

# RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

## Save Humanity, Save the Earth

Two interrelated global crises confront us in this intense epoch. Exponentially accelerated technological development has pushed the inherent contradiction of capitalism to its limit and created an untenable polarization of wealth and power, manifesting itself in broad declines in the standard of living of previously secure sectors and the absolute impoverishment of over one-fifth of the earth's population. At the same time, global warming, the destruction of natural resources, and the fouling of land, water and air call into question the very future of the planet.

Saving humanity and saving the earth are one and the same struggle. It is increasingly clear to many that capitalism, with its overarching drive to accumulate and expand, and treating nature as a commodity in the same way it treats humanity and human needs, is fundamentally unable to save the environment. It is no wonder that concepts such as ecosocialism and solar communism are being debated in the environmental movement.

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION

Leading climate change scientists estimate that unchecked global warming, caused by oil and fossil fuel consumption, will result in global sea level rise and agricultural collapse. Some estimate that we may have only a decade left to put in place a prevention program to avoid catastrophic climate change. Biologist David Schwartzman, in his 2009 article "Ecosocialism or Ecocatastrophe?" wrote "The threat of ecocatastrophe is no longer a potential contingent outcome in some indefinite future...it is now highly probable in the near future unless radical changes in both political and physical economies are made in time". He cites as the major obstacle to these radical changes the nuclear-military-industrial-fossil-fuel complex, especially its U.S. component.

Environmental issues take many forms. The 2010 film *Gasland* documents with dramatic testimony the health and environmental impacts of the natural gas extraction practice of fracking on rural areas all across the United States. The proposed Keystone Pipeline System and its Cushing Extension, running from the Athabasca Oil Sands in Canada to the Gulf Coast, carry potential dangers of oil spills, exacerbation of greenhouse gases, and cultural impacts. The impact of war consists not only in the human toll, the immediate destruction of ecosystems and the chemical and toxic waste left behind for decades, but also the use of fossil fuels for the production of huge amounts of armaments, drones, humvees, and other military hardware.

Experts have estimated that 30% of asthma exacerbations among children were related to the environment, and the World Health Organization has estimated that 44%

of the asthma burden worldwide is due to the environment. The United Farm Workers Union has launched a petition against the insecticide chlorpyrifos, a neurotoxin that presents particular dangers to the developing brains and bodies of children and is linked to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Monsanto's seed monopoly controls the genetics of nearly 90% of five major world crops including corn, soybeans, cotton, canola and sugar beets.

Public acceptance of the science of global warming has fluctuated widely over the past five years, from 71% in 2007 to 44% in 2011. An onslaught of propaganda has utilized pseudoscience to sow doubt about the role of human activity in causing climate change, and has promoted the concept that environmental laws and regulations are "job killers" in a time of suffering from high unemployment. In the meantime corporations are aggressively pushing their anti-environment agenda through ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, which helps corporations write state and federal legislation supporting their interests.

Naomi Klein, in her November 2011 article in *The Nation*, "Capitalism vs. Climate", points out that these forces understand very well that a meaningful response to global warming is antithetical to free-market capitalism, but that Democrats also have gone mute on the subject in order not to alienate independents, and that "the liberal climate movement runs away from the deep political and economic implications of climate science".

### TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION IN SERVICE OF EARTH AND HUMANITY

The revolution in technology and the exponential increase in productive capacity force us to rethink many assumptions about what value is. Conventional economists deal only with exchange value, that is, how goods are bought and sold. Exchange value is tied to scarcity. If there is not enough of something, exchange value is used to determine who gets it and how it is traded. But if the things we need are abundant and freely available, exchange value becomes irrelevant. In an era in which it is possible to produce sufficient necessities for all, we should not be basing our economy on exchange value but on use value, that is, on what benefits humanity materially, culturally and spiritually.

Increased productivity does not have to mean increased consumerism and waste. Consumerism is a product of capitalism and exchange value, which uses clever manipulation to persuade people to buy things, not because they are needed, but because the profitable products are aggressively advertised and people are made to feel left out if they don't have them. Increased unnecessary capitalist production using fossil fuels has

led to vast environmental problems, in terms of the energy it takes to make them, the pollution from the byproducts of production and the waste of discarded goods.

Because Karl Marx was living and writing in the early stages of capitalism, he focused his analysis on what creates exchange value (labor) and where profit comes from (surplus labor-power). This does not mean that he did not recognize use value. He built his critique of political economy in large part around the contradiction between use value and exchange value. In fact, he frequently referred to sustainability as a material requirement for any future society – the need to protect the earth for successive generations.

It is not possible, nor is it desirable, to turn back the clock and repudiate technological advancement. Production, motivated by use value and not exchange value, and determined collectively and democratically, could serve the actual needs of humanity and the earth we live on. Besides providing for the basic necessities of life for everyone, such as healthy food, decent housing, and quality health care, enlightened production can develop the means for clean air and water, efficient mass transit, renewable energy resources and the repair of damaged ecosystems. Since with higher productivity people have to work less to produce these necessities, more time can be available for the labor-intensive work necessary to foster healthy families and communities. People would have time for personal development through learning, arts, and recreation, including appreciation of the natural world. All of this is only possible in a cooperative society, where the benefits of technology are distributed equally.

