

# RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

## Protect Planet Earth

Capitalism is a dying system. But like a fatally wounded beast, it is attacking the hands that once fed it. As new electronic means of production throw more workers out of the system and into destitution, capitalists are forced to invent new ways to further exploit both human and natural resources for profit. Corporations are using the State as a battering ram. Most laws passed today by state or federal legislators are actually written by corporate lobbyists for the benefit of corporate shareholders and Wall Street.

Elected officials today no longer pass regulations to protect the health of workers, their communities, or our land, water, air, and other precious natural resources for the benefit of the public. Instead, politicians from both major parties serve capital by sacrificing every last remnant of “the commons” upon the altar of corporate profit and Wall Street speculation. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the fossil fuels corporate-industrial-financial complex.

Since the first Earth Day in 1971, any gains made to protect the environment and restrict corporate polluters have now been reversed or are under serious attack. From the 1989 Exxon-Valdez spill to the 2010 BP blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, heavily subsidized oil and gas industries have spent a fortune attempting to preserve their profitability. They fund studies to influence scientists and they buy Democratic and Republican legislators alike. The Republican-dominated American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the bipartisan Council of State Governments (CSG) are equally active, corporate-funded bill mills. CSG’s budget is roughly \$30 million a year while ALEC’s is around \$6 million a year. Both draft model bills and present them to state legislatures to vote on.

As a result, many bills that claim to regulate industry are actually written by the very companies they are supposed to govern. ALEC, for example, promoted a bill to address the issue of public disclosure of chemicals in the drilling fluids used in fracking (extracting natural gas through unconventional hydraulic fracturing). Sponsored within ALEC by ExxonMobil, it was based on a Texas law that allowed energy companies to withhold the names of chemicals to “protect trade secrets.” This bill became a model for states all around the country.

Democrats as well as Republicans collude in this process. CSG modeled the above bill before ALEC picked it up, and the disclosure standards found in both the CSG and ALEC bills were developed by the Obama administration’s DOE “Fracking Safety Panel” formed in May 2011. The panel was stacked with oil and gas industry insiders. The sole “environmental” representative was Fred Krupp, president of Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), an NGO based in New

York. EDF’s senior energy policy advisor and spokesman on hydraulic fracturing is a member of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission, which opposes applying the federal Safe Drinking Water Act to fracking. He also is a former executive Vice-President and general counsel for the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association. With friends of the environment such as EDF, who needs enemies?

### WORKING PEOPLE LEAD GRASSROOTS UPSURGE

Increasing fossil fuel extraction has led to well-water contamination in fracked areas as well as a rise in cancer, asthma, and other illnesses. As a result there has been an upsurge in grassroots opposition across the United States as well as the entire world. This is not coming from NGO’s, but from working people who have never been activists before. Josh Fox’s 2010 documentary, “Gas Land,” originally filmed to share with neighbors in Pennsylvania, contributed to the groundswell as the destruction spread to Wyoming, Texas, and elsewhere.

This year grassroots groups in Illinois made a last-ditch effort to lobby Democratic Governor Pat Quinn and members of the regulatory committee against passage of Illinois’ fracking bill. They argued that the Illinois law, simply a tweaked version of the ALEC-written Texas law, was far from being the toughest regulation on fracking to date, as the committee claimed. Not satisfied, the groups occupied the governor’s office and pressed for a moratorium until impact studies could be conducted. Nevertheless, the bill passed easily, supported by national “green” organizations, in particular the national Sierra Club and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

In California, a coalition of farmers, nurses and labor (Californians Against Fracking) attempted to present Democratic Governor Brown with a petition for a moratorium with over 100,000 signatures. They were ignored. The moratorium bill was voted down, a fracking bill was passed, and a subsequent poll indicated that most Californians believe the legislature is run by a few looking out for themselves. Coalition leaders have used this legislative process as a first step to build awareness.

In Pennsylvania, two-thirds of voters oppose fracking, causing the Democratic State Committee to support a call for a moratorium. Josh Fox indicates the movement is stronger than ever in Pennsylvania, and stresses the imperative that we present a vision of another way. Actor Mark Ruffalo, member of the Green Shadow Cabinet, is working on green energy banks as part of a “Solutions Project” campaigning for renewable energy.

Other motions such as the anti-Keystone

XL pipeline have drawn indigenous communities into the fight to protect the land and water, including the Idle No More movement in Canada and the Lakota and others in the U.S. In the Four Corners area of the Southwest, indigenous members of the Dine and Hopi have organized to stop wholesale destruction of water and land in the Big Mountain and Black Mesa areas by Peabody Coal. Members of the Black Mesa organization have traveled to St. Louis to receive training and present Peabody’s CEO with a list of grievances. They demanded an end to the impact of coal and uranium mining on the native population and the miners’ health, and requested that profits be used to develop solar energy in their area. They also voiced support and solidarity with United Mine Workers miners facing loss of pension and health benefits from the bankruptcy decision favoring Patriot Coal, a subsidiary of Peabody.

Many of these indigenous groups have involved the youth in particular, who have become quite effective in organizing. Protection of water and the public’s right to water are at the heart of these struggles. Water privatization is central to corporate profit plans in the future, especially the use of water for shale oil, natural gas, and coal production, which is increasing exponentially. Governors of several states, including Texas and Illinois, have signed bills essentially to privatize water supplies to ensure industries have first use. In Texas alone, during a serious drought, 30 towns are running out of water as farmers sell their supplies to oil and gas companies.

### ALLIANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC SURVIVAL STRUGGLES

More and more, these environmental battles against corporate power are gravitating toward alliances with the basic economic struggles of people for survival. In North Dakota resisters to the Bakken Shale drilling are reaching out to homeless people pushed out of their homes by rising rents. In North Carolina, defenders of the environment have joined the 2013 Moral Monday protests against austerity programs imposed by the right-wing legislature. Protection of the

environment is seen as a crucial protection of the rights of the poor. Reverend William Barber, one of the movement’s leaders, points out that he is not wedded to the Democratic Party but rather to coalitions that are willing to fight for just causes. “Narrow-minded, isolated agendas aren’t going to hold themselves up as meaningful in the changing demographics of our country,” he said. “A regressive agenda doesn’t fit.”

The people are rising and moving to put their class interests out front. As the grassroots members are organizing against environmental devastation in their backyards, and fighting “eminent domain for private gain” which is destroying or taking their land and homes, many of the major “green” NGOs continue to emphasize an incremental “push back” strategy with Democratic politicians. This tactic is questionable, in light of the fact that the gas industry gave \$3.5 million to the Democratic Governors’ Association!

As some leaders pursue the legislative path, there is a growing urgency pushing the movement toward direct action, only increasing when demands for moratoriums and bans are not met. While third party motion is barely beginning within the grassroots environmental movement, there is Green Party involvement. In Richmond, California, for example, the fight for working class demands such as housing and jobs are inseparable from the fight for the environment.

Recent polls indicate the public’s concern for climate change and global warming has declined over the years; however, when a study by Stanford University’s Woods Institute posed the question in May 2010 “What do you think the most important problem will be in the future if nothing is done to stop it?” 25% said the environment or global warming as opposed to only 10% naming the economy. Clearly, we dare not underestimate concern about the economy and its interconnection to environmental degradation.

### PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT REQUIRES END OF CAPITALISM

As new leaders emerge from the grassroots movements, some are questioning the

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# Inside: New Conditions Call for New Forms of Organization

With the foundation of their wealth and power crumbling before their eyes, the capitalist class finds itself historically on the defensive. They have conquered the world and there is nowhere for the system to expand. Labor-replacing technology is destroying the market. They are forced on the offensive to protect what they have. They foment war and violence around the world, overturn governments, shore up the right and create new leaders from the left. Poverty, chaos and death follow in their wake.

Yet that same new technology that is destroying the capitalist system holds out the promise of a different future for the peoples of the world. These new technologies offer the possibility of building a society of peace, abundance and cooperation. But we cannot achieve our goals simply by fighting defensively, that is, trying to regain what is already lost. We must shift to the offensive — go after the economic system at its root, form our class politically into a force able to take political power, and prepare it to overturn the system and reconstruct society in the interests of our class.

The three interconnected reports under “Fascism Today” provide an estimate of the situation that our class is facing today. “The Objectivity of Fascism Today” shows that fascism is rooted in the qualitatively new technology and the resulting radical transformation of the economy. The capitalist class must preserve private property at any cost. They must go on the offensive.

In the “Culture of Fascism and the Role of History” we see how this offensive encompasses not only the changing form of the State and repressive legal changes. It also seeks to teach the American people to accept a fascist

society and culture, to accept the violence, the degradation of human life and the suffering caused by the capitalist system and its rulers as normal and justifiable.

“Edging Toward a New Stage of Consciousness” shows how these attacks have also worked against the ruling class by revealing to the people the immorality and injustice of the system and the government that protects it. The workers are beginning to put forward programs in their own interests and in opposition to those of the ruling class. This means something fundamentally new for revolution in America and its significance cannot be overstated.

Two other articles show how this estimate is playing out in two key struggles, the environment and public education.

“Protect Planet Earth” shows how diverse the environmental struggle has become as a growing number of communities are affected by corporate pollution, especially fracking. The refusal of the government to protect the people against the corporate polluters or to do anything about deepening poverty is beginning to spark interest in third parties and in some cases a rejection of the capitalist system itself.

“Struggle for Public Education Hinges on New Ideas” shows how the attacks by the ruling class are forcing the movement out of its local battlefields and step-by-step into the national arena. This lays the foundation for a national movement, which can confront corporate capital and insist that the national government act to safeguard the funding and quality of public education across the land.

Revolutionaries cannot see what is developing in America and simply go on as before. With the “Call for the 8th National Convention of the League of Revolutionaries for a

New America” the League is carrying out its revolutionary responsibilities to meet the demands projected by the estimate of the situation faced by our class. The National Convention will make the decisions that align the League with the rapid and dramatically changing political situation and organize the League as that situation dictates.

The article “No Victory Without New Ideas” shows why an organization of revolutionaries plays an indispensable role in helping our class shift from the defensive to the offensive. This means fighting for the world the new technology makes possible, and

bringing together revolutionaries to fight on the basis of the demands of millions for a decent, stable and cultured life. It means laying out the path our class must take to secure its future, and taking the steps along that line so that every battle leads us to the final goal — the emancipation of humanity.

