

# RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

## Hold Government Accountable to End Homelessness

Homelessness in America is the clearest sign that a new class of workers has been created as a result of their displacement by automated production. It is living, visible proof that there is a section of the population for which the ruling class no longer has any use. Because it has no place in the system, however, this new class is also the key to overturning it and building a new one.

While mounting a massive public relations campaign around ending homelessness for a few, the government is mobilizing every historical, ideological and political weapon available, to suppress and persecute the masses of the homeless. It is step by step casting aside the “social contract” that mediated the struggle between capitalists and workers in the twentieth century, when workers were needed for production. There is no such period in the future of today’s capitalism. The economy no longer needs hundreds of millions of workers, and the system’s inherent disregard for human life is emerging. While the system relies on forms and methods from the past, it is much more dangerous today.

### THE SITUATION TODAY

For some thirty years the movement around homelessness has fought to a stand-off, resisting some of the worst forms of repression, while making few (if any) real, lasting gains in housing for the homeless. However, after decades of spinning its wheels, the movement today is in a state of flux, demonstrating an influence, strength, and ability to wring concessions far beyond its numbers or organizational capacity.

What is causing this change? Despite deceptive HUD reports to the contrary, society is seeing increased homelessness in more and more communities. Today, there too many homeless to isolate as was done in the past. They are visibly spilling out of the old downtown and “skid row” locations, into suburban neighborhoods and rural towns, creating a political crisis for politicians at every level. At the same time, the prolonged recession and “jobless recovery” is pushing more and more workers to the edge of desperation.

From Florida to California, a grassroots movement of homeless people and supporters is emerging, organizing around the premise that housing and other basic necessities are a human right. In some areas it is replacing the various “homeless coalitions” run by bureaucrats, non-profits, and business owners, who marginalized the homeless, hiding them in jail-style shelters.

On the West Coast, especially in the wake of Occupy, homeless people have used encampments as a key organizing form, not only for survival but for protesting. In Washington,

DC, a philanthropist donated 50 tents that were immediately set up by the homeless seeking protection from winter weather. The Mayor responded by finding housing for some and calling on police to remove the rest.

Virtually all politicians resist encampments, because their true agenda for the homeless is to crush them until they disappear. Local politicians have been promising to “end homelessness” since 2000, and have violated those promises with impunity. Homeless encampments make it harder for them because they are a visible sign of their failure to deliver.

### SYSTEMIC CAUSES

Homelessness is threatening the ruling class’ ideological hold on the workers and on society as a whole. People can see more dramatically than ever, the market economy is failing to meet the needs of its people, and the social contract has been abandoned. The ruling class today has no incentive to house the homeless and no intention to do so, but cannot admit this because the homeless have public support. As a result, politicians adopt well-publicized plans to house a fraction of them, to make it look like they care, to make it look like the system works. Then they harass, oppress, criminalize, or brutalize the rest until they go to jail, the hospital, or leave town.

It is becoming clearer every day, that the private property system is only concerned with housing as an investment commodity for profit, not shelter to protect human beings from the elements. This is proven by the spread of “ghost houses,” which are deliberately kept vacant (not even rented out), to be used strictly as investment vehicles for wealthy speculators to park their investments.

The homeless are beginning to develop political independence and unity based on their economic equality. One aspect of this unity and independence is that the “Non-Profit Industrial Complex” is unable to get a real foothold in the homelessness movement. While it can co-opt a few leaders, provide services and talk about “affordable housing” and “cutting poverty,” it cannot effectively connect with the homeless leaders as a whole. It cannot connect, because of its funding streams and political alliances; it cannot and does not advocate for real, effective, immediate solutions to homelessness.

The significance and power of this movement is its objective position in society. It is part of a displaced class that is growing rapidly and creating new leaders and organizations the ruling class cannot control. These are not the “same old” organizations that have been fighting these issues for decades. The power of the homelessness movement today comes from the fact that the ruling class has no solution for it, is powerless to prevent or end

it, and has no moral defense for refusing to house its people.

### NEXT STEPS

New organizations are connected with camps, kitchens, churches, etc. They are unstable, frequently splitting around trivial issues, with old ones dying and new ones arising all the time. Their very instability, however, makes them more open to influence by revolutionaries, who help them unite and keep politically on track. At the same time there is a growing convergence between movements around homelessness and larger movements for tenants’ rights, affordable housing, and movements for health care, Fight for \$15, and against police violence.