The question of the earth's population also has to be considered in the context of the capitalist economic system imposing extreme inequalities. Schwartzman writes, "Overpopulation" is a reality, but only in the context of the carrying capacity of the

present political economy in this world of extreme inequalities. It is not so in relation to the carrying capacity of the biosphere... 'Overpopulation' is not the fundamental driver of global inequalities and widespread misery; it is, rather, a symptom of the unsustainability of a world economy in which capital reproduction takes priority over the needs of humanity and nature."

Solarization of the economy, including harnessing wind power, is essential for the continued survival of humanity and the earth. Solar power is abundant: one hour of solar energy flow to the earth supplies the same amount of energy as that consumed globally by society in one year. Critical to this question is the concept of EROEI (energy return on energy invested) – that is, the amount of infrastructure and investment of energy that has to be made to realize solar power. The newest technologies being developed, including plastic thin-film photovoltaics, are making these renewable energy sources a more efficient and viable alternative to fossil fuels.

### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

We have to reject the idea that the world's ecological damage can be repaired without the disruption of the market economy and the capitalist system of accumulation that dominates the world. Market-based solutions such as the "Cap and Trade" system of trading pollution credits, and "Clean Development Mechanisms", make atmospheric carbon dioxide a commodity under the control of the same interests that created global warming, and allow them to use their power over money to control the carbon market for their own ends. We can't be fooled by "greenwashing", where corporations and organizations, including some of the worst polluters, cynically advertise their "green" credentials to promote their marketing aims.

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# In this issue: Globalization and its discontents

In May of this year tens of thousands of revolutionaries from across the country gathered in Chicago during the convening of the “Group of 8” (G-8) at Camp David, representing the world’s leading economic powers, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), representing the military power of 28 countries. A growing instability and polarization across the globe is the context for the rise of fascism and the drive toward war as the ruling class strives to resolve the crisis in its own interest. This has engendered a huge social response, expressed in the massive protests emphasizing that the material needs of the world’s peoples be met, and at the expense of the military.

The central issues that were taken up and expressed in the G8/NATO protests are reflected in the articles that appear in this issue. “Save Humanity, Save the Earth” says it best: saving humanity and saving the earth are one and the same struggle. Raging fires in the West, triple-digit temperatures on the East Coast, and unheard of flooding in Florida are all telling us something. Global warming and the fouling of our natural resources call into question the future of the planet, but the movement to save the earth cannot be separated from the struggle for jobs, health care, food, shelter and education.

As we go deeply into the fronts of struggle, including the environmental movement, we see the common basis (and solution) upon which they all rest. “Public Housing, Politics and the Need for New Strategies” shows how in an era of robotics and automated production, the ruling class has little interest in meeting the basic needs of the workers, including the need for housing. As the article emphatically states, in this epoch

of laborless production, “*the workers have no rights that the system is bound to respect.*” In the face of such a reality, the only option is to build the political unity necessary to fight for a different and better future.

“Unity of Dispossessed Only Weapon as Fascist Culture Gains Ground” shows how for the ruling class it is necessary to build a fascist culture in order to impede and disrupt the political formation of the new class of workers thrown to the wayside by electronics. As we have already seen with Trayvon Martin, undocumented immigrants are targeted, and their lives devalued as they are blamed for all of the ills of society. A fascist culture reduces the value of life of all workers to practically zero, so the real target is the new class which the ruling class no longer needs but must control.

“Polarization Accelerates as Economic Power shifts” and “Rising Global Ruling Class Transforming World Economy and Society” both remind us that whatever the front of struggle or movement within which we are based, we have to view how things are unfolding on a world-historical stage, and the role we play within that overall perspective. Automated production is polarizing global society and exacerbating a world economic crisis, and a rising global ruling class is moving toward the formation of a world fascist imperialism in which the United States resorts to permanent war to assert and maintain its dominance. Even so, the U.S. is not always able to get what it wants when it wants it. Emerging economic and political forces arise to contend with one another for hegemony.

At the same time, the growing social response to the economic and social inequality fosters the necessity of a fascist solution

for the ruling class. 1226 billionaires and 10 million millionaires head a capitalist class determined to defend private property at all costs.

The tens of thousands, even millions globally, of revolutionaries produced in this moment of devastation and crisis are instinctively fighting for the very survival of humanity, but without any clear understanding of the cause of the problems they face, or any clear vision of the solution. “What is

the League’s Goal, Strategy and Mission?” raises again the question of the necessity of building political unity, first uniting our embattled class around the practical issues that are held in common by all – the struggle for the distribution of the great wealth produced by the new technology according to need – and the necessity of building an organization of leaders, an “officer’s corps” prepared for the emerging revolution.

## Save Humanity, Save the Earth (Continued from Page 1)

ecological crisis should also not lead us to “ecocatastrophism” – the idea that there is no time to build a popular movement for a sustainable cooperative society. This leads to coalitions with the same forces that promote the market-based proposals, while delaying the real comprehensive change that is needed. And while good individual habits such as recycling, reducing one’s carbon footprint and rejecting consumerism are positive indications that people are aware of environmental issues, they alone cannot turn the tide against the uncontrolled onslaught of capitalist accumulation and expansion. Collective action, not individual behavior, is the only effective path to making changes on the scale necessary to save the earth.

Popular collective actions for the environment are abundant and varied. Chico Mendes and the Forest Peoples Alliance fought against deforestation in the Amazon. The residents of Shell Bluff, Georgia, are raising questions about the cancer epidemic that has developed since nuclear reactors were built there in 1987, and why they have to accept sickness and death in order

to get jobs in their communities. The Bolivian people prevailed against the privatization of water by Bechtel. In California’s Central Valley, where air pollution is the worst in the country and asthma rates are very high, communities opposed a Wal-Mart distribution facility to stop the impact of the trucks on air quality. The French Farmers Confederation fights against GMOs (genetically modified organisms). Many cooperative Occupy encampments have included sustainable practices and community gardens to demonstrate their respect for the environment.

