

RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

Corporate Control Devastates Public Education

Public schools are being shut down all over America. Washington D.C. plans to shutter 15 more schools on top of the 28 already closed. Chicago claims the city has a \$1 billion deficit, so it intends to close 49 schools while 17 more may share a single building. Parents and communities rising to defend their schools were critical to the Chicago teachers strike last year.

Detroit has been seized by an “emergency financial manager” appointed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder. Consequently Detroiters have lost their civil rights to make decisions about their city. Detroit has closed dozens of schools in the last few years and will close 28 more in the next two. The school district website markets the empty buildings as having “the finest collection of school architecture” in America to potential condo developers.

Corporate school reformers supposedly offer “school choice.” So why don’t they listen to parents who want to save their neighborhood schools? Communities, parents, students and, teachers can barely get on the agenda, while politicians, developers, bankers, and billionaires blatantly control the process. The modern expression of inequality in America is that the economic and political power of corporations determine what is on the table.

School closures reveal that public education is being reconfigured to benefit corporate markets and investments, while permitting a high quality education to a declining few. It is striking how elected local governments play an active role in organizing this giveaway.

FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO CORPORATE TAKEOVER

In 1954 the Supreme Court found that segregated schools were inherently unequal and un-constitutional. Decades of massive underfunding devastated central city schools and created a market for billion dollar charter school corporations. These corporations claim that their charter schools “are the civil rights issue of our time,” even though research clearly shows that they increase segregated education.

George Bush’s 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) established school testing as a way to measure school success. NCLB created a huge \$1.7 billion corporate market in standardized testing. It also provided the means to determine who would be the unprivileged. Thus began the objective nationalization of public education to benefit corporations.

President Obama took the next step with his 2009 Race-To-The-Top program (RTTT), run by ex-CEO of Chicago schools Arne Duncan. This was an historic turning point in funding public education. Even during the Bush Administration, federal money was supposed to be distributed to all school districts equally. But RTTT only funds districts that apply for grants and meet standards set by corporations. This step marks the end of the principle of equal funding of public schools and the beginning of their massive reorganization.

The new Common Core standards being implemented by the Obama Administration emphasize standardized course materials in every state with little room for enriching the curriculum. Common Core is written by corporations, funded by Bill Gates, and regimented with constant standardized testing. It narrows the curriculum by emphasizing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) over social science, the arts, history, and ethnic studies. Testing will be only online, which increases the digital divide between wealth and poverty. Illinois will not do testing in social studies; thus, social studies is being dumped by many school districts!

Supposedly austerity requires cutbacks because there is no money, but there is plenty of money for corporate educational reforms. The federal government is in effect nationalizing education in the interests of the capitalist class and away from local control of the schools.

Wall Street’s Moody’s Investor Service is “bullish” on school closings, claiming that reducing expenditures means school districts can improve their credit ratings and borrow more money at cheaper rates.

Philadelphia shows how this works. The city is closing 23 schools, almost 10% of the district’s 250 schools, to erase a huge budget deficit of some \$218 million. Philly schools, like most school districts, are at the mercy of Wall Street’s \$3.7 trillion municipal market, where hedge funds and banks speculate, for profit, on the chances of cities and schools paying off their debt.

Why did the Philly school district borrow so much money in the first place? Cities and corporations conspire to use corporate charter schools to destabilize and erode public schools. Corporate charter schools now enroll nearly 30% of Philadelphia’s 200,000 students, and have emptied about one-quarter of the seats in the public schools. This is a massive drain of resources from the public schools.

Philly’s obligation for charters increased by about \$120.9 million in 2012. Most of this money goes to big charter corporate chains that make a profit off of charter schools, even as public schools must be closed. Now the state refuses to cover this debt. This leads to more and more of public education being pushed into the hands of capitalists and their operatives.

Privatization in this form is the national pattern under austerity. Most states ran huge deficits, due to revenue cuts and borrowing billions of dollars from Wall Street to finance bonds. Chicago alone spends \$100 million a year on debt servicing. So now cities close schools in order to continue to pay Wall Street. School closings are the face of austerity. This is failure by design: under-resourcing entire communities, draining them of resources, then allowing them to die.

POLICE AND CRISIS

For vast areas of the country’s big cities, the school is the last anchor that sustains the

community. Closing schools pushes communities closer to the brink. When schools go, all that’s left in communities, deserted by jobs, is the police.

As part of the “Drug War”, the school-to-prison pipeline was organized to target and victimize young people. The police have been militarized, with many police powers actually privatized under the shadow of Homeland Security. Now the only solutions on the table to deal with mass school shootings are the police.

Government at all levels spend some \$30-\$40 billion a year on Homeland Security. To deal with mass shootings, schools are supposed to buy high-security fences, body scanners and armed guards. But somehow there is no money to pay for school counselors, psychologists and support services to help kids thrive and learn.

It is not greed, however, that is driving this process. Capitalism itself is in crisis, caused by laborless production, production with computers and robots that replace people. Real wages grew only 4% in the 36 years from 1971 to 2007. In the same time, productivity — how much each worker produces — doubled to 200%. Worker productivity increased 25 times more than their pay. This disparity is the result of improving technology and eliminating workers. The benefits go to the capitalist class, not the working class.