The League has dedicated itself to this historic task. Join with us.

## Protect Planet Earth (Continued from page 1)

system of capitalism itself. They look for solutions in sustainable agriculture and renewable energy forms such as wind and solar. Recycling, conservation, and anti-consumerism are their mantras.

But as Richard Smith notes in his 2011 *Real-World Economics Review* article “Green Capitalism: the god that failed”, “...the problems we face cannot be solved by individual choices in the marketplace. Most of the ecological problems... from global warming... to species extinction, are way beyond the scope of companies, industries, even countries. They require concerted, large-scale national and international action. And they require direct economic planning at global, national and local levels. The world’s climate scientists tell us we’re doomed unless we sharply reduce our consumption of all fossil

fuels. But even the world’s largest corporations, such as Exxon Mobil, can’t afford to take such losses... Corporations can’t make the socially and ecologically rational decisions that need to be made to save the humans because they represent only private particular interests, not the social and universal interests of humanity, the environment, and future generations.”

Only by abolishing capitalist private property and making it public property will we be able democratically to create the kind of society that produces for the needs of the people, while protecting the environment for future generations. A step towards that goal is to fight for nationalization of the corporations and demanding a government that runs them in the interests of we, the people.

## 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.

# Struggle for Public Education Hinges on New Ideas

Millions of families are counting on education to provide a way out of the devastation and poverty as the old industrial economy crumbles. They had been told that hard work in the factories guaranteed the American Dream — a promise broken when corporate capital turned to robotic production all over the globe. Today we're promised that if students study hard they will one day earn enough to rescue their families from economic disaster. Instead, many graduates find themselves with too much debt, too little pay, and temporary jobs or no job at all.

It's not that people aren't fighting to defend the promise of education, nor haven't won any victories. Parents saved many schools. At great personal risk undocumented students mobilized and forced President Obama to allow some of them to work, after deporting more people than any president in history. And teachers launched strikes at all levels, from Chicago's schools to California's universities. Yet everywhere each concession won by a struggle was quickly followed by further attacks on public education, such as budget cuts and private companies taking over testing, charter schools, and online learning. What is the movement lacking?

Our biggest problem is not a lack of schooling, or jobs, or even the budget cuts. Our main problem is that as the technological revolution forces the old industrial society to change, most working class people hope to somehow "fight back" and return to the mythical good old days, while the corporations "fight forward" into a new hi-tech global capitalism that sacrifices our future for theirs. They have shredded the old industrial jobs and cut funding from the education of working class children and youth whom they no longer need in jobs now done by robots.

Their strategy for reorganizing society is carried out through both political parties and by groups like the Bill Gates' Foundation and the Koch brothers' think tanks. They convince school and college leaders to cut teacher and staff wages, while handing millions of dollars over to online learning companies and banks. Certainly a new society is inevitable due to the new technology and online tools — the question is which class it will serve. But we cannot get to the critical question of society's future if we focus only on defending public education by fighting back city-by-city, state-by-state, or neighborhood-by-neighborhood.

## DISCRIMINATION DIVIDES AND DISUNITES STRUGGLE

America's terrible history of discrimination, separating people along color lines, has contributed greatly to this scattered, disunited way of thinking. Past segregation and current government policies have resulted in the poorest people of color being packed together into "projects" and "ghettos," usually located near the biggest, dirtiest factories. As those factories closed, unemployment and poverty increased the most in nearby neighborhoods, leading to the perception that most unemployed people and recipients of welfare were

people of color.

The struggle to defend education constantly faces this same confusion, because segregated housing also produced segregated schools. As companies left these areas many residents did too, so local schools lost both students and per-student funding. When Rust Belt cities like Detroit and Chicago began closing schools in old industrial neighborhoods, it often seemed like a struggle about African Americans or Latinos alone, instead of what it really was: the leading edge of resistance to attacks on the class as a whole.

The Rust Belt not only suffered devastation. It is also producing new leaders striving to overcome the old disunity. For example, when new leaders of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) were elected in 2010, they insisted that only by uniting with embattled parents could teachers hope to win public support, when their contract struggle came up the next year. Since Mayor Rahm Emanuel decided to close over one hundred schools, starting with some in majority African American communities, CTU's leaders gathered teachers from all over the city to fight for those schools first.

## NEW LEADERS AND NEW TACTICS ARISE

By turning towards the most threatened communities, CTU convinced thousands of Chicagoans to turn toward them when they went out on strike in September 2012. Then, instead of just fighting against school district officials and the mayor, the union also began naming the leading local capitalists who were behind the city's economic restructuring. The mayor was forced to concede raises and limit his attempt to link teacher evaluations to student test scores. By mobilizing thousands of teachers and parents against the city's elite, the strike had not just tapped people's desperation about their economic crisis, it had helped them see a bit more clearly their friends and their enemies. This was taken a step further in the battle against school closings after the strike. Threats to close as many as 300 schools were followed by multiple hearings, at which the community was unanimous against closing. Nevertheless the enemy revealed itself as Chicago Public Schools callously shuttered forty-nine schools. From the industrial ashes of the Rust Belt a new phoenix of teachers struggle had risen, and school unions in other cities began planning how to broaden their fights, too.

