological revolution that has transformed the productive forces over the past century. This process was enormously accelerated by the modern globalization of production, which integrated the world economy and knit together humanity's scientific and intellectual labor as never before. Having arisen out of this revolution, AI now accelerates it in turn. Marx established that every fundamental transformation of society has its roots in the development of the productive forces, which at a certain stage come into conflict with the existing relations of production. AI brings that conflict to an extreme pitch—a colossally socialized productive force straining against the private property relations and national boundaries that confine it.

10. More than any technology before it, AI is the materialization of what Marx, in the *Grundrisse*, called the "general intellect." He grasped the principle now unfolding before us:

> The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a direct force of production, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it.

AI systems are built from the general social knowledge of humanity—its science, language, and accumulated culture—congealed into a machine. That common inheritance, the product of countless generations, has been seized as the private property of a handful of the largest corporations on earth.

11. The scale of the speculative frenzy surrounding AI is without precedent. A small group of interlinked corporations—among them OpenAI, Anthropic, Microsoft, Oracle, Amazon, Meta and Google—have bound themselves together in a web of "circular deals" that inflate the appearance of demand. Such commitments now approach $1 trillion, even as OpenAI, valued at over $850 billion, loses money on a colossal scale with no prospect of being profitable. This is a vast expansion of fictitious capital and financial speculation—paper claims on wealth not yet produced—swollen far beyond any commensurate base in real production, and it must eventually collapse.

12. This mountain of speculation rests on the promise that AI will restore the profitability of a stagnating economy. It will do the opposite. Value, as Marx demonstrated, is created by living human labor, and profit is derived from the surplus value extracted from the worker over and above the wage paid for his labor power. As capitalism develops, the mass of constant capital—machinery, plant and raw materials, and now the vast infrastructure of chips and data centers—grows relative to the variable capital laid out in wages, and the rate of profit tends to fall. By displacing living labor, the sole source of surplus value, on a vast scale, AI accelerates this decline. Far from rescuing the profit system, it drives to a new extreme its fundamental law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

13. The AI boom exposes the parasitic and superfluous character of the capitalist class. The owners contribute nothing to production. These systems are conceived, built, trained and maintained by workers—the engineers and researchers of Silicon Valley and its counterparts across the world; the low-paid data workers who label their outputs in Kenya, the Philippines, India and Venezuela; the miners of cobalt, lithium and rare earths in the Congo and other oppressed countries; the chip fabricators of Taiwan; the workers who build and run the data centers. The oligarchs merely own the result, and use that ownership to throw millions out of work while enriching themselves without limit. Society has no need for the oligarchs: their grip on economic life has become incompatible with social progress and the survival of civilization.

14. The struggle over AI poses point-blank the question of who is to control the productive forces, and demolishes the oldest argument against socialism—that a modern economy is too complex to be consciously planned, that without the market and the guiding hand of owners and managers production would collapse into chaos. This was always a self-serving lie; with AI and modern communications it has become an absurdity. Workers organized in rank-and-file committees can now obtain in moments the answer to any question about their industry, their supply chains and the world economy, and coordinate instantly with their class brothers and sisters across every border. The material premises for the socialist planning of the world economy are fully in hand.

15. Directed by scientists in their fields, AI has become a powerful instrument for augmenting research. Freed from private profit and placed under social ownership, AI could vastly accelerate the science and the rational organization of production required to halt climate change. The party takes seriously the concern over the enormous energy consumed by the present AI buildout—but this waste is a product of capitalism, not of the technology. Under a democratically planned world economy, AI would itself become a powerful instrument for solving the climate crisis it is now made to deepen.

16. The working class must reject the false solutions of the pseudo-left. The most instructive is the recent call by Senator Bernie Sanders for an "AI sovereign wealth fund," under which the government would take an equity stake in AI corporations and pay the population a dividend. This converges with the policy of the Trump administration, which has already moved by executive order to establish a US sovereign wealth fund, and with the schemes of the AI executives themselves—OpenAI's Sam Altman foremost among them—who have offered the government a stake in their firms, with the aim of securing a future bailout when the AI bubble bursts. Under every such scheme the corporations remain private and profit-driven, while the working class owns nothing, controls nothing and decides nothing. The control of AI cannot be entrusted to the capitalist state, whose function is to defend the wealth and power of the ruling class. It will be won only through the independent political mobilization of the working class, on the basis of the following demands:

Expropriate the technology monopolies! The great AI, cloud-computing, semiconductor and digital-platform corporations must be expropriated and transformed into public utilities under the democratic control of the working class.

Not a single job lost to AI! For a shorter working week and workers' control over technology! The immense gains in productivity

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must be used to shorten the working week with no loss of pay and to raise the living standards and free time of the whole population. The introduction of new technology in every workplace must be placed under the control of the working class, governed by the needs of the workers and of society, not the drive for profit.

Turn AI to human need and the planning of the world economy! Placed under social ownership and integrated into a democratically planned world economy, AI must be directed toward the needs of humanity—the advancement of science, medicine and education, the abolition of poverty and drudgery, the solution of the ecological crisis and the raising of world culture.

17. The ideologists of the technology industry present the outcome as already settled: an all-powerful machine intelligence will be created, before which humanity will be rendered obsolete and effectively reduced to the status of pets. This is a fatalistic myth that abstracts AI technology from the class struggle. Between the present order and any reorganization of society stands the working class, whose labor sustains the entire system and which will not accept in silence the destruction of the livelihoods of hundreds of millions. The struggle over AI—over who owns it and whom it serves—will become an epicenter of the class struggle. To reconcile workers to permanent joblessness, the ruling class and its apologists offer a universal basic income. This is a fraud, a means of administering mass unemployment and dependence on the capitalist state while the wealth and the machines remain in the hands of the oligarchy. The alternative to barbarism is not a subsidized passivity but the conquest of power by the working class.

18. The material foundations of socialism have never been so fully assembled. The productive forces developed under capitalism—of which AI is the highest expression— make it possible to abolish scarcity, poverty and toil and to place the accumulated knowledge and creative power of humanity at the disposal of all. But nothing is automatic. The deeper the crisis, the more ferociously the ruling class will fight to defend its wealth and power, even at the cost of civilization itself. Whether the immense powers now within humanity’s reach are used to build a new world or to destroy the existing one will be decided by the conscious struggle of the working class and the resolution of the crisis of revolutionary leadership. The working class must take hold of AI, as it must take hold of all the productive forces its labor has created, expropriate the oligarchy that has usurped them, and reorganize the world economy on socialist foundations. This is the perspective for which the Socialist Equality Party fights.

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