As always under capitalism, public education is configured to support the labor market. The microelectronics revolution has replaced much skilled labor by automation and robots, and is particularly destroying the unskilled and semiskilled jobs that marked the industrial era. Electronics also automates agricultural production, driving families into cities and across borders to survive. Their children go to school in every city in this country. Immigrant rights are also regulated, by law, to serve the labor market.

Computers are transforming work into temporary jobs and precarious labor that works little, but is always on call. Since education under capitalism reproduces labor power, schooling loses value when labor power loses value. When labor becomes redundant, schools become redundant and communities become redundant too.

In Chicago, most proposed school closings are in the African American communities on

the South Side, which are devastated by the lack of jobs. The destruction of public housing in Chicago has displaced 500,000 people, more than Hurricane Katrina did in New Orleans. Just as families were snared into subprime loans, then evicted from their homes, now students are evicted from their schools.

This planned de-population will be followed by massive for-profit schemes, market-driven investment in gentrification. Developers propose selling under-used school buildings to private venture funds, which will then lease them to charter schools. Capitalism understands that disasters bring big profits if exploited correctly.

What does public education mean for a system that needs an ever-smaller number of highly educated people? What kind of education will it offer those who will only work part-time, and those who will never work at all?

EDUCATION FOR INDOCTRINATION

U.S. capitalism has traditionally guaranteed very few real political rights to workers. It has never guaranteed economic rights. In the 21st century the dream of equal rights for every ethnicity has been blocked, becoming replaced by individual consumer rights in the market. This does not necessarily mean the end to public schools, only their severe deformation. Capitalism needs an educational system to indoctrinate and control the increasing sector of the population who will never work regularly.

The economy today demands that less people are educated more, receiving top-scale education even as more people are educated less. This reflects the polarization of the job market into a small number of high-tech jobs and a large number of no-tech jobs. Educating more people less means public education that uses testing to batter students into being docile greeters for Walmart for starvation wages. It means our children will see an America, ridden by inequality, where the corporate regime runs rampant.

Every parent knows that all the resources children need to unleash their individual potential are abundant, inexpensive, and available everywhere. In a desperately unequal

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Inside: Our Children and the Future of Humanity

“If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace.” – Thomas Paine, 1776

Every society has always recognized that its well-being is ultimately tied to the well-being of its children. Yet, in the world today children are the least considered, often the most exploited and the most ill-treated of all the world's peoples.

Millions of people live on less than \$2 a day. In April of this year, UNICEF issued its Report Card 11 on the well-being of children in 29 “rich nations”. The U.S., responsible for over 30% of the world's GDP, ranked 26th, only ahead of Lithuania, Latvia and Romania. 22% of all American children live in poor families. More realistic estimations of what it takes a family of four to live in today's economy put the percentage of American children in poverty at 45%.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that an average of 21% of U.S. households are what is now termed “food insecure”. This includes those who do not have access to nutritional meals, who cannot afford balanced meals and/or skip dinner so the children can eat. In 2011, Feeding America, a national network of food banks, found that 650,000 children in Los Angeles County alone were considered “food insecure”. The expected massive cuts to the food stamp program will only exacerbate this situation.

Without proper nutrition, children cannot learn or develop. Without decent jobs or a functioning economy, parents cannot buy the food their families need or provide them with housing, medical care or the environment to prepare them for their future as contributing adults.

We can see that at the heart of every struggle today lies the fate of our future generations and our vision of what kind of society can provide them with the wherewithal to live

stable, cultured and meaningful lives.

The article “Corporate Control Devastates Public Education” shows mass public education is no longer in the interests of the capitalist class. With automation the capitalist class needs only a narrow strata of highly educated workers, leaving the mass of workers to be forced out of work altogether or at best into contingent, part-time jobs or underemployment. Schools are being closed, programs cut and the next generation is being condemned to a life of poverty and no opportunity for learning. We will not be able to secure quality public schools in our communities without nationalizing them in the interests of our class, not in the interests of corporate privatization.

How could a government that lays claim to such a high moral heritage as ours – the “shining city on the hill,” the last refuge of the huddled masses – allow the mass impoverishment and forced ill-education of our future generations? Simple. The protection of corporate profit. And what makes this possible? A formula of rule that has existed in this country since slavery, and consolidated in the era of Jim Crow.

The article “Political Power in American and the Role of the South” shows how this formula arose and how it is operating today. Exploiting historical racial divisions in our country, both political parties rely on the Southern program in their own ways – slashing social programs, privatizing public services, eliminating regulation of the economy and the environment, cutting taxes for the rich and the corporations and increasing military spending in the drive for war and empire.

“The Rise of Fascism and Social Revolution in America” shows how entrenched this Southern program is, dictating the economic, political and social terrain of the country. Today fascism is consolidating as the merger

of the corporations and the government. Its political face – open State terror – is spreading. Its social expression is seen in the growth of a rising fascist social movement that has its roots in the most racist, brutal and exploitive elements of American history. It only remains for some kind of crisis to erupt for the American people to feel the hard edge of a full-blown fascist offensive.

One way or another, we all know this. But the question is – is there a way out of this mess? First of all, history is with us in a way unknown before. The article in English and Spanish “A New Vision of Work” shows work is changing and that instead of fighting to where things were, we can see that technological transformation offers the possibility of work that is meaningful, fulfilling and of real benefit to society as a whole.

