Richard Wolff: U.S. Empire COLLAPSING, Trump's 'D-Day BACKFIRES

Economist Richard Wolff breaks down why Trump's Iran "Economic D-Day" is already backfiring as allies dump the dollar and the collapse of the US empire accelerates while Trump stays in denial. Prof. Wolff explains what the White House won't: Operation Economic Outcast and the economic war on Iran are not isolating Tehran. They are speeding up de-dollarization, punishing US partners, and exposing a declining empire that can no longer enforce the old reserve-currency order. Prof. Wolff's work: https://www.democracyatwork.info/ https://www.youtube.com/@UCK-6FjMu9OI8i0Fo6bkW0VA LIKE the video and Subscribe for more in-depth geopolitical analysis Leave your thoughts in the comments below! Support the Channel: Patreon: https://www.patreon.com/dannyhaiphong SUBSCRIBE ON RUMBLE: Rumble: https://rumble.com/c/DannyHaiphong Follow Me on Social Media: Twitter: https://twitter.com/DannyHaiphong Telegram: https://t.me/DannyHaiphong Support the channel in other ways: https://www.buymeacoffee.com/dannyhaiphong Substack: chroniclesofhaiphong.substack.com Cashapp: $Dhaiphong Venmo: @dannyH2020 Paypal: https://paypal.me/spiritho #iranwar #useconomy #usempire

#Danny

Welcome back to the show, everyone. As you can see, I'm joined by professor and economist Richard Wolff for another show on the latest developments. So today we're talking about the U.S. empire collapsing fast. There are multiple reports, Professor Wolff, that I think would alarm many people about the state of the U.S. empire. And here is one of them that I know you'll find interesting. You probably already know about it. Here are the numbers on GDP growth for the United States and debt growth. Right now, 1.5% quarter-to-quarter annualized growth in 2026. That's compared to a 7.5% growth in overall debt.

National debt is now, I believe, $40 trillion. U.S. J.P. Morgan is also sounding the alarm about a global food crisis, much of which is spurred by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and how that has rocked energy markets and all markets having to do with the oil trade. Now, D-Day was announced by Scott Bessent, Professor Wolff, as you know, and there was a curious comment made by Scott Bessent saying that he didn't want to blow up the global system anymore, and that countries were going to be taken off the dollar system if they didn't comply with sanctions on Iran. Now they're starting to make some moves, for example, sanctioning Banque Misr, an Egyptian bank's UAE branches, for doing business with Iran. This comes as reporters have been questioning, Professor Wolff, why Trump has not sanctioned Russia and China. Here's what he had to say.

#Donald Trump

You have to understand, for everything they do, we do also. You know, somebody was saying about China, "What about China? We hear they're spying." We spy on them too. That's the way it goes.

#Speaker 1

Why not sanction Chinese banks, though, who are doing business?

#Donald Trump

Well, who said I'm not? You said, "Why not?" I mean, you don't know what I'm doing. Well, I don't have to announce everything.

#Danny

So he doesn't have to announce everything, Professor Wolff. But what has been announced is that a memo from the Pentagon has said that garnished wages from the U.S. military, the U.S. Navy in particular, are helping to pay for the costs of the Iran war, a very shocking report given that the share of national income that wages make up has hit a very huge low. Professor Wolff, please help us understand how this U.S. empire is collapsing fast and what this Iran D-Day fiasco has really wrought and what it really reflects.

#Richard Wolff

Sure. The D-Day designation is a piece of theater prop. It's there to handle an obvious problem. If you could get Iran to do what you want, and you could do it by sanctions, that would have been the easiest, the quickest, and the least costly way to do it. It wouldn't have depleted our munitions. It wouldn't have cost the lives of thousands of people. It wouldn't have led to missiles leaving Iran and destroying the American military bases throughout the Gulf area, and on and on and on. In point of fact, sanctions were tried, many of them over quite a few years, leading up to the decision that they weren't working. Let me say it again: the sanctions weren't working. They may have caused some difficulty, some pain in Iran.