The starting point for class unity of all who can be united is the demand that the government provide housing and basic necessities for everyone; turn over the hundreds of thousands of government-owned vacant homes to the homeless, instead of to private investors to make money. When the State refuses to do so, revolutionaries can propagandize around which class it serves, and how and why a system based on private property cannot provide for the needs of its people.

Making demands on the federal government brings together the scattered struggles against individual landlords, banks, or corporations into a political struggle against the State. National demands open up a battlefield where class consciousness can be taught.

### ROLE OF REVOLUTIONARIES

Across America, a debate is raging around the cause of, and solution to, homelessness. Is it caused by the failure of corporations and government to ensure an adequate supply of housing? Or is it caused by failure of individuals to be smart and hard-working enough to be able to afford it? The facts make it clear that government is to blame, but since the system cannot admit this, it scapegoats the poor. If the answer is personal failure, there is nothing for the homeless to do but suffer in silence and lose all hope. But if the government is responsible, then the battle is on to hold it accountable to solve the problem.

The role of revolutionaries is to position themselves by agitating concretely for class unity in the various housing and homelessness battles. At the same time they use that positioning to draw the revolutionaries into discussions and education around the fact that private property is the ultimate cause of homelessness, and a cooperative society is the solution.

The question for revolutionary propagandists is to learn to use the concrete features of the housing and homelessness crisis to explain the private property system and how it is the obstacle to meeting the demands of our class. Revolutionary propaganda teaches people to look beneath the features and understand the causes of the crisis. Why won’t the system provide affordable housing? What is the relationship between new technology and the growth of homelessness? What would society look like if it were reorganized around meeting human needs instead of corporate profit?

The homelessness movement cannot advance without political consciousness. Political consciousness cannot arise without conscious revolutionary teachers, and revolutionary teaching requires building an organization of revolutionaries to make it happen. Many in the movement resist studying or joining a revolutionary organization, because they are not ready to accept that homelessness is caused by a failed capitalism, rather than just by bad policies, or they see revolutionary activity as an added obligation. They do not grasp where revolutionary ideas come from, and the fact that it is up to all of us to study the history and science of society.

The only answer is more agitation, propaganda, and education within the movement as it grows. People are ready for new ideas, but we have to meet them where they are. Revolutionaries have to spread their ideas and organize their study circles where the movement is breaking out. The homeless and the people around them are part of a class with a historic mission. The ruling class tells them their lives have no meaning, no value, and no purpose. They are hungry for the ideas that will validate their experience, honor their dignity and their contribution to building a new society. The stone that the builders rejected is becoming the cornerstone.

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# Inside: Elections Unmask Crisis

America is in turmoil. If the electoral process underway does nothing else, it has unmasked a deep economic crisis, which is fast becoming a political crisis. Everything is polarizing based on changes in the economy. Throughout society people's lives are being wrecked, and they are demanding that something be done about it. What they confront in their struggles is a ruling class that is unfit to rule.

Now the crisis is being reflected in the political sphere. Cracks, fissures and down-right splitting are an expression of the polarization that is challenging the two ruling political parties. Third parties could emerge. Some who have lost everything want to regain what they have lost. Some are still drawn to the argument that cutting taxes on the rich and giving the corporations a free hand will create jobs and a return to prosperity. Others want to go back to 1776, or to 1850, or even to 1996. Millions of others are inspired by talk of a political revolution that promises big change.

There is no going back. Labor-replacing technology means the jobs are not coming back. A time-worn tactic of the ruling class has been to pit worker against worker, to divide and conquer. It is becoming more and more evident that the only way forward is to build unity on a class basis around those that have no choice but to fight for food, clothing, shelter, education, health care and jobs. That class unity is possible today because the new class is objectively united across lines of color and nationality by its common economic condition.

The condition of the new class is central

to, and is the basis of, the tensions, the turmoil, and the polarization that is taking place in society. The false solutions and the immorality of the ruling class stand in sharp contrast to the program of the new class.