Still, the tactic of educators and communities facing off against local capitalists is not by itself a strategy for class political independence. That requires not only fighting against the vision of the corporate capitalist class, but developing a new vision of what kind of society to fight for, so technology serves humanity and not the other way around. But Chicago-style tactics can give thousands of people anywhere practical experience in the power they can exercise by coming together, the basis for revolutionaries to promote broader and deeper analysis and debate about classes in capitalist society,

and the possibility of creating a new kind of cooperative, communist society.

Every struggle holds opportunities for analysis and debate about the ideas that serve opposing classes, the hinges upon which the struggle will either swing open to greater political independence, or swing shut and lock the fighters within the corporations' vision of the future. The task of the revolutionaries in the movement is to explain these "hinge ideas." For example, many college faculty leaders oppose the shift to more online courses because it costs jobs, while students working excessive hours to pay tuition and living costs must often use online courses to learn on weekends or in the middle of the night. Neither group can solve their problem because corporate capitalists have directed politicians nationwide to limit tax funding for both financial aid and faculty hiring. Both college faculty and students are fighting capitalism, though this is not yet clearly obvious to many fighters.

other technology from for-profit companies. In 1998, the Clinton Administration allowed for-profit universities to use federal financial aid and reduced restrictions on their use of online courses. Just two years later online higher education companies had the highest rate of profit of any stocks on Wall Street!

These actions are drawing the mass of education activists out from their local battlefield and step-by-step towards the national arena. Every time Congress fails to budget enough for financial aid, students are faced with the need for a stronger national movement. Every time the federal Department of Education forces a new requirement for accrediting schools, or for using tests sold by corporations, the corporate agenda gets the force of law, and the movement must take another step towards resistance on a national level.

This is not just developing among forces defending K-12 education — new approaches are emerging in the struggle to defend higher education, too. Links are developing between

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Politicians and administrators, who have granted some limited concessions to the various struggles in public education, have assured the movement's mass of activists these are the first steps back toward the good old days of better funding, when the economic crisis ultimately gets resolved. The Democratic Party has proven especially effective at bringing in minority politicians, who rose from poverty, to assure Blacks, immigrants, and poor people that the economy is getting under control. But their pep talks can't hide the fact that the temporary stabilizing of the Great Recession was bought by greatly expanding the debt of school systems, universities, cities and states, and that student loans now exceed America's total credit card debt. This raises the risk that another collapse will have an especially bad impact on students and education systems.

## GREATER POWER TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The top level capitalists have attempted to prepare for the next crisis by shifting more power over K-12 schools and higher education to the federal level of government, even though most of the funding is run by state legislatures and local governments and districts. For K-12, Congress re-directed Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act from the 1960's by introducing No Child Left Behind and other "reforms." These reforms steered millions into purchasing of iPads and

student activists in different university systems, cities, and states. Faculty activists have become alarmed by government officials' support for privatization and for-profit online companies, and have launched national discussions on the future of higher education. And the most farsighted fighters from both K-12 and higher education in the U.S. have begun meeting with their class brothers and sisters from Mexico and Canada, as will happen in Chicago next May.

Eventually a stage of political maturity can develop, in which a national movement confronts corporate capital and insists that the national government act to safeguard the funding and quality of public education across the land. Just as the Civil Rights Movement eventually got voting rights for minority citizens nationalized, the call will be for nationalization of education — but on a deeper level than anything seen in the 1960's, because this movement for nationalization will be part of pushing corporate capital completely out of government.

Revolutionaries don't stand off to the side pontificating about the ideas they wish people cared about — they deal with the movement's actual problems, introducing the hinge ideas that break the leaders free from political dependence on the corporations' limited vision for society. As capital ravages the lives of the members of the working class their development as leaders will greatly depend on committed, conscious revolutionaries playing their role.

## The Objectivity of Fascism Today

The State is an instrument of force in the hands of the ruling class. Its basic purpose is to protect and further the political and economic interests of the ruling class. This includes doing whatever is necessary at a given time to clear the way for the economy to develop along the lines necessary for the ruling class.

Fascism is the merger of the State and the corporations. While there are subjective aspects to the development of fascism — things that are consciously engineered by the ruling class — the fascism we are experiencing in the U.S. and elsewhere today is not a subjective choice of the ruling class, but is fundamentally an objective reflection of economic development. As the economic base of society is transformed, the social and political superstructure that rests on and reflects the base must also be transformed.

Labor power is the source of surplus value. As technology is replacing labor in production, less and less surplus value is created and the rate of profit falls. As profit begins to vanish, the capitalists seek it wherever they can find it, by whatever means is necessary. The result is that the corporations and the State merge so that the corporations can impose their direct dictatorship on society and channel the social capital as they see fit to boost profits — privatizing things that were public, using public funds to subsidize private businesses, eliminating taxes on corporations and the wealthy, cutting welfare programs, etc.

The demands of globalization also play a role in the evolution of fascism. The power of the State — whether expressed as political, economic or military pressure — is necessary to break down the remaining barriers to the integration of the global market. Any barriers to the global mobility of capital must be eliminated. These barriers include the institutions of the bourgeois democratic republic, due process of law, the welfare State, etc.

Another aspect is that global markets are contracting as technology replaces labor, and the capitalist countries are competing for markets and access to resources such as oil and gas. In some cases this competition takes a military form. In the case of the U.S. in particular, the State has been restructured to maximize its ability to use force to maintain the U.S.' hegemonic position in the world through capturing markets and resources and isolating competitors.