They probably did, but nowhere near enough to change the government, to bring them to their knees, to cause them to surrender, or anything like that. That's why the United States and Israel had to change their strategy. And in June of 2025, a little over a year ago, the United States and Israel attacked Iran militarily in the so-called and famous 12-day war. That stopped after 12 days because, yet again, it wasn't working. An enormous amount of bombs and airplanes and missiles and drones were used. And after 12 days, it was clear that whatever damage was being done to Tehran and to Iran as a whole wasn't bringing them to their knees or anything like it, and it was costing the United States a pretty penny.

All right, so they stopped after 12 days. They regrouped, they brought more munitions into that area, they moved more and more American military assets there, and as we all know, on the 28th of February of 2026, this year, the United States and Israel again decided to use military force. And so the war began, the second war against Iran. It was supposed to last a few days. It was supposed to be a quick war, like the one in 2025. Hopefully, with this difference, it would work. It didn't. And that's what led to the Memorandum of Understanding and to the current ceasefire. But there is nobody, nobody except Mr. Trump—and nobody believes it—who thinks that in any sense the United States won.

It didn't. The war wasn't short. The war wasn't quick. Iran did not surrender. And now, six months or more later, what do we got? Did we change the government? No. Did we bring to an end their nuclear refining of uranium? No. We did get the closing of the Strait of Hormuz, which hurts the United States and the world economy. We got that, but that was not an objective. Now the objective is to get rid of what the very invasion caused. This is, therefore, in the minds of all people across the political spectrum, except Mr. Trump's collection of loyalists, a disaster by, of, and for the United States of America.

In order to give Americans yet again the false hope, Mr. Bessent, in announcing, my God, another bunch of sanctions, has to hype them. They are D-Day. They are the ultimate. And within hours, China and Russia let the president know publicly and privately, you can do whatever you want. You're not going to tell us whether or not we can do business with Iran. We have been doing business. We will do business. Just in case anyone wonders, Russia and China are among the three or four most important economic partners Iran has. And finally, as Mr. Bessent knows but didn't tell you, the ability to get around American sanctions for everyone in the world is now much greater than it was in previous years. So the United States returning to sanctions against Russia, against Cuba, against Iran, and a dozen other countries, that doesn't work anymore.

It didn't work enough to win what it was set out to win in the first place, but it works less well now. To give you just one example, there's something called the CHIPS system, C-H-I-P-S. It's an American-run companion to the SWIFT system. The SWIFT system is a way that banks around the world, about 11,000 or 12,000 of them, communicate with one another. It's the way you organize the flow of payments for exports and imports. The actual payments are made in something called the CHIPS system. CHIPS. Once the United States started politicizing these mechanisms of exchange and of planning and of payments, the People's Republic of China did what it is doing everywhere. If you can't rely on the United States, build your own alternative system. So what did China do?

It built something called, with a twinkle in its eye, the CIPS system, C-I-P-S, instead of C-H-I-P-S. And what does it do? It allows every country, any bank, anywhere, to tie into this Chinese-run system. They don't politicize it. They will handle anybody's payments. So even if you read in the weeks and months in the future, Danny, if you or anyone watching reads about such-and-such a bank, maybe that Egyptian one that your clip showed, it has agreed to abide by the rules of the

CHIPS system, here's what that bank will do, and my guess is they've already done it. They will organize another bank. It'll be called the 123 Bank. They will sign up with the Chinese system. And then any business they do, the old Melli Bank, will be done with the American system.

And they'll walk across town in Cairo and handle the money through the Chinese-connected system. They'll get around the sanctions. That's what they've been doing for 40 years now. It is silly. You're not going to run the world by these sanctions. So then people ask me, well, why do they go through it if it's really an exercise in futility? The answer is it has a function. It is a way for the Trump administration to propagandize the American and, to some extent, European and world public opinion. It looks like we're punishing the bad guys. It looks like we're reacting. It looks like we're not as powerless in the face of this war in Iran as we actually are. And that, for Mr. Trump, is a very important objective, which the sanctions fakery gets him.