The real question is what happens after the elections. What will emerge? Third parties may come out of this, the ruling parties may never be the same, but there are only two real choices going forward: either the solutions of the ruling class, which in the final analysis are fascist solutions, or the beginning of a real political revolution that will transform America and the world in the interests of humanity.

Flint, Michigan is a flashpoint for the burgeoning economic crisis and the exposure of the rulers as a class unfit to rule. "First They Came for Michigan" shows that in Flint, Detroit, Benton Harbor, and across Michigan, the Emergency Managers who have taken over are unwilling and unable to provide even clean water for those the system no longer needs. "The workers who are poisoned, without running water, forced into the streets, denied medical care and facing starvation are moving toward a common struggle around a program for their very survival."

"Hold Government Accountable to End Homelessness" reveals homelessness as the "living, visible proof" that the ruling class will not provide even the basic necessity of shelter to a section of workers who have been shoved to the wayside. Yet, the homeless and the class they represent are key to building a new kind of society.

From Michigan to Georgia to Texas and beyond, the economic crisis is deepening, exacerbating a political crisis. In Georgia, as

"The Corporate State Takeover of Georgia Public Schools" shows, its own version of emergency manager takeovers are being engineered. The public schools are in crisis, and the state is under no obligation to provide a quality education for all children. Why educate those who will never have a job, who have no future? So-called "failing" schools will be taken over and privatized or shut down, and working class parents are fighting for their children to have a future.

"Texas: Dispatches from the Front" shows how the polarization, "the disparity between the rich and the poor" is growing. The center of the world oil industry, Texas is home to 59 billionaires, while at the same time Texas is at the bottom of virtually every index of poverty.

"The European Union and the Fall of Social Democracy" is a good example of how efforts to reform capitalism "into a kinder, gentler system" is a dead-end. Draconian austerity and now the migrant crisis reveal that the crisis being experienced in America is in reality a global crisis. A new path forward is needed.

Which way forward? "The continuation of capitalism is being called into question by the development of computerized, electronic production. This means that in order to survive the workers will have to constantly fight for unity," says "The American People are for Unity." A common equality of poverty is making the old divisions of color or nationality or religion less and less tenable. The fight for unity is the first step on the path to the emancipation of all of humanity.

## 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, healthcare and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a cooperative 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, has arisen to oppose this motion.

Society must take over these corporations or these corporations will continue to 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.

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 humanity's imperiled future.

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# The American People are for Unity

Many different definitions of racism exist, which conform to different political and ideological ideas, or to points of view that certain people want to put forth. However, to be a racist is to take a conscious position, to think something out and come to the conclusion that “I’m better than that person because my eyes are blue, or I’m better than that person because my skin is this color, or because I came from this country” and so forth. It’s only after taking such a position that a person becomes a racist.

The very idea that an entire color or faith of people has got the same idea is in itself racism. How can a whole mass of people all have the same idea? They are from various classes, various backgrounds and various religions. Yet, some people come up with the idea that they all have the same idea. That in itself is racism.

There is a serious problem of racism in America. There is plenty of racism and there are plenty of racists. But to identify the American people with this violent and dangerous minority, it is wrong. The American people, as a people, are not racist.

Revolutionaries need to win the American people to an active position, that is to say, win them over to an active, thought-out class position. The way to achieve it is not to identify them with the worst criminal elements in their midst.

Like the [Negro National] anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” says, “Stony the road we’ve trod.” Along that road there were whites marching with the Blacks every step of the way. Over every stone, there were whites in the struggle against racist policies, like John Brown and Viola Liuzzo, who was killed by the Klan in Selma, Alabama in 1965 during

the voting-rights struggle. But we hear less and less of people who sacrificed their lives, who went to prison, who stood their ground alongside their brothers and sisters. We hear less and less of them and more and more of the vicious, murderous, fascist white supremacists and racists in our midst.

If the media and the ruling class publicized the daily acts of friendship and equality that whites and Blacks participate in, to publicize the good things as much as they publicize the bad things, this would be an entirely different fight. The ruling class will not do that because they don’t want to solve the problem. They need to keep our class divided, not to mention they get good money. Their fortune is made in carrying out, but never ending, the struggle against racism.