Yet another facet illustrating the objective character of fascism today is the ongoing reduction in widespread property ownership in the population (homes, farms, small businesses, etc.), which is the objective basis for bourgeois democracy. The economic and political “middle” that tied the working class to the capitalist class is being destroyed. As jobs disappear, wages fall and the social safety net

is shredded, the growth of a new section of propertyless, dispossessed workers threatens private property. The ruling class cannot allow these people to have a say in society's direction: Only a cooperative society can meet their needs. Even the limited bourgeois democracy we have had is forced to give way to the dictatorship of the corporations. We see a significant example of this in Michigan with the imposition of the “Emergency Financial Managers” on various local governments, displacing elected officials. The State is changing form to protect private property, under conditions of the destruction of the economic foundation of private property. The State will deal forcefully with any social eruptions. The political, repressive aspects of fascism arise on the basis of the objective economic situation confronting the capitalists, and facilitate what they need to accomplish economically.

It should be noted that these conditions (the elimination of human labor and the destruction of value) give rise to nationalization as an objective battlefield. Each class needs nationalization in its own interests. The bourgeoisie needs it to subsidize private profit and protect private property, and the workers need it to guarantee them the necessities of life. Each class needs the State to intervene in the economy. Thus the question of nationalization raises the issue of which class the State serves, and nationalization becomes the battlefield where class consciousness can be taught.

We should clearly understand that fascism is not a policy choice for the bourgeoisie today, as it was during the Depression of the 1930s. The Depression represented a crisis of overproduction, not a qualitative revolution in the means of production. Under those conditions, some capitalist classes chose fascism as a way to deal with the crisis, while others accomplished their goals by maintaining some form of bourgeois democracy. Today fascism — the merger of the corporations and the State — is an objective reflection of an economic revolution which is destroying the foundation of private property itself. There is no possibility of “overturning fascism” today and “restoring democracy.” No reform is possible. There is nothing to go back to. With the ongoing elimination of human labor from production, the contradictions in the economy have reached such an extreme, that the merger of the State and the corporations necessarily evolved to prevent the collapse of the capitalist economy. The old society is being destroyed by objective forces, and the only way to have democracy and access to the necessities of life is to fight forward into a cooperative society.

*Political Report of the LRNA Resident Standing Committee November 2013*

## The Culture of Fascism and the Role of History

Fascism was imposed in Italy and Germany, but it is arising objectively, and stage by stage, in America. First comes the qualitative or objective side. By objective, we mean that which arises independent of our will or consciousness. Driven by new objective conditions of electronic production and labor-less production, the State and corporations in America have consolidated, which is fascism.

On the subjective side the political features of fascism are seen in numerous ways. Examples are the reordering of the State to facilitate the profits and goals of the capitalists in this new era; the increased Supreme Court rulings that safeguard corporate profits and shield corporate corruption; the stepped up wave of police killings; the arsenal of fascist legislation such as “Stand Your Ground” laws, along with the National Defense Authorization Act provision that allows the government to arrest and detain a person without charge.

Now the rulers must guarantee a broad acceptance of fascism among the American people — which can only be accomplished by the cultivation of a fascist culture. This is not hard to do given the history of America: slavery and fascism in the South, genocide of the Native Americans, racism, male supremacy, police killings, lynchings and other forms of inhuman brutality.

### THE RISE OF A FASCIST CULTURE

Culture is a way of life of a group of people — the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept and that are passed along from one generation to the next. Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior. It is the totality of a peoples' learned, accumulated experience that is socially transmitted. Culture progresses largely without people thinking about it. This is the danger today.

To develop a fascist culture, the ruling classes must reach into history and dig out their country's most violent, horrific aspects. The German fascists, for example, created their fascist culture from Germany's most violent, chauvinistic, mystical aspects of history. The fascist culture the rulers are cultivating today in America has roots going back — not only to the genocide against the Native Americans and chattel slavery — but to European history. The Anglo Saxon master race theories and the German white race or master race theories are integrally connected to the ideas that arose to justify racial slavery in the Americas.

Prior to the mid-15th century the word “race” wasn't even in the English language. It arose around the time that the profitable undertaking of African slavery and the slave trade to the Americas began in earnest. It was

then that Europeans increasingly saw “white” as a race. White supremacy in the U.S. colonies — based mainly on color discrimination — developed step by step along with American expansionism. It sought to justify and legalize the horrible brutality and compulsory working to death of human beings in the capitalists' pursuit of maximum profits.

The culture of fascism being cultivated in America today aims to support the economic and political aspects of fascism that already exist. It is accomplished in a myriad of ways, on a daily basis. One unconscionable expression was seen when the House of Representatives stood up and unanimously applauded the U.S. Capitol Police for gunning down an unarmed woman. This murder was widely accepted as necessary to protect the “American way of life.” It is part of a fascist culture that aims fire at anyone deemed a threat.

These ideas reflect today's economy, which is marked by the end of value and that places the value of human life at zero. It is worth noting, too, that although the slave created value and thus had a price tag, today's conditions are creating a far worse situation. The new class is of absolutely no value to the capitalist system. The forcing of perhaps millions of people into greater hunger and even starvation through food stamp cuts is one example.