#Danny

Those are great points, Professor Wolff. And I want to pull up also some of the backlash to the way that the Trump administration right now is administering the U.S. empire. I love your comments on this U.S.-Canada trade war because now we have a U.S. ally in NAFTA directly issuing counter-tariffs that could increase prices of Canadian goods in the United States and exports into the U.S. imported from the U.S. by 50, a whopping 50 percent. Now, this comes as also 43 percent of national income is American wages, the lowest since the Great Depression.

So things are looking very bad on the economic front, Professor Wolff. And I just want your comment on, you know, how is this related to the war on Iran? I said that, you know, one of the microcosms or microscopic symptoms of this is also the fact that you have the U.S. Navy now garnishing wages and saying there's going to be payroll shortages because they have funneled them to pay for the costs of the war. React to this. What are these symptoms of, and what does it all mean?

#Richard Wolff

Well, the garnishing of payments is, again, the kind of finagle that's done for the image of the United States. If they hadn't done that, they would have had to come to Congress, in all likelihood, and ask for more money. It's already a sore point in American culture. Public opinion in the United States has been against the war in Iran from the beginning. That was not the case with the war in Vietnam or the war in Afghanistan. Initially, at least, the people were on the side of making the war. As the war wore on, as the body bags came home, as the costs went up, public opinion changed. Iran is worse for the government because public opinion was against that war from the beginning.

But if anything makes the opposition to the war become much more intensified, it is a public awareness that it's costing more and more money. And what could be more dramatic than being told that the soldiers you ask to go into the theater of trouble, of warfare, risking injury, death, are having their wages nickeled and dimed so you can hide the money being used to pay for the war without going to Congress? You can literally snatch it out of the pay envelopes of the sailors. You put that together with those pictures of the toilets aboard the Abraham Lincoln ship, and you get a sense of a government not only lying to its people, but abusing its own soldiers.

And yet, let me remind everyone, that is the history of empires when they go down. That's what we're living through, folks. I mean, have a little compassion for yourself. When a country has a boom for 75 years, like the United States did after World War II, when all the countries that might have competed with the United States—Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, any of them—had all destroyed each other in two world wars just a few years apart, killed between 50 and 100 million people, these wars among competing capitalist colonial countries. Wow. They all destroy themselves, except for one: the United States, protected by the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other.

We didn't suffer anything after the Pearl Harbor attack at the beginning. After that, no bombs fell here, no bullets were shot here. The number of Americans killed is a small fraction of what happened in, say, Russia or Germany or Japan. So the United States inherited perhaps the most important economic reality people have to understand. We inherited—we in the Americas, in the United States—the destroyed empires of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and on. They lost their empires, beginning in 1947, when India, the absolute dominant player in what was called the British Empire, broke away and said, "We don't want to be part of this empire."

The British lost. Who stepped in to become the important partner for India? The United States. Who stepped in everywhere else? The United States. The United States became the richest colonial power in history because it gathered together, it absorbed, it literally inherited the empires that the Europeans and the Japanese no longer could manage because they had destroyed each other in the war that culminated colonialism. So we became wildly rich. We collected the wealth of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and brought it into the United States. We did it for the second half of the 20th century.

And only now, as the whole world went from a colonized planet to a planet whose major mentality is anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, we're the only one left. And we're the one getting the brunt of the anger. It's not that people hate America. That's silly and childish. It's that people say, "You are trying to maintain the colonial power." That's why the United States has 700 military bases around the country. China has one. Most countries have none. What do you think that means? We are the remaining imperial power, but we're trying to hold on at a time when the whole world is anti-imperialist, wants no part of it. By the way, you can see the tragedy of it all. If you take a look at the one other example of a country in an era of anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, trying nonetheless to be imperialist, that country is Israel. What are they doing?