A broad movement to save the earth must be based in these community grassroots struggles. It can’t be separated from the movements for economic justice – for decent jobs, health care, wholesome food, housing, and education. It must be part of the fight for a robust public sector, since acknowledging and acting on our common interests and needs is essential to preventing and reversing ecological damage. All of these struggles are on the path to a cooperative society where the needs of humanity and the earth are returned to harmony with each other.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

**Rally:** to bring back together and put in a state of order, as retreating troops [to return to attack]

**Comrade:** a person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause

*Rally, Comrades!* is the political paper of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America. In this period of growing motion and developing polarization, *Rally, Comrades!* provides a strategic outlook for the revolutionaries by indicating and illuminating the line of march of the revolutionary process. It presents a pole of scientific clarity, examines and analyzes the real problems of the revolutionary movement, and draws political conclusions for the tasks of revolutionaries at each stage of development in order to prepare for future stages. It is a vehicle to reach out and communicate with revolutionaries both within the League and outside of the League to engage them in debate and discussion and to provide a forum for these discussions. Articles represent the position and policies of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America.

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## League of Revolutionaries for a New America WHAT WE STAND FOR

Tens of thousands of socially conscious people declare themselves revolutionaries in opposition to the degenerating social and economic conditions. The League’s mission is to unite these scattered revolutionaries on the basis of the demands of the new class, to educate and win them over to the cooperative, communist resolution of the problem.

The demands of this new impoverished class for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a co-operative society. For the first time an objective communist economic class is forming to become the foundation for a communist political movement. A new fascist state form, the naked rule of corporate power, is arising to oppose this motion.

Society must take over these corporations or these corporations will take over society. The new class must have political power to achieve these goals. In the effort

to achieve this political power the League supports all political organizations and sections of society that fight against the growing poverty, social and ecological destruction, fascism and war.

Nothing can be accomplished until the American people hold a vision of where they want to go and what they want to be. Creating and imbuing them with such vision is the overriding task of revolutionaries and the foundation of our organization.

Destruction of the ecology, the threat of nuclear war and the looming pandemics are calling the very existence of the human race into question. The battle is class struggle. The war is for the existence of humanity.

We in the League face the future with confidence. We call upon all revolutionaries to abandon sectarian differences, to unite around the practical demands of the new class and to secure that imperiled future.

# Polarization accelerates as economic power shifts

The world has entered the beginning destructive stage of a vast social revolution brought on by the transfer of social production from electro-mechanical production to electronics. The outstanding feature of this stage is irresolvable overproduction. Automated production within the wage labor value system polarizes society with unheard of wealth at one pole and unheard of poverty at the other. This antagonism is irresolvable within the capitalist system and the struggle inevitably moves from the economic level to the political revolutionary level. For revolutionaries, this reality must guide any discussion on our assessment and our tasks.

A global economic crisis is shattering and transforming all existing social and political institutions and relationships. The fundamental antagonism that is destroying the very basis of modern society lies at the heart of the economic and political crisis that is engulfing the globe.

The U.S. is struggling to dominate the world. It has militarized its economy and turned to war in its attempt to maintain its control. At the same time, its dominance is being challenged. A profound shift in economic power is taking place – from the U.S. to Asia. As we assess the current situation in the U.S., we recognize that a process of political restructuring is taking place, including how that situation is playing out in the elections as well as in the motion toward a third party, as the ruling class strains to accommodate itself to the new economy. But the struggle to control that process is taking place on a world scale, not just at home.

Though the politicians keep pointing out that national security is first about economics, the struggle to obtain and maintain supremacy inevitably comes down to political and particularly military solutions. The empire is in crisis, and the U.S. State has placed permanent war on the agenda.

The deepening global crisis and the competition for shrinking markets means that no country can back down without courting economic ruin. The U.S. ruling class cannot implement all the changes necessary to carry on this fight without unifying at least a section of the American people around its goals. President Obama is attempting to use the populist message of the 99% to mobilize a section of the American people behind his program.

Objectively the U.S. has no way out. Every path leads to greater polarization, discontent and the further development of the new proletariat. At the same time, fascism grows out of the process to implement whatever solution the U.S. pursues to protect and maintain its position in the world. Inevitably, any solution the U.S. pursues will force it to crack down further at home as it moves to more aggressively impose its will on the world stage.

## THREAT OF WORLD WAR

Globalization – capitalism in the age of electronics – defines the economic motion of our time. The political motion is toward

empire. By globalization, we mean the opening up of the world to expand and advance investment in a period of electronic labor-replacing technology. Globalization can take place under a political system of allies and equal states or it can take place under a system of vassal states, such as with empire. By empire we mean the indirect control of the process by one nation.

wants. This doesn't mean it won't sabotage, assassinate leaders, foment "uprisings," and drive the world to the brink of nuclear war to accomplish its strategic goal. It does mean that irreversible polarization has begun. Today, the U.S. is threatening Russia's and China's national interests. As a result, Russia and China are forced closer together. Polarization means the breaking of the monolithic

years, there have been numerous small wars around the world but national existence of the bigger more powerful countries have not been threatened. Today, however, the world is moving into a situation where the national existence of Russia and China is being threatened.