The article “Human Nature and Communism” tackles the question of whether such a society is possible. It shows that we humans are both a product of the interrelation of our essential human qualities – our difference from other animals, our lifelong interest and commitment – our environment – community, cooperation and social organization – and the development of technology and tools at every stage of human history. It shows that these factors have been the driving force of human development through each stage of human history and will provide the organizing principle for human society as we both fight for, and ultimately achieve, communism.

It will only be in that society where we will have the wherewithal to guarantee the deepest wish of every parent, every society – to cherish our children as the future of humanity.

Public Education (continued from page 1)

society, the abundant educational resources are only distributed according to the needs of capitalism. However, when the necessities of life are potentially abundant, capitalism has no choice but to enforce scarcity. This is why we need nationalization of public education in the interests of our class, not in the interests of the ruling class. When the necessities of life are potentially abundant, capitalism has no choice but to enforce scarcity. This step alone demands the elimination of legal rights.

When rights are removed by a hostile class power, people must learn how to use working class political power to confront and counter this. In many cities, parents, teachers and students recognize that saving public schools is essential for saving communities. Public schools are not yet fully privatized. The battle is to secure quality public schools in the communities.

Guaranteeing the political and economic rights of groups in this society guarantees rights for every individual. The public as a legal entity, and all constituent parts, are sovereign over corporations. Full collective rights guarantee the rights of every group over corporations.

California and most states have a legal Bill of Rights for the police. There are no such Bills of Rights for students, parents, communities, and teachers, just to name a few. The words of the old saying are coming true today, “This time around it's all of us or none of us.” There can be no social justice without political power for our class.

Despite the destruction of society by a desperate ruling class, the day belongs to those who see that the future must be secured for all of us. This means a cooperative society that benefits people everywhere.

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.

A New Vision of Work

Work in its broadest sense is mental or physical effort in order to achieve a purpose or result. Within capitalism, however, work has become synonymous with activity on a job, that is, to labor for wages, with surplus value kept by the employer. This link between work and money has skewed how we value human effort. We associate work with its exchange-value instead of its use-value. In *Wage, Labor and Capital*, Marx points out that with capitalism, labor is a commodity sold to the employer so that the wage worker may live. This insulting reality caused labor activists to push for inclusion of the statement “The labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce” in the 1914 Clayton Act.

Southern policy to intimidate Blacks whereupon tens of thousands of African Americans were arbitrarily arrested and leased to coal mines, lumber camps, brickyards, railroads, quarries and farm plantations.

With the current explosion in the incarcerated population, prison labor has returned, promoted by ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Commission). For example, inmates in Florida work for PRIDE (Prison Rehabilitative Industries and Diversified Enterprises), processing beef, chicken and pork; they are paid minimum wage minus 40% for room and board.

Participants in the bracero program of the 1940s, 50s and 60s endured slave-like conditions, with very few rights and poor compensation. In more recent times, The Coalition of

our own gas and assemble our own furniture. We may commute hours in a day. The technological revolution which eliminates jobs often has the side effect of making us do more for our personal lives. We check ourselves in at the airport and out at the library. To save money we research our own flights and buy our own insurance online instead of using an agent, go to health care web sites for self-diagnosis instead of the doctor, and deal with automated or remote technical support to fix computers ourselves instead of utilizing a repair person.

WHEN THERE ARE NO JOBS

People increasingly try to survive in the informal economy. They make tamales or jewelry to sell, recycle bottles and cans, sell at flea markets, or work under the table for less than minimum wage doing yard work, babysitting, washing windshields or walking dogs. Musicians and other artists perform in the park or subway stations for tips, and often hold benefits for each other when they experience catastrophic health issues or other misfortune.

The desperate stand at freeway off-ramps, or panhandle on the sidewalks asking for handouts. Some turn to petty theft, small scale drug dealing, gambling and prostitution. The wages they receive are incarceration and/or early death from addiction, violence, or sexually transmitted diseases. A prison record puts up barriers to getting a job, applying for many benefits, voting, or running for office.

Public benefits and assistance are often used as an example of free money without work. But, the reality in most cases is stressful and exhausting as individuals and families have to fill out often complex applications, gather up documents, and travel to eligibility interviews in order to receive a bare subsistence. They go from the food pantry to the welfare office, from the housing authority to the clothes closet, from the free clinic to the legal aid agency. They apply for free school lunch, Thanksgiving baskets, children's Christmas gifts, and back-to-school backpack giveaways. To fulfill requirements they have to go to job-readiness classes, parenting classes, independent living classes, 12-step programs and/or punitive workfare jobs.

The real compensation without working comes from inherited wealth and stock dividends from the profits of production with the surplus labor of workers. Financialization creates new opportunities to gain wealth through day trading, hedge funds, derivatives and other financial instruments. A recent video that went viral on YouTube, *Wealth Inequality in America*, points out that the top 1% owns fully half of all stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, while the bottom 50% own just 1/2 of 1% of them. That is why the top 1% has 40% of the wealth and the bottom 80% has just 7% of the wealth. No wonder the Occupy movement resonated across the country!

Just the other side of legal are white collar crimes such as insider trading, grand theft, embezzlement, money laundering, racketeering, and drug cartels. Capitalists also benefit

from the privatization of the public domain.