They're trying to settle Gaza, the West Bank, and the part of that area that they call Greater Israel. They're trying to colonize this area. And the people there won't have it because they know they're part of a world whose vast majority are anti-colonialist. And it makes Israel do things whose horror we all know. But the United States is in the same sad predicament. And because Donald Trump doesn't understand three-quarters of what I just said, he is actually proving it by acting out a fantasy that we're still a colonial power that is strong and can take over other parts of the world. And so he fantasizes about Greenland, or about snatching back the Panama Canal, or Lake Ontario becomes one of ours, or Canada becomes the 51st state, or maybe Venezuela is absorbed, or maybe Cuba can be snatched. But these are all—but it didn't come from nowhere.

That's our history working its way through. But the real tragedy is not that. That's tragedy enough. The bigger tragedy is that we're going to be stuck in these fantastic and highly dangerous games until we recognize we're going through the decline of our empire. Now, you can do that nicely or you can do it really ugly. That's a choice we have. We still have. Do you want to fight it at every turn? Turn on your allies, turn on everybody you knew, grab this, grab that before the next one gets it? You're making Mr. Carney in Canada become the ally of the enemies around the world. The Canadian economy is going to need China and Russia to help them. They know it. The Chinese know it. It's already underway. What are we doing here?

Or you can sit down and say, okay, like every other empire, when it goes down, the following happens, and this goes to an earlier question you asked me. The people at the top, the ones who have the wealth and the power, when the economy goes down, they use their wealth and power to hold on to what they accumulated. It's the middle and the bottom who can't do that. They don't have the money. They don't have the power. They suffer. And so the people at the top offload the costs of a declining empire. If you talk to the people at the top in America, they will tell you, look at the stock market, how wonderful it is. You remind them the 10% richest people own 80% of the stock. Yet they are doing fine.

They're in a position, even when the empire goes down, to hold on to their wealth. It's you and me who can't. We can't get the extra money to pay the higher price for gasoline, or the higher price for our food, or the higher cost of our rent, or the fill in the blank. For rich people, they could care less. It's not important. But for us, it is. That's what's happening. And if you want to know why workers are getting 43% of the total income, it's because of these mechanisms. And that's one of the reasons why it's in the interest of the mass of the working class to sit down with China and the rest of the world and come up with a way to live with each other rather than going to horrible wars.

Let me remind everyone, after World War I, the people of Europe who killed each other were so horrified by their own behavior that they created something called the League of Nations. The whole idea was no more war. Well, eventually Germany and Italy and Japan withdrew. Then we had World War II. That was even more horrible than World War I, and it ended with an even stronger opinion: we need to create, what do we call it, the United Nations. Now, who's withdrawn from that effectively? The United States. Who else, effectively? Israel. Hello. Here we see what's going on. It's a rerun of the history before. If that continues, we're going to have yet another war before finally colonialism and all that it represents will be ended in human history. And that will not go well if the United States is resisting it every step of the way.

#Danny

Yeah, analyst Trita Parsi, I heard him say that there's more than a 50% chance that this war that the United States and Israel have been waging on Iran restarts in a big way after the midterm election. So that's a big percentage. But to your point, Professor Wolff, I mean, look at these numbers: corporate profits in the U.S. surging by 22.8% year on year in quarter two. This is in contrast to wages in the United States as part of the national income falling to the lowest since the Great Depression, where of every dollar the U.S. economy produces, workers are getting less of it than at any point in U.S. history. So, Professor Wolff, what does this portend then? Because we have the Trump administration. It seems like everything, and this is another characteristic I've noticed, everything that the Trump administration, the United States does, it really doesn't matter which administration.

It's just the Trump administration inherited and then exacerbated, it seems like, all of these ills. So everything that it does seems to come back on the U.S. tenfold, especially on the people. Now you see his appeal to farmers. And we mentioned the Great Depression. There's a Great Depression-era tool that the Trump administration is trying to use against Canada around these tariffs, where economists generally agree that these acts of escalating retaliatory tariffs extended the Great Depression itself by helping to cut off the United States from the world market. Maybe you could talk about this. We're into Great Depression-era-like numbers, and yet Washington, the Trump administration, is using Great Depression-era tools. It's quite astounding. Your thoughts on this?