Another point that is helpful on this question is to look at other forms of racism that have dominated that period of time of the rise of fascism. Look carefully and we see that inner-color racism: racism among the whites, racism among the Asians, racism among the Blacks, has been much more deadly than racism between Black and white.

Hitler’s racist war was against the Slavic people, the butchering of 30 to 40 million human beings in a period of six years, including his savage racist war against the Jews. Another example is the racist wars that were carried out by the Japanese against all the other Asian peoples. The war of the Japanese against the Chinese was an outright racist war. They declared themselves superior to the Chinese. The Japanese claimed the Chinese had no rights they had to respect, and they invaded China and slaughtered them like animals.

Racism is not just between Blacks and whites. Inner-color racism has killed more people than inter-color racism. And people

don’t even think about it.

What are the roots of racism in America? Racism continues in different forms and in different historical epochs. We need to look further and ask, what is it – what’s behind it, what gives it its strength – its life? Once we look deeper into it, we have to conclude that it’s the capitalist system itself. Then if we say that racism is an integral part of the capitalist system, then you’re not going to get rid of racism without getting rid of the capitalist system.

We have to conduct this war against racism like we conduct any war. The first thing is to know who your enemy is. Take World War II for example. If the Allies identified their enemy as the Germans, the Italians and the Japanese people, we would still be fighting. They identified their enemy to be this little clique that wanted to control the State in Germany, Italy and Japan. They identified clearly who their enemies were and made an effort to win everyone else over to their side. The first thing is to identify the real enemy. The second thing is to do everything possible to isolate that enemy to the extreme and then organize the maximum force to crush them.

The enemy isn’t white people, or poor white people, because we’ve shown that inter-white racism is as violent as racism between Blacks and whites. The problem is the system. We identify the system and not the people as the problem. The next step is to go after that system. Then we can show the identity of interest between the whites and the Blacks in the same economic category. This way, there is a basis for them to come together, to stick together, to organize the maximum number of people against the system.

The false idea that the American people

are racist – that they have taken a conscious position – is planted to prevent the maximum amount of force to organize against capitalism and therefore against racism. This is intentional. This is not happening accidentally. As long as the problem is identified as “white people,” or “Black people,” or “Brown people,” there is no way to resolve it.

Do the conditions exist today to do away with racism? The continuation of capitalism is being called into question by the development of computerized, electronic production. This means that in order to survive, the workers will have to constantly fight for unity. Things we are faced with in periods of transition, such as the one we are in now, is that you can be unconsciously or subconsciously thrown into disunity or even into racism. But you can’t be thrown unconsciously or subconsciously into unity. Support for unity is a thought out, conscious thing.

We have to understand that the fight for unity depends on education of the masses of people, which demands an organization that is dedicated to doing this. It will take an organization of revolutionaries to bring this kind of consciousness to the American people. The point of it is, that as long as capitalism was stable, expanding, and dominant, the war against racism could be fought – and had to be fought – but it could not be won. Now we have a situation in which not only does it have to be fought, but it can be won. To win this war, the first things we need to do is identify the enemy, isolate that enemy, then mobilize the maximum force to attack it. And then we’ll overcome this thing, because the destruction of capitalism means the destruction of racism.

## From the Editors: First They Came for Michigan

The state of Michigan provides ample proof that the capitalist class is not fit to rule. Fascist rule is replacing all vestiges of democracy in many cities and towns throughout the state. Over the past ten years of state appointed Emergency Managers across Michigan, living conditions and democracy in cities and towns across the state are being destroyed. From the contaminated water poisoning of the population of Flint; to the tens of thousands of Detroit residents, who have had their water cut off and the entire city public education system decimated and in decay; to Whirlpool Corporation-ruled Benton Harbor that unlawfully imprisoned Reverend Edward Pinkney; the people are being nakedly attacked by the State.

The Emergency Manager law has sent state-appointed corporate managers to designated cities and school districts across the state. These unelected managers sold off public assets, privatized public property and services, and nullified existing contracts. Corporate dictatorship instantly replaced the limited democracy that existed. What is happening in Michigan in particular, and in the Rust Belt generally, is part of a larger pro-

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cess that is taking place throughout America today. The growing fascist assault we face is the result of the changes in the economy and the inability of the capitalist system to provide for the people.

