

The Cash Machine - “Qu’ils mangent de la brioche”

News:

BP has reported its biggest quarterly profit for 14 years after oil and gas prices soared.

The energy giant saw underlying profits hit \$8.45bn (£6.9bn) between April and June - more than triple the amount it made in the same period last year.

It comes as typical household energy bills have been forecast to hit more than £3,600 a year this winter.

The bumper profits have prompted calls for the government to tax firms further to help families with rising bills.

BP's profits were the second highest for the second quarter in the firm's history.

It follows a host of profit announcements from other firms including Shell, Equinor, TotalEnergies and British Gas owner Centrica, which have been reaping the benefits of higher gas and oil prices. ([BBC](#))

Comment:

Shocking shameful. A taunting of the people, picking themselves up after a terrible pandemic, now facing unprecedented sky high energy and food prices, inflation and suffering not seen here since World War II. Office for National Statistics reported UK inflation hit 9.4% in the 12 months to June from 9.1% in May. Typical energy bills rose by £700 pounds in April, and predicted to increase yet again by £1,200 in October.

António Guterres the Secretary General of the UN, was compelled to condemn the ‘immoral record profits’ of the large energy giants which made profits ‘on the back of the poorest’, totalling \$100 billion in the first quarter of this year.

How is it energy prices inordinately, cruelly high in a nation that has oil and gas? Where have these ‘immoral’ profits come from? Alok Sharma, former Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy for the British government offered the capitalist explanation on Sky News, 24th January this year, “We face international wholesale gas price. You know, even if we were extracting more right now from the North Sea basin, ultimately the price, that’s going to be ‘generated’, is going to be on the international wholesale gas price.”

The message? Not the government’s fault. Nothing the government can do.

What they aren’t telling the public, is that their rich capitalist chums are raking it in on this ‘cash machine’, selling to the highest prices they can ‘generate’ on the world market, to blazes with the people.

And their media are complicit in perpetuating this misery. The ‘mainstream media’ owned by capitalist media barons, work hard to deflect, distract and diffuse public anger and pain - the capitalist narrative is: It’s everything else that’s at fault, the pandemic, the end of the pandemic, demand, the lack of demand, the Russian ‘war’ in Ukraine, not Brexit, - the ‘fates’, i.e. ‘thems the breaks’, nothing can be done, and by the way, the rest of the world is in pain too.’. The mainstream media, ensure governments that protect, justify, safeguard their obscene profits and selfish interests, of the rich rule. Capitalism undermines democracy and skews the system to benefit the rich.

This is wrong, unjust.

The root problem is capitalism fails miserably, oppresses horribly when dealing with critical and basic needs.

The fact that energy is a critical need, makes it 'demand inelastic' - people need energy for daily life, they are forced to pay no matter what the price. In effect it's a form of monopoly. It means, the bigger energy restrict production, the more profit they make! The capitalists hold our lives in their hands.

It is a base resource for daily life, from transport, manufacturing, offices, schools, hospitals all need energy. When the price of energy goes up the impact is multiplied and impacts all aspect of life, adding to suffering of inflation.

Big energy companies, are turning our desperation and misery, into cool profit. In capitalism, oil and gas, the mineral wealth of the nation, isn't for the benefit of the people. It is for the benefit of the rich capitalist few.

This tragedy would be unthinkable in the Khilafah (Caliphate). Ibn Majah narrated from Abu Hurairah *radhiallahu anhu*, that the Prophet *sallallahu alaihi wassallam* said, «المسلمون» **“Three things are not prevented from (the people); the water, the pastures and the fire.”**

The system of Islam (Shari'ah) designates all mineral wealth in a special category '*al-milkiyyah al-ammah*' - public property, owned by all. It cannot be owned by individuals, nor can it be owned by the government (nationalised). In contrast to capitalism and socialism / communism, all mineral wealth, including oil and gas, is for the benefit of the people, managed by the State on behalf of the people.

And unlike the apparent helplessness of powerful capitalists' governments of the world, the Khalifah (caliph) and his governors would certainly be accountable, personally, were the citizenry 'priced-out' of energy, let alone suffer when it is abundantly available. The Shari'ah, the system of Islam looks after all, especially the vulnerable and the weak.

After taking office, the first Khalifah of Islam, Abu Bak'r (ra) addressed the people: **“I have been given the authority over you, and I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, set me right. Sincere regard for truth is loyalty and disregard for truth is treachery. The weak amongst you shall be strong with me until I have secured his rights, if God wills; and the strong amongst you shall be weak with me until I have wrested from him the rights of others, if God wills....”** (Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah 6:305, 306)

It's not for the rich and powerful nor poor and needy, to decide right and wrong. The world has never seen such widespread global suffering and turmoil in living memory. In their brief period of reign, capitalism and socialism have brought about global poverty and misery. Islam implemented a just, compassionate, enlightened civilisation that cared for the poor and rich, for all races and creeds, for over a millennium.

We urgently need the return of Islam, for the Believers and all the good peoples of the world.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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