#Richard Wolff

Well, let me pick up on this, connecting our current situation to the Great Depression. I think that's correct. I think that is the key clue. But I would put it a little differently from the way most folks are doing it. And let me be brief and do it for you. Capitalism, American capitalism, but also global capitalism, had its greatest collapse in what is now called the Great Depression. Starting in October of 1929, capitalism fell apart. It got so bad that in 1933, a little over three and a half years later, the official U.S. unemployment rate was 25%. One in every four workers was without a job. That meant that every American family had a person who was not working, often more than one.

And let me remind you, there was no unemployment insurance at that time. There was no help for people. They went to the local church and the soup kitchen and hoped they would get something to eat. You know, it is important to remember, when that happened, when millions and millions of Americans walked the streets unemployed, no jobs available, the American people, the working class, the vast majority, went sharply to the left politically, not the right. The 1930s were a period of time when you had enormous growth of two socialist parties and a communist party, all three of them larger than DSA is today. Not at all a criticism of DSA, but they are replicating what happened on a much larger scale in the 1930s.

On top of all of that, you had the greatest union organizing drive in American history. We had never had anything like it before. We have never had anything like it since. It was headed up by something called the CIO, Congress of Industrial Organizations, the second half of the AFL-CIO, that is the labor federation of this country today. The militants in the communist and socialist parties were often the leaders in the unionizing drives. In a very short time, millions of unemployed Americans and millions of employed Americans, those who still had jobs, joined unions. These were people who had never been in a union before. These were people whose parents and grandparents had never been in unions before.

They joined because that was the mood of the country. And they went to the president of the United States, these socialists, communists, and unionists. And they basically said these words to him: "We want you to help us. We're going through a disastrous depression. That is not our fault. That is the capitalist system that collapsed all around us. And you, the governor, the president, you have to help us. And if you do, we will vote for you big time. And if you don't, you won't get elected dog catcher." Roosevelt was reelected three times, more than any other president in American history before or since. How did that all happen? Here's what happened.

Mr. Roosevelt said to the communists, socialists, and unionists, "Okay, I'm going to give you what you want. I'm going to help you, and I'm going to make corporations and the rich pay for it. But in exchange, you've got to stop talking about revolution or socialism, or just support, let's call it, the New Deal." Well, they went for that. Not everyone agreed, but the majority went for that deal. FDR was true to his part of it. He went back to the rich, from whom he came, comes from a very wealthy family, and he told them, "I need you to give me much more taxes than you have and lend me money. But I'm telling you, you better give me half of the money you have, because if you don't, there'll be a revolution here, and you won't have any money to give anybody."

He persuaded half of them. The other half of them became the Republican Party of the future that we now live with. But the party he persuaded joined with the communists, socialists, to support Roosevelt. And here's what he did. Just to remind, the Social Security system: everybody who's 65 years of age and has a lifetime of work gets a pension every month for the rest of their life, no matter how long they live. The first unemployment compensation system: you get a check every week for a year if you lose your job. The first minimum wage, and a government jobs program that put 15 million Americans back to work. Amazing achievements, paid for by the highest taxes capitalists had ever been required to pay.

Why am I telling you this? Because right at the end of the war, when Roosevelt dies, 1945, the business community went on a tear, and they had a clear objective and a clear project: undo the New Deal, roll it back. Whatever the government had given to the people under the Great Depression had now to be taken away from them. That's why we haven't had a public jobs program, even though we've had long bouts of unemployment. And right now, as I'm speaking, eight or nine million Americans are unemployed. There's no government job program for them. The minimum wage, it's now a joke because it hasn't been raised since the year 2009, even though prices rose every year since then. I could go on, but you get the message.