Not long ago Michigan was the most industrialized and most unionized state in America. Today it is an impoverished, “right to work” state. This rapid transformation over several decades is the result of an economic revolution, based on electronic production and the consequent permanent replacement

of human labor in the production process. Millions of workers who have been thrown out of the production process constitute a new class in need of food, clothing, housing, healthcare and education. The ruling class will not care for those it no longer needs. It is organized to protect private property at all costs. The battle is joined and corporate government is intensifying its fascist attack on the people of Michigan. The people of Flint, Detroit, Benton Harbor and other parts of Michigan are speaking up and organizing

against these attacks.

Throughout America the same process is taking shape. Either the private interests of the corporations are going to take over the people, or the public interests of the people are going to take over the corporations. The scattered struggles of the new class for food, clothing, housing, healthcare and education all have a common cause. Combined, they are politically summed up as a program for nationalization in the interests of the people. Public access to clean and safe water means the nationalization of the nation’s water supply, just as public control of quality healthcare and housing, or free, quality public education requires nationalization in the interests of society and not the private interests of the corporate few.

Such common cause allows our class to develop an identity, as a class, around its most basic needs and, therefore, its self-interests as a class. The demand for nationalization shapes and broadens common political struggle, allowing our class to begin breaking its historic ties to the ruling class, freeing it to put forward its independent political program that represents its class interests.

# Texas: Dispatches from the Front

The capitalists say that in 2016 everything is going to get better. Even with the crisis in oil production, they say everything will be “okay.” Here in Texas, they are saying we will have yet another boom, saying it is like one we have never seen. They call it “I smell oil.” What they really mean is “I smell money.”

## CRISIS IN OIL

Texas is no exception to the basic economic laws of capitalism. Capitalism is not continuing to expand. In fact it is dying. Ever since the 1970s, when capitalism still needed thousands of workers, we also witnessed the oil crises during those years, with the cyclical crises of overproduction in the oil and gas industry. We have seen these booms and the busts in the oil industry of the 1970s to the 1990s here in Texas. It was these very crises that forced the capitalists to advance the means of production in the oil and gas industry, to enable the U.S. to compete with Middle East oil production.

There is a now a glut of oil on the world market. The U.S. used to import 65 percent of its oil. Now it imports only 40 percent due to increased U.S. production. This became possible with the new methods of gas and oil extraction, which uses new technologies to extract oil horizontally rather than vertically, a method called “fracking.”

The mastermind, known as the “Father of Fracking,” was Texas oil billionaire George Mitchell. He needed to figure out how to squeeze more oil from each well. As a capitalist, he wanted more money, more profit, and he did that by working the workers to the bone and beating the competition. He invested millions of dollars to perfect his system of hydraulic fracking to extract oil and gas from shale. At the time, it was a very dangerous technique. The process to unlock the previously unreachable reservoirs of oil and gas revolutionized the oil and gas industry.

The oil and gas industry is responsible for almost 13% of all the economic activity in Texas, but because it is so central its impact is much wider. Just in West Texas, there is enough oil and gas to run the whole world for two years. These days, drilling for oil and gas is easier, faster and most of all cheaper. Modern oil geologists examine the terrain and the surface with the help of satellite images for drilling and maintenance. They have also advanced, using the fracking drilling method, where drones are used to repair off shore oil platforms.

The federal government has done all they can to help the oil industry. They have given billions in subsidies and tax credits. The Environmental Protection Agency has exempted the practice of injecting fracturing fluids from EPA drinking water regulations, through an exception inserted into the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005.

In some towns there are hundreds of wells inside the city limits. The quality of air and water are in question. In 2014, Denton Texas, just outside of Dallas became the first

city to ban hydraulic fracking. The response immediately showed how the state protects the interests of the oil and gas companies. In 2015, the pro-fracking forces, led by then governor-elect Greg Abbott got a new law passed that strips cities and towns of the power to impose limits on fracking, or to limit the number of oil wells, or to sue companies for damage to their community. Abbott said that this legislation “was necessary to protect the oil and gas industry from the heavy hand of local regulation.” Community groups, including Earthworks and others, have been fighting for reform ever since.