A NEW VISION OF WORK

As the wages system becomes more and more dysfunctional we need a new definition of work, measuring it according to its use-value to society instead of its exchange-value as a commodity. We have to evaluate how any particular kind of work benefits humanity by providing the essentials for us to survive and thrive, such as healthy food, decent shelter, medical care, and clothing, or meeting emotional and psychological needs. Does it contribute to the raising of children, their intellectual and cultural development and their need for recreation and exercise, and offer adults the same? Does it help repair and maintain a healthy environment, promoting clean land, air and water as well as the reversal of global warming? Does it promote the public good?

It's not true that without punitive measures or financial incentives people won't work. That is a myth propagated by capitalism, to justify the wage-labor system, and of course many have been infused with that mindset given their options within that system. Recent studies publicized in the *Scientific American* and *New York Times* have indicated both that we are born with an urge to help, and that our intuitive instinct is to cooperate with others. The world is full of those trying to make things better without compensation. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that 64.3 million people a year in the U.S. volunteer for an organization such as a church, school, youth, or community service organization. This does not include the efforts of individuals. People are looking for opportunities to contribute to society in a meaningful way.

Neighbors babysit their neighbor's children, church circles visit the sick, and friends have a carwash to pay for funeral expenses, while volunteers coach sports leagues, build houses for Habitat for Humanity, and hold concerts to raise money for causes. People constantly organize themselves to work together for each other in many ways. They have community gardens, potlucks, sports leagues, book clubs, and open mics. John Curl, in his book, *For All the People: Uncovering the Hidden History of Cooperation, Cooperative Movements and Communalism in America* shows that U.S. history is full of examples of consumer and worker cooperatives and mutual benefit societies; even today, 48,000 cooperatives exist in the United States.

With technology able to take over arduous and repetitive tasks, humans could have the freedom to devote themselves to do what humans do best, such as caretaking and teaching, without fear of not meeting their basic necessities. But, that will depend on the elimination of the wages system as we know it, and the reorganization of society along cooperative lines. One of the most meaningful contributions we can make to society today is to advance that cause.

We have to evaluate how any particular kind of work benefits humanity by providing the essentials for us to survive and thrive.

About a century later, it is clear to everyone that the world of work for wages is changing dramatically. As more physical and intellectual production is robotized, jobs, especially stable jobs, are becoming scarcer. The book by Guy Standing, *The Precariat, the New Dangerous Class*, documents in great detail the growing global sector of permanently unemployed and of temporary, part-time, un-benefited low-wage labor.

With this breakdown of the traditional contract between labor and capital, we have to take a new look at what kind of work is valuable in society. Michelle Alexander points out in *The New Jim Crow*, that with these new changes in the labor market more and more people, especially young people of color, are being marginalized. She offers the insight that in some ways it is better to be exploited than marginalized, because at least when you are exploited you are needed. Capitalism classifies people as unnecessary when there is no job for them that will lead to profit for capitalists. However, there is plenty of work that needs to be done, that we can do, for each other.

LABORING WITHOUT COMPENSATION

In reality, United States history is full of examples of those who labor under capitalism without compensation. Chattel slavery of Africans in the South, indentured servitude of Europeans in the North, and the labor of Native Americans in the Spanish missions of the Southwest laid the basis for that in the nation's beginning.

Furthering that tradition, the convict lease policy started in the late 19th century and only ended in 1927. In his book, *Slavery by Another Name* Douglas Blackmon show how it was

Imokalee Workers has a mobile Modern Day Slavery Museum which documents the conditions of immigrants and homeless citizens recruited to work in fields and orchards of Florida. The Polaris Project has shown how hundreds of thousands in the United States are victims of the commercial sex trade.

Most domestic labor, primarily by women, is not within the wages system — child-rearing, housekeeping, caregiving, etc. Canada estimated in 1994 that the value of housework, if it were paid, would be \$318 billion. AARP estimated the value of unpaid caretakers at \$450 billion in 2009. Much of the important work in society is already done on an unpaid basis. When the budgets for human services are cut, or falling incomes do not allow for bringing in assistance, family members, friends and neighbors become caretakers for the disabled and elderly. When cash-strapped schools fail, parents homeschool their children.

There are also new forms of labor without pay. Job hunting itself is very time consuming. Job hunters have to spend hours daily looking for work either in person or on the internet, create multiple resumés and cover letters, fill out online applications and psychological assessments, and travel to interviews, only to do it all over again when the job is part-time, temporary, or poorly paid. To become more employable, people have to do unpaid internships and/or show volunteer work to show experience or fill in gaps on their resumé. Desperate for an edge in the job market, they respond to come-ons from vocational schools and for-profit colleges, spend years in classes earning degrees and certificates, usually becoming debt slaves in the process, only to find there are not enough jobs in the field for which they are trained. In the so-called service economy we pump

Human Nature and Communism

Students of history learn that what is possible is not inevitable. Yet some things are indeed inevitable: capitalism is failing. It is failing to allow society to actualize its developmental potential; failing to provide the individual with adequate means of growth or even survival; failing to recognize or address the ecological and environmental constraints that threaten humanity itself.

What then, when capitalism runs its ragged course and finds its final end? What is the practical future of human society? What is inevitable? What is possible? Proponents of communism are confronted with arguments that any attempt to organize human society cooperatively, where people share equitably in the work and wealth, will ultimately fail. These arguments rely on notions that “human nature” is essentially violent, competitive, selfish, and greedy and that humans are inherently unequal by race, gender, and intelligence.