We've been living not only in the undoing of the New Deal, but we've had to live in the way that that was justified to the American people. And here's how that was done. It was the Cold War: the big bad Russians. We were supposed to be scared to death of them. And in the name of holding them back and pushing them back and fighting them, we had to undo the New Deal. Very clever. And it taught Americans to look with a jaundiced eye on socialism and communism and Marxism and all those things. That's why today, when we face a trauma that is becoming as deep and as big as the Great Depression, we don't have a population yet ready to go to the left. They went first where we should have expected them to go: to the right, a populist BS-er like Trump. The workers thought maybe he'll do something. The Clintons didn't. Obama didn't.

The Bushes didn't, right? So he's clearly different. He says racist things. He says white supremacist things. So the right wing prepared the way, and so the working class went there. But here's where we are now. The working class is figuring out, with the statistics exactly like those you clipped, Danny, that that's not helping them. Under Mr. Trump, did they get more jobs? No. Did they get a higher income? No. Did they solve the problems? No. Did he end the endless wars? No. It's too many things. It looks like he's taking care of himself and his family. Other than that, he's lost in symbols. He wants to name it not the Gulf of Mexico, but the Gulf of America.

He wants to rename the Kennedy Center because they won't put his name on the facade of the building. That's what they're getting: lots of symbolism like that, but no real solution. And so, guess what? The left reemerges and says, "Hey, we got an alternative way of going about it. Why don't you come over here and give it a try?" And what the elections are showing us, as we should have foreseen, that's exactly what's happening. And it will continue to happen. My only concern, and I don't mind saying it, and I admire Zohran Mamdani, and I admire the young lady in Florida who won that race, and now the young lady in Oklahoma who's going to be the Democratic candidate for Senate there.

These are wonderful breakthroughs of people who have something to say. But here's my warning: if you just keep your socialism to the level of things the government can do for us, you will not have learned the lesson of FDR and the New Deal. And that lesson is: can you get the government to help you? Yes, you can. But if you leave the capitalists there, controlling the industry, gathering the profits in their hands, they will undo whatever you win. Governments who give you are also governments who can take it back. You're going to have to go further than the government in order to change the society from the bottom, so what you win cannot be taken back.

#Danny

That's a great point, especially around that period too, and directly after the New Deal. There weren't just backlashes on things like labor law, Taft-Hartley, and all of this, which undid a lot of the things that you said, Professor Wolff, all those policies that helped workers. But also there was a backlash against the workers themselves. There was a massive campaign of McCarthyism that sought to dismantle and dismember any element inside of that movement which would go further, as you said, Professor Wolff.

And I think this is interesting because you have nearly 25% of U.S. workers functionally unemployed, and maybe you can help us understand what that means. As The Hill reports that Trump's approval ratings have endured a cruel summer, I wonder why, including a 33% approval rating in a Reuters/Ipsos poll just this week. So, as you said, Professor Wolff, there is a massive popular sentiment away from Trump's leadership of the U.S. empire, so to speak, and the numbers and the data that directly affect people's lives show it.

But at the same time, there is this, I think, maybe malaise around, well, what does this all mean? And how does one get to stopping what I feel like most people probably think they're powerless over, things like the Iran war, which has, of course, literally drained money from American workers' pockets. I think something like $1,200 a day, something absolutely incredible, if people in the United States really could connect what they're going through with that kind of reality. So, your thoughts on this, Professor Wolff?

#Richard Wolff

Yeah, I think what you need is, you need a left-wing movement to become powerful in the United States. And by powerful, I don't mean the government. I mean powerful in persuading millions of people that there's a simple idea. And here's the idea: we can do better than capitalism. You know, there was a time when many people around the world lived in slavery. Most people were slaves. Those slaves conceived the idea, hey, we can do better than slavery. And eventually, slavery was gone. The 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution outlaws slavery. Okay, then we had feudalism, serfs and lords. And the lords had all the power and the wealth; the serfs didn't. And the serfs eventually conceived the idea, hey, we can do better than feudalism.