Clearly the world situation is extremely unstable. Even as the U.S. attempts to unite a world bourgeoisie under a U.S. dominated empire behind a façade of democracy and human rights, every step it takes only heightens the antagonisms.

## TASKS OF REVOLUTIONARIES

The ruling class is masterful at strategic thinking. Our thoroughgoing understanding of the real processes underway must shape our strategic thinking. The strategic tasks of revolutionaries flow from the content of the time – the irreparable antagonism between the productive forces and productive relations. Our starting point as revolutionaries is to describe as accurately as possible the situation faced by our class at every stage of its development and to use that information to constantly examine and reexamine our political conclusions, and the strategy and tactics that flow from those conclusions. The answers to the questions revolutionaries face are not the purview of this or that person, or this or that organization. They are questions of the revolution, and as such involve all who seek to end the destruction around us and build a new world.

Humanity is moving through a world historical process of transition and change. The League of Revolutionaries for a New America looks at the world from this immense and broad perspective. There are tens of thousands of revolutionaries ready to join an organization of revolutionaries. They are ready to become part of a strategic thinking organization that can articulate the next step toward that end point of change.

The future of humanity is at stake. The qualitatively new class—that is arising globally—is the key. It must be educated about communism. Understanding cause and effect in human history helps us to map the line of march forward through all of the destruction and instability to the only solution for humankind – a global cooperative, communist society based on distribution according to need. It is the only solution that will end war and bring peace. The task of revolutionaries is to build the political force that can move history in that direction.

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For the U.S., this means that all strategic competitor countries must be brought under its domination. The contradiction the U.S. faces however, as do all countries of the world, is the problem of the market in a time of labor-less production. On the one hand, the world economy cannot develop without a market. On the other hand, the world market is shrinking due to production with labor-replacing technology and the resulting inability of people to consume. Since profit can only take place through the sale of commodities, the contention is over access to and control of the market that is left. Today, China is out-selling the U.S. Something has to give.

The U.S. is preparing for war against China. Installing friendly regimes in the Middle East, along with the military encirclement of Russia and China, is a strategic step in this direction.

"The entire planet is divided up into geographic Combatant Commands under the control of the Pentagon", writes Michel Chossudovsky. "The Pentagon's military road-map consists of a sequence of war theaters. The five-year campaign plan includes... a total of seven countries, beginning with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan."

In an interview this year, Middle East scholar Ibrahim Aoude described the back and forth of this process, and the adjustments that are made to achieve the overall strategic goal. "Thus far, Iraq and Libya have been destroyed. Egypt and Syria are in progress. Preparations are underway to separate Iran from Syria. Then they can hit the resistance in both Lebanon and Palestine. What delayed the move against Russia and China was the resistance in both Iraq and Afghanistan; the U.S. didn't succeed and was compelled to withdraw from the first and is about to do so from the second."

As powerful as the U.S. military is, it can no longer get everything it wants when it

character of a process. Struggle becomes the dominant relationship.

The U.S. is in the process of encircling China militarily, establishing bases in Australia in addition to Iraq and Afghanistan and Central Asia, docking Navy ships in Singapore, and is building up troops in the southern Philippines to assist in the fight against "terror" there. The so-called "Pivot toward Asia" with its increased focus on air and sea power is directly related to preparing for war with China.

U.S. attempts to destabilize Syria and overthrow the government there has a direct impact on Russian geopolitical interests. Relations between Syria and Russia go back many decades. This cooperation has included military arms supply, the training of Syrian officers, and the construction of military facilities. The Syrian port of Tartus has served as an additional warm water port for Russia for many years and gives it greater access to the Mediterranean and the Suez. Russia has plans to modernize its major naval facility there to insure that Tartus can accommodate all Russian Navy vessels, including aircraft carriers, large warships, and missile cruisers. Russia and China cannot just step back and simply submit to the U.S. They have their own national interests. Wars always become inevitable when one country feels its national existence is at stake. Over the past twenty

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The new *Rally, Comrades!* website provides online access to all issues of *Rally, Comrades!* It is a political resource for our readers and allows us to post new statements, articles and videos more frequently. The website is in English and Spanish. Future plans include videos and different forms of interaction with our readers.

# RISING GLOBAL RULING CLASS TRANSFORMING WORLD ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Today a rising global ruling class is accumulating unprecedented wealth, not so much from buying labor power and extracting surplus value, but mainly through financial transactions that are increasingly removed from actual production. At the same time, this class is still a capitalist class. It functions within a world where the buying and selling of labor power and the production of value still go on. This rising global ruling class is leading the motion to create a society based on a new form of private property and exploitation. As part of this process, the outlines are becoming clear of the formation of a fascist state imperialism that can operate to guarantee the interests of the capitalist while repressing all who challenge its rule.

## THE RULING CLASS

Revolution is an historical process by which a subordinate class overthrows its ruling class, establishes itself as a new ruling class and creates a new political system to facilitate its interests. It is important to discuss who is the ruling class in order to put the various groupings within it in their proper relationship to one another. We have to identify groups of people by the way they move in society, and what they are capable of doing to alter and change society, as well as by their relationship to the means of production.

The capitalist class is the ruling class. It is the class that owns and controls the means of production. But to rule the capitalists need a circle of people whose job and expertise is

to rule. They need this ruling circle because the capitalist class is not united politically. This is not to say that there are two wings of the capitalist class as there were during the Roosevelt period. It means that there are different pulls, ideologies and groupings within the capitalist class.

