Essential readings to understand Socialism.

By Robert Montgomery

To discuss socialism coherently, after mastering the “basics” in Marx and Engels, we need to read the seminal documents of the Trotskyist movement. All of them: The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the 4th international, The Permanent Revolution, The Revolution Betrayed, and In Defense of Marxism.

For starters.

Only then will we have the theoretical and political clarity to intelligently discuss:

– what capitalism is
– what socialism is
– what communism is
– what a workers state is
– what a degenerated workers state is
– what a deformed workers state is
– what Stalinism is

I don’t mean we become academics or reference librarians. It takes hard, disciplined work. If we fail to do it we risk talking impressionistically. The World Socialist Website is a great reference source. It has a link to the classics. The Marxist Internet Archive is essential also.
Marx and Engels – The basics

The Communist Manifesto

Read the “The Communist Manifesto” here

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific
Read “Socialism – Utopian and Scientific” here

Lenin

Karl Marx: A brief biographical sketch with an exposition of Marxism
Read “Karl Marx A Brief Biographical Sketch with an Exposition of Marxism – 1914” here

Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism
Read “Imperialism: The highest stage Capitalism” here.

The State and Revolution

Read “The State and Revolution” here.

Trotsky
Marxism in Our Time

Read “Marxism in our time” here.

The Revolution Betrayed
The Permanent Revolution, Basic Postulates
Read “The Permanent Revolution, Basic Postulates”

In Defense of Marxism
Read “In defence of Marxism” here

The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International
(Also known as the “Transitional Program)

Read the “The death agony of capitalism and the tasks of the 4th International” here.