

Chomsky: "US is racing toward the precipice"

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The minimum wage should be \$20 an hour, “neoliberalism is tyranny” and the Republican Party is “dedicated to destroying human life,” renowned academic and activist Noam Chomsky told RT in an extended interview.

“We are headed toward a cliff and the worst cliff we are headed toward is due to market systems,” the linguist and philosopher said to the “On Contact” host Chris Hedges during a sit-down talk at MIT, where Chomsky, 88, continues to serve as Emeritus Professor.

Hedges, himself a professor, and Chomsky traced back the history of applied neoliberalism from its late 1970s origins on both, the left and the right, to the era of Donald Trump.

“The neoliberal shift moved decisions from the public arena to the market,” said Chomsky, whose book on the topic, “Requiem for the American Dream,” came out earlier this year. “The ideology claims it’s increasing freedom, it’s in fact increasing tyranny.”

Putting the interest of capital – and specifically transnational corporations and financial institutions – above that of the people, has created a “democratic reduction” and a “stagnation or decline of wages, for the majority,” said Chomsky, who advocates better wage distribution, and has called himself a socialist.

“Neoliberalism has been putting the working people of the world in competition with each other, but allowing freedom of capital, and in fact a high degree of protection for capital. So, for example, intellectual property rights are a huge tax on the population,” said Chomsky, who noted Microsoft’s stranglehold on tech patents, and Apple’s tax avoidance schemes as means of depriving ordinary people.

Chomsky, who co-authored the prominent 1992 media study Manufacturing Consent, said that these changes have been pinned by “indoctrination” with opponents marginalized and even dismissed as “anti-American.”

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"Aside from the US, I don't know any other non-totalitarian, non-authoritarian country where the concept even exists. That's a very striking concept. If you're critical of policy – you're anti-American," said Chomsky.

Chomsky, who achieved academic fame for his universal grammar theory, is now predominantly concerned about climate change, and particularly the recent US withdrawal from the Paris agreement, signed by then-President Barack Obama in 2015.

"The position of the savage wing of American capitalism, the Republican Party, is really striking, they are really racing toward a precipice. Has there really been an organization in history that has dedicated itself to the destruction of human life?" said Chomsky, who has been a constant critic of Trump. "The US is racing toward the precipice, while the world is trying to do something."

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