For example, the banking sector wants high interest rates. Owners of industry want low interest rates. Differences emerged around the Bush administration's unilateral, heavily militarized approach. Some billionaires paint Obama as a Nazi and a

workers whom the system no longer needs. All sectors of the capitalist class are fundamentally united around private property and the new forms of rule that are needed today.

Karl Marx succinctly described these ruling circles when he wrote in the German Ideology, "The executive of the modern state is nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" In America, these groupings are the leaders of the major political parties, the politicians, major corporations, the intelligentsia, the police, military, judges, among others.

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The rising global ruling class is leading the motion to create a society based on a new form of private property and a fascist state imperialism that can guarantee their interests while repressing all who challenge its rule.

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socialist. Others — Forbes Magazine calls them "Obama's billionaires" — favor what they consider to be the more "liberal" Democratic Party. Some critique the "excesses" of capitalism, saying wealth must be more equitably distributed. Others say the role of business is only to maximize profits.

Yet not one, regardless of where they make their money, has put forth anything that would in any way disturb the existing property relations. None has or will support the

In his July/August 2010 article "America's Ruling Class — and the Perils of Revolution" published in the conservative magazine *The American Spectator*, Angelo Codevilla brought Marx's summation to life:

"The leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties, of major corporations and opinion leaders, stretching from the *National Review* magazine (and the *Wall Street Journal*) on the right to *The Nation* magazine on the left, agreed that spending some \$700 billion to buy the investors' 'toxic assets' was the only alternative to the U.S. economy's 'systemic collapse.' In this, President George W. Bush and his would-be Republican successor John McCain agreed with the Democratic candidate, Barack Obama. Many if not most people around them also agreed upon the eventual commitment of some 10 trillion nonexistent dollars. In fact, Republican and Democratic office holders and their retinues show a similar presumption to dominate and have fewer differences in tastes, habits, opinions, and sources of income among one another than between both and the rest of the country. They think, look, and act as a class."

## THE NEW SUPER RICH

This year, Forbes Magazine tracked an all-time high of 1,226 [U.S. dollar] billionaires in the world with a combined wealth of \$4.6 trillion. (Seven years ago there were 447, which shows how rapidly the wealth is being transferred.)

There are 10 million millionaires in the world. [It is said that real wealth begins when you have around \$10 million.] 59 countries have billionaires. Brazil has 36, Indonesia has 17, Turkey has 34; China has 95, Germany has 55, the United Kingdom has 37, India has 48; Russia has 96, up from 82. The U.S. has 425. Mexico's Carlos Slim

Helu is the richest man in the world with a net worth of \$69 billion, slightly down from \$72 billion last year. Bill Gates (second richest) has \$61 billion, up from \$56 billion and Warren Buffet (third richest) has \$44 billion. (*Forbes Online Magazine*, April 12, 2012)

Most billionaires come from wealthy families having made their money in industry, then moving on to investments and speculation. Warren Buffet started with family money, buying stock in Berkshire Hathaway's insurance operations in 1964 to finance his investments. He is now known globally for his hedge funds and famous "investment strategies." Others have made their money through the new technology, and then moved on to financial investments and speculation. Bill Gates, who made his money with the computer giant, Microsoft, now makes 70% of his fortune from global investments and speculation. Larry Ellison, sixth on Forbes' 2012 billionaire list, made his fortune through the software giant, Oracle. He now owns 75 companies worth \$40 billion. Over one third of the 57 U.S. billionaires made their fortune through speculative activity, property and the stock market. New wealth has also been made in other ways, such as through privatization in countries like Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union, as well as Latin America, Europe and the U.S.

## A NEW ECONOMY

A new economy is developing around the global rich, and along with it a new level of consumption. A typical U.S. billionaire's home consists of a several hundred acre spread, a massive mansion, numerous guest cottages each the size of a single family home, and estate grounds landscaped with emerald green grass, fountains, bubbling streams, waterfalls and exotic plants and flowers. These estates include their own full-service spas, often multiple swimming pools, and private golf courses with their own clubhouses.

There is no price limit on their luxuries. They wear jeweled watches costing as much \$600,000. They drive Maybachs, the German luxury cars which cost anywhere between \$375,000 and \$465,000. They willingly pay \$400,000 for membership in prestigious golf clubs, and spend hundreds of millions speculating on art. Many own multiple "mega-mansions" throughout the world. They are constantly working to make more money, even while vacationing on their yachts in far corners of the globe. A new sector of highly paid service workers is being created to service the elite. Some billionaires have hundreds of workers servicing their estates. There is even a television channel, Wealth TV, launched in 2004 and distributed around the world, dedicated solely to the lives and interests of the ultra wealthy.

Articles and books document the new character of these global rich. The new millionaires and billionaires "are creating a new social hierarchy built on money and more money

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## You Need *Rally, Comrades!* *Rally, Comrades!* Needs You

*Rally, Comrades!* stands out, offering a sound and clear analysis of the way forward. *Rally, Comrades!* shows how capitalism is coming to an end. *Rally, Comrades!* and the League receive no donations from corporations, foundations or government. We rely completely on volunteers and donations from readers like you to carry out this urgent work.

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# Public Housing, Politics and the Need for New Strategies

At this time, some 5.4 million families living in HUD-subsidized housing are in grave danger. HUD (US Department of Housing and Urban Development) currently assists the residents of public housing, project-based Section 8 housing, tenant-based Section 8 voucher holders, and residents of various programs for the disabled, elderly, and homeless. The 2012 presidential election is unfolding as a battle between one major candidate who says he favors elimination of HUD altogether, and another who is slowly strangling it through step-by-step elimination of funding.