And we don't have feudalism anymore. We don't have lords and serfs. We don't have kings and queens, except as decoration for tourists. It's not serious. Well, the whole point now is to get people to understand we didn't need slaves and masters, we didn't need serfs and lords, and we don't need employees and employers. The minute you allow that to exist inside every factory, every office, every store, you're creating a mass of people who come to work every day, do what they're told, and if they step out of line, they're fired. They lose the job. They lose the income. Their family is in terrible trouble. And then a group of people at the top who are rich get richer by the day.

You know, we celebrated a few weeks ago that we have a person who's already the richest man in the world, who we're all excited is going to be the first trillionaire at a time when most Americans can't afford to send their kid to college. The inequality, the unfairness of all of this is staggering. Why don't we run our enterprises in the same way that we run the communities where we live? Where you live, there's a rule. If you live in a town and you have a mayor, you elect the mayor. And why? Because the democratic idea is, if there's an official who has power over you, then that person must be accountable to you and the others over whom they exercise power. The same goes to the congressperson, the senator, the president, whoever.

And yet, when you go to work, when you cross the threshold out of the street into the place of business, you lose your democracy. Suddenly, there's somebody there, the boss. You don't elect him, you can't fire him, you can't remove him from office, but he can easily do that to you. That's not democracy. That's what we don't allow where we live. So why in the world do we allow it where we work? It's just as appropriate to be democratic in the workplace as it is at home, in the community where you live. That understanding would make people realize that socialism, or any progressive movement in this century, the 21st, is going to have to be different from what happened in the 20th century.

The 20th century proved that a united working class can get the government to do lots of good things for it. But it also taught the lesson that if that's all you do, the capitalists, the people who run the businesses, who collect all the profits into their few hands, can and will use that money to buy the politicians so that the government takes back what your struggles got it to give you. If you don't want to have that happen again, you have to go further than capturing government seats. You have to change the organization of the workplace. If you democratize the workplace, you will no longer have boss versus worker, employer versus employee, and you will not get the results of that system, which is what we are living through now.

#Danny

Yeah. It seems, first of all, if you're talking about power—and geopolitics are all about power, economics are all about power—it just so happens they're completely intertwined. And maybe, first of all, can you comment on what the impact of all of this has on the dollar system, from the U.S. empire's reliance on these endless wars, particularly against Iran right now? But it's not just Iran. It's Ukraine and the Asia-Pacific against China and wherever else. Latin America—we've had reports that the United States is trying, under Trump, to ink some kind of deal with Venezuela to literally steal their oil reserves—not just oil, but oil reserves—to pump those into the U.S., despite all of the infrastructural and all kinds of other problems that that might encounter.

But the United States continues to extend itself abroad in this way. And the dollar system is being directly cited by Scott Bessent as a weapon now by the United States directly, not just what we've been talking about here for so many months and years and all that you've covered about it, but directly now referencing the dollar system as a weapon. So how does this impact all of this from the economic situation inside of the empire's borders and what goes on abroad?

#Richard Wolff

Well, here's what the basic law is: if you're going to be the hegemon, the dominant power, if you're going to deal with the whole world as though you control its basic economic reality. And that's how the United States had it in the second half of the 20th century, for the reasons I went into. That's why the United States is so offended that a little passage of water, the Strait of Hormuz, should now be taken over by somebody else. Up until Iran announced this, it was a passage that everybody could go through and that the United States supervised the way it supervises everything in the world, with its 700 military bases, its military dominance, and all the rest. But if what you begin to do is use your power not to keep the whole thing going, but to advantage yourself at the expense of others, you're creating the incentive for those others to get out from under you.

We're doing that with Canada over the last year. We are teaching the Canadians that if you rely, as they did for 200 years, on a good, easy, pretty equal relationship with the United States, we, the United States, not the Canadians, we have decided that's not acceptable. We want more from you, and we're planning to give less to you. Wait a minute, say the Canadians. Just like, wait a minute, said the Iranians. And wait a minute, are saying more and more and more. The example I gave a few minutes ago between the CIPS and the SIPs, those are alternative payment systems. You don't need the dollar anymore. You could use the Chinese one. They accept their currency and other.