Thus, we are taught, humans will fall back automatically into a class society where the State must enforce and protect the ownership of (private) property, a construct also understood to be immutable and natural. These ideas are the product of the nature of class society in general, and capitalism in particular, and are necessarily promoted by the ruling class to maintain control and power, to divide and delude, and to contain any expressions of actual democracy.

Knowing what constitutes essential human nature will help revolutionaries combat the falsehoods, myths and lies, and propel humanity forward to communism, which is already objectively possible under the existing conditions of potential abundance created by electronic means of production.

What we are is both a product of essential human qualities that distinguish us from other animals and the product of the society we live in. Insofar as people are fooled by myths concerning human nature, they are less likely to take part in revolutionary action; to be empowered, people need to realize the true cultural potential of humanity to create a new society of peace and justice.

Historical progress is the dialectical interrelationship of essential qualities of human and social organization within each stage of improved technological knowledge and capability. This understanding empowers revolutionaries to imagine communism in a real and practical manner without being “utopian.”

SOCIETY ORGANIZED AROUND PRODUCTION

Underlying all social motion is the natural desire to survive and propagate as individuals and as a species. Like all animals, humans live, work and develop in accord with the resources and limitations of the environment in which they live. But vastly different from any other animal, humans excel in the ability to recreate their environment. 50,000 years ago, in what Jared Diamond in *Guns, Germs and Steel* calls the Great Leap Forward, humans

in East Africa developed standardized stone tools and jewelry.

By 40,000 years ago humans were producing needles, awls, engraving tools, hand-held scrapers, and multi-piece weapons, such as spear-throwers, bows and arrows, and rope for nets, lines and snares. They were capable of killing larger animals, fish and birds, and of creating magnificent cave paintings, statues and musical instruments.

These humble, awe-inspiring beginnings have brought humanity to today’s complex society with instant global communication, 3-D printing, robots making robots, and the potential for all human material needs to be satisfied with minimal labor.

Between 100,000 and 50,000 years ago a momentous unknown change took place that separated humans from other animals, giving humans the ability to communicate through language. This superior ability to communicate through language is integrally connected to the unique quality of human intelligence, which propels human history through its stages of development.

UNIQUENESS OF HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

Human ability to identify problems, to find solutions, and to implement them far outstrips all other life forms. Frederick Engels in *The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man*, wrote, “We, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.”

What further distinguishes humans from other animals is not just our intelligence but our lifelong interest and commitment to learning. We like to learn, both as individuals and as a society. A few animals show curiosity to know things that are not connected to basic survival skills, but humans are the only animals whose common well-being and social organization is integrally connected to continual learning and development of individual intellectual capability.

But superior intelligence is not enough to explain the acceleration of human development. Community, cooperation and social organization have been essential to human survival and development. Many have said that harsh environment and random genetic mutations led to humans’ exceptional development.

Certainly the environment in which change occurs is critical, and genetic variations are essential. The growth of individual intelligence is advanced, however, not just by individual achievement, but by the quality of social organization and the pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon culture — the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. Individual breakthroughs in development of tools and technology contribute to the intellectual development of the community through social organization and culture.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION ESSENTIAL FOR GROWTH OF INTELLIGENCE

Social organization and culture are the necessary conditions for the development of individual intelligence. Individual intelligence and social organization are in dialectical relationship with each other. The environment that provides the raw material and means of production for survival and growth shapes what is possible at any given stage of development.

Carel Van Schaik in his 2006 article in *Scientific American*, “Why are Some Animals So Smart?” wrote, “Our analyses of orangutans suggest that not only does culture — social learning of special skills — promote intelligence, it favors the evolution of greater and greater intelligence in a population over time. Thus, when a wild orangutan or an African great ape for that matter, pulls off a cognitively complex behavior, it has acquired the ability through a mix of observational learning and individual practice, much as a human child has garnered his or her skills.”

This interrelationship between individual intelligence and social organization was the driving force of human development in the leap from ape to human. It is the constant quality that drives human development through each mode of production and will provide the organizing principle for human society after advanced communism.

RULING CLASS DOMINATION OVER INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Under class society we see the interrelationship between intellectual capability and social organization develop in accord with the interests of the contending classes. As conditions determine, the ruling class advances or retards intellectual development to serve its needs. And as conditions determine, the laboring classes develop their intellectual capability to combat the domination of the ruling class.

Today we are beginning to see the breadth and importance of this particular battle. As capitalist competition escalates, and the incorporation of labor-replacing technology through electronics and robotics accelerates, we see government eliminate programs and policies that served industrial capitalism. The State, serving the interests of the ruling class, subsidized industrial capital by providing a healthy educated workforce for factory floor and management. Now that workers are no longer needed in production, they’re withdrawing that subsidy across the board through elimination of public assistance, health and education.

Striking at a central driving force of human development — learning — they are withdrawing the State’s considerable subsidy of public education, even as it is championed as the hallmark of an exceptional society. This de-investment follows and intensifies along already existing class lines, and

education becomes limited to those who can afford it either in time or money. The effect of the decline in education has the very real potential to undermine and eventually destroy the conditions necessary for the intellectual development of the individual and, in turn, the progress of the working class in general.

However, hope for the future rests with clear understanding of the objective process of human interrelationships alongside the technology we create and the new opportunities that are presented. The same technological advances used by the capitalist class to free itself of human labor may be used by the working class to liberate itself from a culture of isolation and dependency and move toward the formation of a new reality.