### FASCIST IDEAS THE RULERS ARE USING TO PROMOTE A FASCIST CULTURE

No fascist culture has arisen without using the concept of “exceptional people.” American Exceptionalism is the historically evolved belief that America is unique when compared with the historical development of other countries. American Exceptionalism is often expressed as the “land of the free and home of the brave.” The people have been taught by the rulers that to deny American Exceptionalism is to deny the heart and soul of America.

The rulers have promoted these ideas over and over, and they are deeply embedded in the American psyche. As a result, Americans see their country as the world's greatest model for democracy, and responsible to establish freedom and democracy globally. These ideas are rooted in the belief that America is a country of peace and prosperity (despite that it has been at war since its origin.) Madeline Albright summed up these views after the first Iraqi war by saying, “If we have to use force it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future.”

As the motion toward world war

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## Edging Toward a New Stage of Consciousness

The sole role of revolutionaries is propaganda — the raising of the political consciousness of the working class. Revolutionaries shape propaganda using a scientific understanding of the situation on the one hand, and a thorough knowledge of the thinking of the people on the other. To produce effective propaganda and develop the proper tactics, revolutionaries have to answer: What is the situation? What are the intellectual blocks that, cleared away, will help the workers advance to the next stage of consciousness? And finally, what are we going to do? These questions can only be answered by an organization of revolutionaries that is organically connected to the spontaneous movement.

### “FLASHES OF CONSCIOUSNESS”

In the course of the political struggle there comes an event that crystalizes people's thinking. It becomes a beacon of light that shines the way for others to follow. At these moments, revolutionaries must reassess the thinking of the people to insure that propaganda and tactics are in tandem with the revolutionary side of the spontaneous movement.

The process of development of political consciousness is triggered and fueled by what V. Lenin in *What is to be Done?* called “flashes of consciousness”. These flashes of consciousness or flashes of insight are events or situations that shake up the workers' thinking, causing them to respond and opening their minds to new ideas.

Revolutionary propaganda plays a crucial role at these political junctures. It adds the clarity needed to solidify these “flashes of consciousness” into permanent nodal points in the development of people's thinking. As the class begins to move, revolutionaries must move with it. They must use the “flashes of consciousness” among the true fighters and leaders of the movement to teach. By articulating what people are really fighting for and by putting forth a vision of a new world and how to get there, revolutionary propaganda can permanently secure the understanding of the true significance of an event. In this way revolutionary propaganda advances the political consciousness of the workers to the next quantitative stage of development.

### “FLASHES OF CONSCIOUSNESS” IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Generally, the level of political consciousness today is the stage of social awareness. At this stage workers are grouping themselves together, not as a class against a class enemy, but as a mass against “racist cops,” “corporations,” “the government,” etc. Yet the importance of this should not be underestimated. The workers are beginning to recognize more clearly the contours of the enemy — the government, police, its laws and institutions.

An overview of key events — flashes of consciousness — in the last few years gives us an indication of the quantitative stages of development of social awareness in the American people.

*Hurricane Katrina, 2005:* As people screamed from rooftops for help, the world witnessed the inhumanity of a government that was more preoccupied with the interests of the corporations than in saving and securing human lives. Official estimates put the death toll at 1,833. In the face of the government's disregard for human life revolutionaries could teach who the enemy really is — the capitalist class and its economic system, where profit and private property are more precious than life itself.

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The workers are beginning to put forward programs in their interests. This means something fundamentally new for the revolution in America.

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*Immigrant Rights Mega Marches, 2006:* With these marches the spontaneous movement took a historic turn, going from the defensive to the offensive on the immigration issue. Close to four million people, the great majority of whom were U.S. citizens, shielded the undocumented as these workers took to the streets and drew a line in the sand with their chant, “We won't go and if you deport us we'll come back!” This inspirational counterattack from one of the most vulnerable sections of society provided revolutionaries with the opportunity to teach that the immigrant worker is part and parcel of the American working class.

*The Rust Belt, 2010-2013:* The response of millions of workers to the economic crisis of 2008 began to play itself out in the cities of this country following the 2010 elections. The results of these elections opened the way for stepped-up attacks on the working class with policies that furthered the shift of wealth to the corporations and the rich. The struggle against these attacks moved from the occupation of state houses to various petition campaigns for repeals or recalls, to elections to recall elected officials or overturn legislation. The Rust Belt workers' “flash of consciousness” was the recognition of their betrayal by the Democratic Party, and has translated into a growing interest in third party alternatives. The workers of the Rust Belt are still reeling from the economic devastation of the region, bankruptcies and the anti-democratic imposition of Emergency Financial Managers.

*Occupy Wall Street Movement (OWS), 2011:* The OWS movement is both an expression of a stage of struggle and consciousness

and a catalyst that pushed consciousness forward. The coining of the phrase “the 99% vs. the 1%” became part of the popular discourse. Although most of its adherents are opposed to the corporations, but not necessarily to the capitalist system, the OWS does contain a discernible anti-capitalist thread. As such this anti-capitalist thread is a “flash of consciousness” that has helped set the stage for the development of future stages of consciousness.