“Things like Housing and Urban Development, which my dad was head of, that might not be around later,” said Mitt Romney at a Florida fundraiser on April 13. In the meantime the Democratic administration has proposed reduced funding for project-based rental assistance, rolling over the \$26 billion shortfall of public housing capital funds, and raising minimum rents for HUD’s most destitute residents. The Budget Control Act of 2011 ensures that these cuts will get steadily worse in the years to come.

We cannot fight this bipartisan assault on housing rights if we do not step back and examine what is causing it, who is driving it, and who and how we can organize to stop it. Public housing and HUD-subsidized housing were born during our last Great Depression, and are apparently being destroyed in this one. What accounts for the difference?

## THE ERA OF AUTOMATED PRODUCTION

The difference is that we are entering an entirely new epoch. Despite its unusually massive scope, the depression of the 1930s was essentially a cyclical crisis of capitalism in the industrial era. The capitalist class had to ensure some minimal housing for its workforce and found ways to profit while doing so. In California, for example, the first public housing was for workers who moved there to work in shipyards and aviation in World War II.

Today that era is over. Now we have entered the era of robotics and automated production. As industry is increasingly powered primarily by computers, the ruling class has little use for workers, so it has no intention of spending money to provide for them. The history of Cabrini Green in Chicago is an important case study. Public housing began with the passage of the Housing Act of 1937. Residents in Cabrini Green will tell you that the projects were originally built for veterans of WWI and soldiers returning home from WWII.

The military promised WWI veterans a bonus in the early 1920s, but the government told them they had to wait 20 years to receive it. By 1931, when the country entered the Great Depression, many veterans’ families became destitute. Calling themselves the “Bonus Expedition,” they marched on Washington DC from all over the country and set up a tent city near the White House. Groups

of soldiers lobbied Congress and demanded their bonus right then and there.

Embarrassed by this, the President began a media campaign calling the veterans a bunch of tramps and communists. He called them reds because they refused to exclude Black soldiers and openly signed up all veterans regardless of color. The protesters won the support of retired General Smedley Butler, who pointed out that no one called them tramps while they were catching bullets for the rich during the war.

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Today, we have to move beyond coalitions and toward real political unity based on our common class interests. We either learn to band together to force the government to take over the corporations or we will step by step lose everything we have.

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Congress voted down the bonus for the starving and homeless vets, and Hoover sent out troops led by General MacArthur. Bulldozers and tanks destroyed their tent city and many of the “Bonus Marchers” and their families were machine-gunned and bayoneted, with some dying. The ensuing public uproar affected the 1932 presidential elections. When Franklin D. Roosevelt won, he brought in public housing as part of the New Deal, and veterans’ families were moved to the top of the waiting lists. The first public housing was built in New York City, and construction began on the Cabrini Homes (row houses) in 1937, finishing a little after WWII started.

## CABRINI GREEN

After the war the Cabrini Extensions (high-rises) were built across the street from the row houses, with the William Green Homes (high-rises) built adjacent to them, and the Green Home Extensions (low-rises) a few blocks away. Together they became known as Cabrini Green and housed some 23,000 people. Such a high concentration of the poorest proletarians on less than 3/16 of a square mile provided capital with a golden opportunity. Cabrini Green sat in the middle of large-scale industry and manufacturing companies like Montgomery Ward, Oscar Meyer, Seeburg Corporation, and Turtle Wax, and was surrounded by industrial parks.

Workers who live in public housing pay only 30% of their income for rent. This benefit for workers is simultaneously a very real subsidy for industrial capitalists who can pay workers in public housing wages so low that these workers would be unable to survive if they had to pay market-rate rents. Workers coming from the South during the “Great Migration” accepted this because it was far better than picking cotton; and in fact many were driven off the land by the mechanical cotton-picker and forced

to migrate to Chicago, where there was a shortage of workers; the saying was, “If you can’t get a job in Chicago, you can’t get a job nowhere.”

In the 1980s, however, as a result of the application of the electronics revolution to the forces of production, industry left the area, downsized, or went out of business altogether. An industrial park area just south of the projects gained the name “Ghost Town” because of the blocks and blocks of empty buildings that once were factories. The

workers had nowhere to go. To keep from becoming homeless, public housing was one of the few choices of last resort, especially for the workers most hard-hit by the layoffs.

## THE NEW DEAL COALITION

The other main HUD housing programs were also born in the industrial era from the 1950s through the 1970s. HUD-subsidized mortgages and long-term rental assistance contracts benefited tenants and developers alike. Developers found they could get a HUD loan to build apartments with very little capital of their own, collect government-subsidized rental payments, and then leverage new loans to develop market-rate properties. Created in 1974, the tenant-based rental assistance program provided support for millions of private landlords by enabling them to rent out apartments even in times of high vacancies.

As the modern State increasingly merges with the large banks and corporations, it is reorganizing HUD to squeeze out higher profits and reduce the subsidies to workers (tenants). The current spike in expirations of rental assistance contracts and HUD-subsidized mortgages is leaving residents vulnerable to market-rate rent and eviction. HUD attempts to mortgage public housing in order to finance maintenance costs poses a grave threat to privatize the entire system.