The following examples drawn from the Pew Research report series “The Future of The Internet” published in February 2012 illustrate the objective changes taking place in the human mind that can be used by the ruling class for continued domination over humanity, or by the working class for liberation of the human spirit and capability in a communal society.

Susan Price, CEO and chief Web strategist at Firecat Studio and an organizer of TEDx in San Antonio, Texas, noted: “The amazing plasticity of the brain is nowhere as evident as in the rapid adaptations humans are making in response to our unprecedented access to electronic information. Those who bemoan the perceived decline in deep thinking or engagement, face-to-face social skills and dependency on technology fail to appreciate the need to evolve our processes and behaviors to suit the new reality and opportunities. Young people and those who embrace the new connectedness are developing and evolving new standards and skills at a rate unprecedented in our history. Overall, our ability to connect, share and exchange information with other human beings is a strong net positive for humanity.”

Alan Bachers, director of the Neurofeedback Foundation, explained that society must prepare now for the consequences of the change we are already beginning to see. “The presence of breadth rather than depth of cognitive processing will definitely change everything — education, work, recreation,” he states. “Workers will show up unsuited for the robotic, mind-numbing tasks of the factory — jobs now vanishing anyway. Creativity, demand for high stimulus, rapidly changing environments, and high agency (high touch) will be what makes the next revolution of workers for jobs they will invent themselves, changing our culture entirely at a pace that will leave many who choose not to evolve in the dust.”

We can see unlimited potential in our future when we no longer need to use our intellectual capability for survival and struggle, but are free to develop our creativity to the fullest in every respect.

Political Power in America and the Role of the South

Politics in America is about power. It is about how a class asserts its supremacy. It is about how a class maintains and defends its power as a ruling class in order to exercise its domination over an exploited and subordinate class. For the subordinate (working) class, it is a question of how political power may be won or wrested from the ruling (capitalist) class in order to reorganize society in its own interest.

That struggle for power, either to maintain it or to overcome it, is in play today more so than ever. These are new times. Today we would not recognize the world, or the America, that prevailed even 75 years ago. Who then could have known that today our time would be described as a “post-industrial” era? The advent of the microchip has changed everything.

Laborless production is creating a new class of permanently unemployed, part-time, temporary and contingent workers who are growing proportionately to the decline of industry. More and more shut out and excluded, this new class points to the crisis of capital itself. The system is broken. It can no longer deliver, except as an expression of the growing polarity between wealth and poverty, and as a consequence, the very ability of the ruling class to rule is called into question.

While we may describe the new epoch inaugurated by electronics today as a qualitatively new time, we also know that our present develops out of our history, and the struggle for power cannot be understood apart from that history.

AMERICAN HISTORY IS SOUTHERN HISTORY

American history is Southern history, and that is a history that is rooted in slavery, white supremacy and the direct, brutal control of an oppressed people. The Southern program, entwined with white supremacy, marked the South as the first fascist State. This State oversaw the South, and particularly the Black Belt, as America’s first colony, and the profits it yielded built the foundation of U.S. imperial expansion.

Democracy prevailed for the ruling class and at least the illusion of democracy was extended to some sections of the white worker in the South. But the objective reality of the segregationist Jim Crow terror exposed the lie of Southern democracy. To guarantee the profits for imperial expansion, the workers of the South had to be made to submit.

The formula for rule for the South became a question of the control of the Blacks in the South. In this way, the question of political power and white supremacy are inextricably intertwined. The ruling class divided Southern workers by attacking, isolating and dominating the Black worker on the one hand, and bestowing social and, for some, meager economic privileges on the white workers on the other. In this way, they tied the white worker in the South to the ruling class, but through this control they were able also to control the Northern workers.

In reality, for the white worker in the South, white supremacy meant *not* their own supremacy, but acting and voting *against* their own interest. The Southern program was, and still is, to slash social programs, privatize public services, deregulate the economy and the environment, cut taxes for the rich and the corporations, and increase military spending in the drive for empire. Today, this Southern program fits hand in glove with the newly emerging market-state.

And, while there is plenty of racism to go around, white supremacy is more about political power. It is about the control of a class. It is really about ruling class supremacy, and wielding the power to carry out its program as a ruling class.

With the end of World War II, processes were getting under way to put an end to a South based in agriculture and to launch the industrialization of the South. At the same time, the Civil Rights Movement arose to confront and challenge the Jim Crow State. This movement was about achieving civil rights, but it was also about abolishing the form of rule in the South.

History is about continuity and discontinuity. Southern history is a history of white supremacy entwined with the question of political power. That was the case 100 years ago with the rule of Jim Crow, principally through the Democratic party. The content remains the same, but the form has changed.

With the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act in 1965, African-Americans were enfranchised by the millions, and flooded into the Democratic Party, many achieving political office for the first time since Reconstruction. Whites flooded into the Republican party and it began its steady transformation to a party of white supremacy with its program the Southern program. While the form of rule is different, that is to say, discontinuous, the content remains the same. But this by no means says that the Democratic party today has shed the shackles of white supremacy. It may take another form, but it remains the second pole of ruling class power.

GEORGIA 2013: CONCENTRATE AND DIVIDE

The results of last year’s election would appear to reveal that the Republican Party is now a minority party and unable to adapt to what is being termed a “rising new electorate”. Yet it unquestionably exercises political sway in the South, still the key to political power in America.