*Moral Monday & Trayvon Martin, 2012-2013:* Shocked by the Zimmerman verdict, people were moved to spontaneously march, to rally and to hold vigils against such a blatant injustice. It was another step in the loss of faith in the legal system. It created an opening for revolutionaries to teach the meaning of

seeks to impose, with a program of its own. The Moral Monday movement spoke in defense of the bottom of society.

Though the quality is still social awareness, the spontaneous response to Trayvon Martin's murder and the Zimmerman verdict and to the Moral Monday movement is edging the consciousness of the workers closer to where they can learn social consciousness. With social consciousness the workers come to understand that they are members of a class and that they need class solidarity. They come to understand that their class is exploited and that they must fight that exploitation as a class. The times call for revolutionaries to produce and disseminate propaganda that hammers out the idea of class and of class unity.

The workers' thinking has not yet progressed to the stage of social consciousness. But direction is more important than velocity. It is clear that workers are beginning to discern the different class interests. Simply fighting back is no longer enough, and the workers are beginning to put forward programs in their interests. This means something fundamentally new for the revolution in America. These developments are of the utmost importance and they will define the League's role as an organization of revolutionaries.

It is the economic crisis that is pushing people into the streets to right what they perceive as wrong. But it is revolutionary propaganda that points out class interests, that unmask the enemy, and that points the way forward with a vision of a new society. Revolutionary propaganda will be decisive in securing those flashes of consciousness as nodal points in the thinking of the American people.

*Political Report of the LRNA Resident Standing Committee November 2013*

## Call for 8<sup>th</sup> League National Convention — June 2014

As the capitalist class spreads war and violence around the world, the polarization of wealth and poverty is reaching unprecedented proportions. The economic revolution is taking our country toward a critical juncture. In brief, the world is moving rapidly toward a global depression and another world war. We are confronted with the reality of a fascist America — the merging of the corporations with the State to impose the direct dictatorship of the corporations on society. This will get much worse very quickly. The workers are going into battle ideologically and politically unarmed. The struggle cannot advance without the clarity that class-conscious revolutionaries bring to the front. It is imperative that we centralize the League politically, disperse it organizationally, and build it as rapidly as we can to prepare for what is coming.

The situation in the world is changing so rapidly and so dramatically that a Convention is needed order to centralize politically around the current situation and to organize the League as the situation dictates.

Therefore, LRNA's Resident Standing Committee calls for a National Convention in June 2014 in Chicago, Illinois.

# No Victory Without New Ideas

The escalating destruction and polarization of our society is generating a heightened level of spontaneous resistance. Mass social struggles in Wisconsin, Michigan, in immigrant communities, Occupy Wall Street, North Carolina, and others are drawing more and more Americans into activity. There is one immediate burning question for all of them, and for the revolutionaries who fight alongside them: what will it take to win?

This is a complicated problem, but the short answer is that it will take the introduction and dissemination of entirely new ideas into these struggles. These new ideas in part consist of a clear moral vision that insists on the intrinsic value of human life. They also include a scientific understanding of our economic and political system, why it is turning against us, and how we can transition to one that will uphold and reaffirm the preciousness of human life and the planet.

Ideas assume such outsized importance today because the incredible technology and wealth in our society has brought us to the brink of a new era, one that the prophets of old could only dream about. Humankind has the realistic ability to arise and abolish the private property economies that have enslaved and impoverished the world. We have the power to establish cooperative systems that will at last allow us to become fully human, to end our domination by alien economic laws, to heal the earth, and determine our own destiny.

## THE LAW OF VALUE

The private property system itself has created the means, opportunity, and necessity of abolishing it. Capitalism has driven the development of technology to such an unheard of level that automation is already effectively replacing human labor. Laborless production makes it impossible for a system based on the buying and selling of labor power to exist. When jobs disappear, workers no longer have money, commodities can no longer circulate, wealth drastically polarizes, and poverty spreads so rapidly that people are forced to fight just to survive.

This economic oppression is enforced by an entire private property superstructure that mobilizes to try to convince us “there is no alternative,” that our lives have no value or meaning, and we should submit to the desolation the system is preparing for us. Revolutionaries are called to stand in the gap and confront these lies head on, with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Our people not only have value, their lives are sacred. There is no moral or scientific reason why we should submit to poverty and exploitation in an era of such spectacular potential abundance. We have a choice.

However, we cannot make this choice without a clear understanding of how to transition beyond the private property economy. It is the role of revolutionaries to study, understand, and explain this transition. It cannot take place spontaneously. Today’s polarization of wealth is driven by capitalism’s law

of value. It can only be ended by a political movement that consciously sets out to attain political power, and use that power to organize a cooperative economy. In today’s high technology economy, only a cooperative system is capable of distributing the social product in a manner that can effectively meet human needs.

Previous revolutions were able to develop and achieve victory more or less spontaneously because they responded to economic developments that had already taken place. Feudalism reflected the small scale agricultural production that emerged spontaneously from the destruction of the slave system built by Rome. Capitalist relations developed within the feudal structure. These were stages in the development of private property. But a cooperative society cannot emerge by itself out of a capitalist economy. The domination of the competitive market makes it impossible. A cooperative economy can only emerge when a conscious, class-based political movement acquires the power to consciously organize it.