The housing movement born out of the “Bonus March,” unemployed councils, and other unionization and anti-poverty movements of the 1930s, in coalition with New Deal politicians, created public housing and HUD-subsidized housing sufficient to end “Hooverville” style homelessness from 1940-83. During the neoliberal Reagan era, however, capitalism began to retrench around the new electronic means of production, and the housing programs that once served industry were sharply curtailed. They were no longer adequate to meet people’s needs, and

homelessness like the 1930s returned to the streets of America all over again.

Because the new forces of production have qualitatively transformed the economic base, the old forms of the housing movement cannot possibly be effective today. Resurrecting the 1930s-style coalitions, no matter how militant, will not address the problem. Business benefited handsomely from government housing programs from the 1930s-70s, which were also a lifeline for an important section of the working class. As a result, in those days housing programs could be effectively defended by the scattered resistance of loosely organized coalitions of workers under the auspices of the Democratic Party.

## CLASS UNITY, POLITICAL STRUGGLE

Today we have to go beyond coalitions and toward real class unity and political struggle. As the ruling class jettisons its commitment to HUD tenants, alliances with Democratic Party politicians are losing their clout. Too many special interests have a financial stake in HUD to permit its total elimination right now, but the government is definitely moving to strip tenants of their rights, step up evictions, reduce subsidies, and privatize the housing stock.

The 1930s movement made the deadly error of acquiescing to the New Deal’s insistence on maintaining strict segregation of African Americans in most of the new public housing of the time. The result was public housing deliberately designed to fail because it isolated the poorest workers both racially and economically. Not only the housing itself failed, but the housing movement foundered because it was segregated and never overcame the media lie that HUD housing was an African American issue and therefore of no consequence to the broader working class. Workers of all colors are paying the price now.

The government has worked to further marginalize and fragment the movement by passing anti-immigrant restrictions and the “one strike” policy for evicting families. The result is a weak and divided movement that is unable to adequately defend itself at the very moment the government and corporations are going on the attack.

The only way to save our homes is to organize and educate ourselves along class lines. HUD housing residents alone do not have the power. The old coalitions with unions do not have the power. Organizing along color lines does not have the power. What is needed is political unity based on a common understanding that in the era of robotics, the *workers have no rights that the system is bound to respect*. We either learn to band together to force the government to take over the corporations, or we will step by step lose everything we have. The corporations have no use for us or our children. They are systematically planning our eviction, homelessness, and death. We can either accept that fate or stand up and fight for the better future we all envision and deserve.

# Unity of dispossessed only weapon as fascist culture gains ground

The anti-immigrant drumbeat that has been led by nativist gangs and neo-nazi vigilante-type groups is contributing to the building of a fascist culture that criminalizes a whole people and renders their lives as practically worthless. We are now seeing the codification of that culture in anti-immigrant laws that make the targeting of immigrants *legal*. In turn the legalization of fascist laws accelerates the building of a fascist culture whose real target is all workers, and is designed to impede and disrupt the political formation of the new class of workers.

Particularly in the South as well as in Arizona, Latino workers have a bullseye on their backs. Legislation passed in Alabama and Georgia especially made it practically illegal for an undocumented immigrant to even exist. Under these laws the undocumented are being denied employment, it is illegal for them to attend the schools, to receive health care or any other service provided by government. It is even illegal for anyone to provide housing to an undocumented resident. Roadblocks are routinely set up in immigrant neighborhoods to target, detain and deport undocumented workers en masse. Deportations are taking place on such a scale that there are now more immigrants being deported than are coming across the border. And almost every week we hear of deaths of immigrants attempting to cross a militarized border.

On June 25, the Supreme Court upheld the onerous Arizona state SB 1070 law called “show me your papers.” This measure requires local police to determine the legal status of anyone they apprehend, no matter how minor the infraction. Though it struck down three other repressive provisions of the Arizona state law, the door is now open

for reintroducing them, or for other states to do copy cat laws.

As with Trayvon Martin, the targeting of Latino immigrants and the devaluation of their lives arises out of an American history which includes the genocide of Native Americans, the enslavement of African Americans and an imperialism that colonized peoples of color throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. A racial ideology is being employed that advantages only the ruling class. In this time of crisis all workers are seeing their standard of living under attack, and it is in this environment of extreme instability that the fear is instilled against all immigrants, who are blamed for everything that is wrong in society. This blaming of the immigrant for all of capitalism’s ills has nothing to do with ethnicity, or race, and everything to do with the capitalist class achieving its own economic and political goals.

So we see that the real battle is directed not against the fascist gangs or in “fighting the right,” but in mobilizing the workers as a whole to unite in the fight for the program of all the dispossessed – for jobs, education, health care and housing for all, including the immigrant worker. The working class as a whole must come to the defense of the immigrant worker, embracing its struggle as its own. But we have to also see that the aim of the fascist movement is to destroy any vestige of democracy, and to put in place the direct, brutal dictatorship of the corporate state. Fascism always comes in the guise of legality. The solution for our class is clear: either the corporations will take over the state and put in place its own fascist agenda, or the people, that is, the workers will fight to gain the political power to reorganize society in their own interest.

## *Rising global ruling class... (Continued from Page 4)*

rather than breeding and lineage”, Chrystia Freeland wrote in the January/February 2011 *Atlantic Monthly* article “The New Global Elite”. They “are forming a global community, and their ties to one another are increasingly closer than their ties to hoi polloi back home.”