The Republican Party has accomplished this supremacy by concentrating and dividing. By a process of gerrymandering, redistricting and packing Black voters in concentrated districts, thereby securing Republican majorities in the remaining districts, Republican supremacy was and is assured throughout the South. Georgia, for example, has 16 congressional representatives, 12 of whom are white and Republican, three are Black Democrats and the one white Democrat is the only white Democrat remaining in the entire South.

The virtually all-white Republican party in Georgia also enjoys for the first time a supermajority in the state legislature, allowing them to consolidate power on the county, city and local level as well. They are in a position to exercise their power virtually unfettered, and to carry out the Southern program unchecked.

In her book *The New Mind of the South* Tracy Thompson shows that Atlanta, located mostly in Fulton County, is a kind of Mecca for young, educated and upwardly mobile Blacks. It has enjoyed an unbroken 40-year history of Black political leadership, but also has a pattern of ingrained residential segregation and the biggest gap between rich and poor of any city in the United States. The alliance of the Republican governor with Kasim Reed, the Black Democratic mayor of Atlanta, indicates how the Black political elite are complicit in the formula for rule in the South.

Today, however, segregation is less a matter of overt racism than it is a reflection of wealth and income, as Thompson points out. In the metropolitan Atlanta area, most African Americans are concentrated in urban Atlanta and the southern part of the metro region. That is also where the greatest poverty is concentrated. The more affluent African Americans and whites are concentrated primarily in the northern part of the city and suburbs, as well as in the counties that surround the urban core.

SECESSION: DIVIDE AND CONQUER

The South’s long and particular history of

racial division is being used once again to divide the workers in order to implement the Southern program. Today the virtual political supremacy of a mostly white Republican party in elected political positions in the South practically guarantees their success.

All local legislation is routinely passed through the state legislature. With a Republican supermajority, legislation has been introduced and passed that would allow a Republican takeover of the Black-majority and Black-led urban counties and cities.

In the first place, legislation has been passed to incorporate new cities in the more affluent northern half of the urban counties — in effect seceding from the urban county governments — keeping the resources for themselves and undermining the tax base and resources for the southern, Black majority and poorer part of the counties. This process is still underway, and includes legislation to have the entire northern part of Fulton county secede and form its own separate county.

Via gerrymandering and redistricting after the 2010 census, the Republican majority counties that surround Fulton county grabbed for themselves a slice here and a slice there from parts of Fulton county, thus qualifying themselves as a part of the Fulton county legislative delegation. Now, 13 of 18 Republican delegates, all white, have effectively taken over Fulton county government, although none of them actually reside in the county.

Legislation has been passed to redraw districts within Fulton county so that the Republicans can take over the county commission and the elections board; freeze tax revenues for the next two years and require

Continues on page 6

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The Rise of Fascism and Social Revolution in America

Most Americans think fascism is something foreign, occurring in Europe decades ago, and that it “can’t happen here.” In fact, the opposite is true. Today, epochal changes in the way things are produced are opening the door to the rise of fascism worldwide. One of the gravest dangers the working-class movement in America faces is the ruling class’ effort to mask what fascism is, how it arises, and, most importantly, the ominous danger it represents for humanity. As a result of bourgeois propaganda, a section of America is welcoming fascism.

WHAT IS FASCISM?

The fundamental characteristic of fascism is corporate economic power merged with the political power of the State. Politically, fascism is the substitution of one form of class domination — bourgeois democracy — by another. Fascism is State intervention in every aspect of the economy and society to protect private property.

In an earlier era, fascism arose during periods of great instability in the State and society. In Germany, for example, a political transition was taking place from a feudal State form to bourgeois democracy. The country was in enormous turmoil as a result of the Versailles Treaty signed in 1919, which forced Germany to pay billions in World War I reparations. To pay it off, they had to inflate their currency. The inflation was so great people couldn’t buy food. People were starving. Communist uprisings spread. At that historic moment, Germany had a choice: fascism or communism. The German capitalists won out. They instituted fascism to guarantee their imperial expansion and to crush the

rising communist movement.

Although there are basic similarities, fascism is arising objectively today, not as a choice, as in Germany. Today as a result of qualitatively new conditions, no further stages of growth in capitalism are possible. New labor-replacing tools — computers and robots — are destroying the foundation of capitalism, which is the buying and selling of labor power. One result is the amassing of an unprecedented amount of wealth into a few hands. Given this new reality, there is no way for the giant corporations to manage and secure their property except through the constant merging of the corporations and the State. This process was witnessed in 2008 when the U.S. government came to the rescue of the banks deemed “too big to fail.” Without State intervention, the banking system could have collapsed. Within this progression, fascism seeks to guarantee the transition to a whole new world while preserving private property.

On the other hand, for the first time, an objective communist movement is arising. It is communist because those displaced by electronics can no longer exist within a system of private ownership of socially necessary means of production. Communism seeks to facilitate a whole new world based on the public ownership of the socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the new world of plenty according to need. Yet these new relations will not develop spontaneously. They must be consciously fought for.

FORMS OF FASCISM

With limited room for expansion, corporate power in the U.S. is forced to turn inward.

Fascism is taking the form of the interpenetration of private interests and the State on every level, with the government directly assuming responsibility for the profitability of the corporations. An extraordinary transfer of public property into corporate hands is accelerating. Schools, toll roads, police forces, water, possibly even the Tennessee Valley Authority — and much more — are being transferred into private hands while the government and the taxpayer foot the bill.