## AN ORGANIZATION OF PROPAGANDISTS

Such a revolutionary political movement can only be developed by an organization that understands that our current economy is broken, that a cooperative system is possible and necessary, and that the workers cast out by capitalism have to organize themselves independently as a class. The only way to build such a movement is through systematic introduction of these ideas. The League of Revolutionaries for a New America was founded on this understanding. That is why the League describes itself above all as an organization of propagandists. The dictionary defines propaganda as the “spread of ideas and information to promote a cause.”

Karl Marx famously stated that, “Theory becomes a material force once it has gripped the masses.” How to make this come about is the historic task of revolutionaries. Ideas can never grip the masses unless they are first disseminated and taught. They do not arise spontaneously out of the movement itself. Today’s spontaneous resistance is in fact growing in a situation that is subjectively extremely unfavorable. Americans have been raised and educated to eat, drink, and breathe the twin fascist ideologies of anti-communism and white supremacy. They are bombarded daily with Fox news, negative religious messages, and countless commercials for capitalism. Their organizations endlessly promote identity politics, reformism, and incrementalism as the answer.

The situation may be subjectively daunting, but the objective situation is favorable. Every day there are fresh proofs that the system is failing. Every day the bankruptcy of petty reformist tactics in the face of massive austerity is exposed. Every day the revolutionaries can effectively pose the question, “How is that working for you?” We can point out how tirelessly and incredibly hard the system has to work to create poverty amid the

potential material paradise that our technology is creating daily.

Since these ideas originate in scientific study outside the spontaneous movement, it is up to the revolutionaries to find the means to then introduce them inside it. We have to position ourselves where we can gain an audience and where we can understand the thinking of the workers and address the questions on their mind. But when we work in and recruit people from the spontaneous movement, the tendency toward spontaneity continually enters into our ranks. There is a continual pull to think that if we simply fight harder we can win. All our study of philosophy, social science, and history teaches us otherwise.

Our class cannot win even the most basic demands today without entirely overturning the private property corporate dictatorship, and building a cooperative society. We cannot create such an entirely new social

system without introducing these new ideas and new ways of thinking into the movement. These ideas can only be communicated by the most widespread writing, speaking, getting out newspapers, pamphlets, organizing schools and study circles, raising funds, etc. All our wonderful strikes, marches, and rallies will never lead us to victory unless and until we can persuade the people around us that a new society is necessary and possible. This requires that we move to the next level of economic and political education and propaganda. We have only begun to fight.

*Building Block articles help explain a basic concept of the revolutionary process, challenging readers to explore its meaning for political work in today’s environment. This is the second in a series on “Why the League.”*

## Culture of Fascism (Continued from page 4)

intensifies, we are seeing the revival of these ideas by President Obama and others. In a speech on the Syrian crisis this year Obama said, “When, with modest effort and risk, we can stop children from being gassed to death, and thereby make our own children safer over the long run, I believe we should act . . . that’s what makes America different. That’s what makes us exceptional.”

Given this history, it is not surprising that a poll done in November 2011 by the Pew Research Center found that a large percentage of Americans — 49% of those polled — believe that American culture is superior to others. However, as testament to changing times, the poll also found that these ideas are being shaken up. The percentage of Americans touting America’s “cultural superiority” was down 11 points from 2002.

The second idea that that the rulers are using to cultivate a fascist culture involves the changing form of racism. With all of our historical roots, it isn’t difficult in America to make a transformation from racism based on color to racism based on poverty and the new class. While there is plenty of the old racism to go around the new form of racism is directed against an emerging new class that includes the “ghetto blacks,” the “illegal immigrant” and the white, so-called “trailer trash.”

The class and cultural differences with the ruling class — not color — are emerging as the ideological basis for the savage economic assault against the poor of all colors. As during slavery, the rulers put forth a position that blames the victim and in this way the poverty, brutality and murder of defenseless people is made acceptable.

Out of this progression will develop not only a fascist culture, but a full-fledged fascist movement. The fascist culture will feed the fascist movement and the fascist movement will feed the fascist culture.

The ruler’s goal is to stop the revolution from proceeding on a class basis. Their aim

is to guarantee that the new class, particularly the dispossessed, does not unite. This is happening at a moment in history when it is finally objectively possible for the class to unite.

This is not to say that the deeply embedded ideas based on America’s history of slavery and color racism are not still flourishing. The rulers insured that as many whites as possible believed that they benefitted from segregation and discrimination against the blacks. As Lyndon Johnson said in 1960 to the journalist Bill Moyers, “If you can convince the lowest white man he’s better than the best colored man, he won’t notice you’re picking his pocket. Hell, give him somebody to look down on, and he’ll empty his pockets for you.” The reality is that, through the decades, the majority of whites have lost more than they gained from color racism. They have lost healthcare, education, social welfare, etc. The point is that now is the time when a qualitative change in thinking is possible. This depends on the conscious intervention of the revolutionaries.

The only alternative to a fascist culture is a communist society where a communist, cooperative culture can flourish. Culture is therefore a key battlefield in which the ideas of class interests are fought out. No revolution has developed without a culture that not only illuminates the social scene, but that heroically points the way out. Revolutionaries must take the weapon of culture away from the rulers by cultivating a culture that embraces the vision of a communal society organized around distribution by need where everyone has a chance to contribute. Such a society will insure that the practical and cultural needs of all will forever be met.

*Political Report of the LRNA Resident Standing Committee November 2013*