

"the Super Bowl—and super-bad ways of thinking and acting, doing real harm"

In my last message (Number Twelve), I talked about the shooting during the Super Bowl championship celebration in Kansas City, the bigger picture this is part of, and the larger lessons that need to be drawn from this. But the truth is that, with all the terror, trauma and loss that are caused by things like this shooting, it is not *all* that is wrong with the Super Bowl, this year and in general.

Just to be clear, I am someone who likes to watch good football (I played football in high school), but I *can't stand* the Super Bowl, with all the hype and especially the peddling of poison surrounding the game. Think, for example, about the fact that Super Bowls regularly become a focus for the sex trafficking of women.

And then there is all the gambling associated with the Super Bowl (and sports in general). This year set a record for Super Bowl gambling—betting was estimated to be *more than 20 billion dollars*.

On the one hand, this reflects the *parasitism* of this capitalist-imperialist system—and this country in particular. (A *parasite* is an animal or plant that feeds off other living things. *Imperialism, and U.S. imperialism above all, feeds off the people of the entire world.*) As a result of this system's exploiting billions of people around the world—and ravaging the earth in the process—some people have money they can afford to lose on sports betting. At the same time, this gambling—and the losses that so many suffer as a result—will devastate many people who are barely able to get by already, and do not actually have money to waste on gambling, but get caught up in the “get rich quick” culture that is continually pumped out at people in this country.

Actors and other “celebrities” who appear in ads promoting sports betting *should stop and think*: these ads are doing real harm—hyping gambling—when, along with promoting this whole putrid culture, this will add to the real suffering that so many are already forced to endure!

This is yet another reason why we need a fundamentally different system, where the culture as a whole will be oriented to *uplifting, not degrading*, people. As part of that, sports should provide healthy recreation and entertainment for masses of people, contributing to their physical and overall well-being. This is the orientation in the *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*, which I have written—setting forth a sweeping vision and concrete blueprint for a radically new, emancipating society and world. As it says in that *Constitution*:

The role of competition in sports will be recognized and given its appropriate place, but the basic and overall priority in sports will be to foster bonds of friendship, comradeship, community, cooperation and the shared experience and joy of sport, along with its contribution to health and fitness—and the promotion of internationalism, particularly in sports activities that are engaged in together with people from other countries.



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