The ideology to back up this thievery is expressed by corporate executives. Though he denies having said it, it was widely reported that the former CEO of Nestlé’s said that water is not a right and should be privatized. An executive for the (South) Korea division of the healthcare giant, Roche, said, “We are not in the business to save lives, but to make money.” The notion of the public good or government responsibility for the people is not in the corporate vocabulary.

This is why the battle over whose interests nationalization serves is so important. In this struggle, the workers begin to recognize the partisan role of the State. They begin to recognize themselves as a class and that the struggle to build a communal economy is the ultimate solution to war and fascism.

STAGES OF FASCISM

Like all processes, fascism develops in stages. No longer only a “partnership” between the corporations and government, there is now absolute unity between the giant corporations and the State. This is the essence of fascism. The political feature of fascism — open state terror — is spreading. When you have a government that declares it can kill anybody it wants, setting aside constitutional

guarantees, you have fascism. Fascism is also seen in the militarization of the economy and the police, and in the partial martial law that has been imposed on sections of our cities. The social expression of fascism is seen in the growth of the rising fascist movement that has its roots in the most racist, brutal exploitative elements of American history. Fascist violence and ruling class agitation, that calls for blaming the most vulnerable groups of workers in order to divide and conquer, supplements the process.

What remains is for some kind of crisis to erupt that will allow for a full-blown fascist offensive. The legal power to take over the government, and to declare unitary rule by the executive already exists. It should be remembered that fascism in Germany and Italy came about legally — Hitler and Mussolini came to power legally. Ominous polls following the Boston bombings indicate that many Americans are willing to restrict civil liberties in the hope of protecting their well-being. It will require a massive visionary propaganda war for people to realize the dangers and opportunities of this moment, and what they must do.

An old, commonly known adage says, “Those who do not learn from their history are doomed to repeat it.” Less acknowledged, however, is the enormous power of the human mind to break the cycle of the old. Under certain conditions, human beings — armed with an understanding of the past and a vision of a new future — can create an entirely new history. Out of today’s struggle for the new will arise a cooperative world made possible by the new electronic means of production. It will be a society where humanity’s needs are finally met.

Political power in America and the role of the South (continued from page 5)

a three-fourths majority to pass any tax increase; make it easier to fire public employees and limit pay and pension benefits; move to privatize and outsource jobs and services of MARTA, the urban mass transit system; and lastly, to double the homestead exemption, which would withdraw some \$48 million in revenue, affecting the funding of Grady hospital, the only hospital providing care to the poor.

The governor has already taken over two of the urban and majority-Black county school systems, first in Clayton county in the southern half of the metro region, and most recently in DeKalb county, where six school board members (five of whom are Black) were fired and replaced. The scenario is familiar: billions of dollars are cut from education budgets, falling home values also lead to declining revenues for education, the schools fail, and, claiming corruption and incompetence, the state takes over, laying the ground for further corporate privatization.

The governor has also decided to opt out of the expansion of Medicaid, thereby denying coverage to some two million Georgians. And in keeping with maintaining corporate

supremacy in the name of making Georgia the “most business-friendly state in the country” legislation has already been proposed to do away with both corporate and income taxes in the state and replace it with a drastically increased sales tax. The tax burden will be shifted almost entirely to the backs of the working class, particularly the poorest whites and Blacks, with increased taxes on all consumption.

POWER IN AMERICA TODAY

In spite of everything most people living in Georgia today would probably be appalled to think they are living in a fascist State, yet when we look at actual objective developments and conditions, what else could it be? The merger of the corporations and the State could not be more complete, and what is the form of rule if not the direct control, not of Blacks as a people, or based simply on skin color, but the control of a new class of which the Black worker is found to be at its core? It is a question of political power; it is about one class exercising its rule over another class.

We see the same kind of developments

going on not just in the South but throughout the country. When we look at developments on the ground in states like Georgia, the utilizing of white supremacy is virtually self-evident. Yet it is not simply an extension of Jim Crow white supremacy. Local governments are not overtly taken over in order to control Blacks as such, but to enact economic control using the historical racial divisions so deeply engrained in our country.

The reality is that much of what is carried out is done in league with Black politicians. Immigrants are never criminalized because of their skin color, but because of their economic status. The ruling class taps into the history of racial division in the South to implement and spread the Southern program throughout the country. The old saying is still true — as the South goes, so goes the nation (and today, the globe).

So this is not just about power in Georgia. It is about power in America. While large majorities of the youth, women, African American and Latino were captured by the Democratic party in the last elections, the Democrats are after all, a party of the ruling class, attempting to tie the workers to them

by appeals to the “middle class,” another form of all-class American unity. The objective structural inequalities in capitalism make this call nothing less than a call for all-class white unity. The Democratic version of the quest for ruling class supremacy and power remains a program of the domination of one class by another, and indeed needs the Southern program to attain its goals.

The ruling class confronts a common problem regardless of which party they are in or which section of society they have been called on to control. How are they to maintain and defend their rule under new conditions, and to control an increasing and restive new class of workers who are seeing their very means of life being denied them. For the ruling class, history compels them to take the path toward a fascist solution. For the new class of workers, the solution lies in that class, as a class, fighting for political power. Out of the revolutionary struggle for emancipation, which propelled the Civil War to its conclusion, the banner emerged, “Bottom rail on top.” That is what having the power to reorganize society in the interests of the working class means today.