Step by step, the United States' politicization of the world, making it serve the United States in a gross, direct way because the United States' capitalism is in trouble, is teaching everybody: get out of the United States. Don't depend on them for stuff you need. Don't depend on the U.S. as a place to sell. They'll hit you with a tariff. They'll hit you with a trade war. They'll hit you with whatever they got. Oh, now I have an incentive to go where? Well, to go to China. China is the example we should learn from. After World War II, the United States helped rebuild the world from the horrors of World War II. We had the Marshall Plan. We gave money to the Europeans, to the Japanese, but we didn't give any money to Russia because they were communists. And we didn't give any money to China after 1949, when they went communist.

So they didn't get the help. Now, here's the lesson. Who developed further, faster since 1945? China, who got no U.S. help, or the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, who did get Western help? If you don't know the answer, I'll give it to you. China won. Going away, not even close. Why? Because we created the incentive. The Chinese knew they had to depend on themselves or American capitalism would not only not help them, it would crush them. Right? The revolution brought the communists to power in 1949. In 1950 and '51, the United States was at war with China in Korea. We call it the Korean War. It was a war with China. They got a lesson right from the beginning: watch out. The Americans are looking for a chance to shut you down. They got around it, and they have grown to become a competing superpower.

We have got to learn from what they achieved, or else it's going to be replicated by all the countries around the world who see China's achievement as what they're trying to do in Asia, Africa, and Latin

America. They thought they could get it done with the United States. But with China, it works better. That's the reality. That's why the dollar is becoming less and less of a dominant currency. It's all part of a declining empire impacting a country which is unwilling to face that reality and prefers denial. All I can tell you is the same lesson that the AA community teaches its members. If you go to an AA meeting, you begin by saying, "Hello, my name is, I am an alcoholic." You put your problem out there so that you, together with the others, can find a solution. But you're not going to find a solution if you can't admit you have the problem.

#Danny

Hmm. Well, Professor Wolff, that was, I think, a really, really, really important assessment of the overall situation that we are facing. I wanted to ask if you had any final comments before I close out the stream, Professor Wolff, because, you know, we covered so much ground. But I'm curious if you have any final words for the audience before we close out here.

#Richard Wolff

Yeah, I think if I could say anything to the American people, I would say go back and rethink and reread your American history. The history is there to teach us what we have to ask for, what we have to do, what we can avoid, what mistakes we don't need to make again. And, you know, recently, I believe, was the anniversary of one of the greatest writers of American history for the working class, a man named Howard Zinn, Z-I-N-N. And if you're looking for a way to get an understanding of American history and how it brings us to this point and what lessons we can take from it, then you can't do any better than the work of Howard Zinn, Z-I-N-N.

#Danny

Yeah, definitely. And I was good friends with a good friend of his who recently died and taught that book. He was a teacher for many, many, many, many years, decades, and he taught that book in the classroom. In terms of another book, I want you all to have awareness that Carlos Martinez, who's also a guest on this show, has just edited a volume of chapters on China's foreign policy and the making of a multipolar world, Changes Unseen in a Century. That link is in the video description. I contribute a chapter on whether China's foreign policy is good enough, answering critiques about it that we often hear from the Western mainstream, as well as even some of our friends, you know, in the anti-imperialist world. And it also contains chapters from many other good scholars as well, like Ken Hammond, Cheng Anfu from China, Carlos himself, Michael Dunford, and so many more.

So do pick up a copy of that. You can find that in the video description below. Also in the video description are Professor Wolff's links to Democracy at Work, as well as the YouTube channel that they run. So do subscribe to them. Do support their work as well. If you are able to hit the like button, everybody, that helps boost the show in YouTube's algorithm. All the places to support this show are in the video description below. And you can also check us out here again on August 29th, 2 p.m. Eastern Time, with KJ Noh. Until next time, hit the like button, check out all those works after you do that, and I will see you all tomorrow. Bye, bye, bye.