Robert Frank comes to the same conclusions in his book *Richistan*. They are becoming “less and less attached to their own countries and more like global citizens of Richistan”, he writes. They “invest around the world, think, live and buy as Richistanis, not as Americans, Indians or Russians.” It matters little to them whether one job is lost in the U.S. when four are created in another country. “I can get [workers] anywhere in the world”, Thomas Wilson, the CEO of the insurance giant AllState told an audience of business leaders in 2010. “It is a problem for America, but it is not necessarily a problem for American businesses. American businesses will adapt.”

The capitalists have the power to reshape the world, and they are using their wealth to do so. Speculators, for example, exert great influence on global economies and politics in the world. Speculators influence oil and gas markets, industrial growth or death, the

global stock market, national and local political campaigns, and more. Social venture capital invests in businesses deemed socially and environmentally responsible. Bill Gates, once seen as a modern robber baron, is now the most prominent and active private philanthropist in the world. His foundation, and those of others like him, control billions of dollars. These private funds are used politically throughout the world, attempting to bind the poor to capitalism while creating the basis for greater profits.

## CONCLUSION

The poverty and wealth gap has never been as apparent as it is now, given the potential of abundance made possible by electronics. Worldwide, the richest .5% own over a third of the world’s wealth. On the home front, the U.S. ranks 41st of 135 countries highest in inequality, with greater inequality than in over half of developing countries, including China. Data from tax returns shows that the top 1% of households in the U.S. received 9% of all pre-tax income in 1976. In 2008, the top 1% share had more than doubled to 21%.

# What is the Goal, the Strategy and Mission of the LRNA?

Revolutionary organizations are created to solve the principal problem of a specific quantitative stage of history. Today that problem is that the masses are going into battle against the most powerful ruling class ever in history without any consciousness of the cause of the problem they face or the solution. In turn, the rulers are adjusting the form of the state. They are moving to crush any threat to private property.

## THE LEAGUE’S GOAL

The content of the times—the cause of the problem—is the fundamental change in the economy. New electronic means of production are in antagonism with capitalist private property relations. Capitalism as a system of buying and selling of labor power is coming to an end.

The goal of the ruling class is to maintain private property relations as society changes. The goal of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America is for the workers to achieve political power to free up the socially necessary means of production now owned by the giant corporations and place them in the hands of society.

## THE LEAGUE’S STRATEGY

Strategy arises from an estimate of the situation and from an understanding of the overall revolutionary process.

The League’s estimate is that the introduction of robotic production is permanently eliminating human labor and creating an objectively communist class of impoverished workers who if educated about their historical mission can lead society to a new world.

The revolutionary process is as follows: An economic revolution brings about a social revolution. The first stage of the social revolution is destruction of the existing social order. We see this in the shuttered factories, the disappearance of work categories, permanent unemployment, the declining standard of living and the polarization of wealth and poverty. This social destruction

(See [www.incomeinequality.org](http://www.incomeinequality.org))

Within this process speculative capital exacerbates the economic instability and thus social and political instability. It accelerates the increasing polarity between wealth and poverty and intensifies the severity of the inevitable global collapse.

The growing economic and social inequality is spelling danger for the ruling class, making the need for fascism a necessity for them. The ruling class cannot continue to allow the growing number of propertyless to make decisions that affect their wealth and privileges. Fascism is already arising economically through the merger of the state and the corporations. The political aspects of fascism are also in place with such laws as “Stand Your Ground” and the National Defense Authorization Act. Along with this is developing a fascist social culture that disregards the cheapening

will inevitably bring about a political revolution. As power passes into the hands of the people they will reconstruct society in their interests, completing the social revolution on a communist basis.

The struggle for communism has in the past been ideological. Today, things have changed. Just as the steam engine created the industrial working class that replaced the existing manufacturing class, electronic production is creating a new class of worker. This new class represents a *practical* movement for communism. It cannot survive without eliminating private property and distributing the social product according to need.

The problem is that this objectively communist class is ideologically anti-communist. Every practical step the new class takes is therefore set back by their ideological backwardness. We cannot get to communism with an anti-communist class. This describes the task of revolutionaries today.

## THE LEAGUE’S MISSION

The League is going about reaching the tens of thousands of revolutionaries from various walks of life that every battle is causing to emerge. These revolutionaries are trying to educate and arouse this mass. They are scattered throughout the country fighting the devastation but without any clear vision of the solution. The League’s aim is to show them that it is only with a unified core of leaders that the revolutionaries will be strong enough to influence the growing movement.

Therefore, the League is building a propaganda apparatus aimed at reaching these revolutionaries with the purpose of uniting them around the practical issues and on that basis winning them to the communist solution. These revolutionaries, once supplied with the education and perspective that the League can provide, will become part of the officer corps for the emerging revolution. They will play a role in guaranteeing that the movement stays on course and that it is prepared for future stages. Achieving the League’s mission will represent the completion of an essential quantitative stage of the revolution.

of life and suffering in society, and even accepts murder for anything from the color of a person’s skin to a passing comment.

At the same time, and despite the barrage of lies from the ruling class to disorient them, there is a growing social response to the deepening economic polarization. The middle sector that previously tied workers to the capitalists is being liquidated. Formerly “middle class” children are not only going to bed hungry, they are becoming homeless in rising numbers. Faced with such conditions people are becoming increasingly aware that the country is being run in the interests of the corporations and not the American people as a whole. They are yearning for answers, for solutions. The opportunity to teach about the real source of the problems we face and to present a solution to the problems the American people face has never been greater.