The price of oil has been falling to new lows. Advanced technology in production eliminates jobs and then cuts in production to protect profits eliminate what’s left. Oil wells produce 24 jobs, so if you have 1000 working wells, you have 24,000 jobs. There were 840 active rigs in Texas in January 2015. They were cut to 321 in 2016. In Eagle Ford Shale, the field that arcs across South Texas, where most of the fracking takes place, the number of active rigs has tumbled from 200 to 76.

Economists, scientists, and professors all say Texas will rebound because of the \$300 billion that national and global corporations are investing in the petrochemical industry. They say the building of new refineries is pumping money into “Down Stream,” benefiting those who are working in the the refining of petroleum crude oil and the processing and purifying of raw natural gas. The capitalists say this is going to make up for the loss of jobs that come with the loss of wells in production, when in fact, oil is cheap. The ones who benefit the most are the oil refineries and not the consumers at the pumps. Most of these jobs are done with advanced technologies and a limited number of skilled workers.

## NEW CLASS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

Texas is number one in almost everything from exports, Christmas stores, crops, oil and the number of executions. It is last in all of these areas: women with health care, the percent of the population with health insurance, on per capita spending on mental health, tax expenditures per capita (47th out of 50 states), people covered by Medicaid (48th), employer provided health insurance (48th), workers compensation coverage (50th), average credit score (49th).

The disparity, the polarization between the rich and the poor, is growing. It seems like it might not exist to the privileged eye, but it’s there, and here in Texas, it’s a reality for so many people. Texas is the second largest oil producer in the world, where many of the world’s leading oil producers are located. A 2015 report from the Houston American Bar Association found the Houston area contains 4 of the 10 wealthiest communities in Texas. Houston is also where 38% of the children live in poverty and Harris County (where Houston is the county seat) has the highest rate of uninsured in the nation, more than 1 million in the county alone.

Like the book by Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, we have a section of society living the rich life and a huge section that is barely surviving. The gap between the rich and poor is wider than ever in Texas. Texas has 59 billionaires, according to *Forbes Magazine*, the 5th highest in the country.

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We can see that things are moving in Texas like never before. New revolutionaries are being born and pushed into the struggle for survival. We have developed the League of Revolutionaries for a New America to train these new fighters and have them ready for the next level of the struggle.

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All are them are living at the expense of a new class of workers that has no ties to capital that is multiplying by the thousands every day throughout Texas. This new class stretches from East Texas to the Southern regions. In these areas, there is not only low employment, but poverty, hunger and homelessness – the consequences of an economy that is rapidly replacing human labor with the computer and the robot. From the *colonias* here in South Texas, to the suburbs of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, this growing class is young and living paycheck to paycheck. It is projected that by 2020 robots and automation will eliminate 5 million jobs globally, from the lowest paid jobs such as service and office work, to the more well-paid such as healthcare, manufacturing and production, extraction and others. A study by the Bank of England last year placed the figure much higher, at 80 million jobs in the U.S. alone.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently reported that 18.8% of Texas households couldn’t get enough food to meet their needs. Only the state of Mississippi at 19.4% had a higher percentage. A 2011 report released by Texas Hunger Initiative and Feeding Texas shows that East Texas counties, such as Dallas County, have over 400,000 people with unsteady access to food, or 19% of the population. In Collin County, there are about 100,000, or 14% of their population. And in Denton County, it’s 15%, which is almost 90,000 people.

Out of 254 counties in Texas, only eleven are above the poverty level. That means that the rest of the 243 counties are below the poverty level. They are ordinary people, who have been pushed to the margins of the economy.

We have seen more layoffs, as well as wage reductions and cuts in, or elimination of, health insurance for the workers that are still working, affecting the average Texas workers. People are losing their housing, their cars, and other essentials. The undocumented, the poor and all types of everyday people are

struggling daily, just to survive, under conditions of fear. The founder of Mothers against Police Brutality in Dallas, Mrs. Collette Flanagan, laid it out straight about the police, “We don’t care about you coming to our community and having a barbecue and drinking soda with us. We want you to stop kill-

ing our kids.”

With the elections at the midway point, Texas ranks second to last in voter turnout. The new class is developing. It is being attacked by the ruling class, as they keep us divided along color lines. Things are getting worse and more tense. The capitalists divide the class by claiming those who are poor like to live off welfare, and that those working are supporting them. All the propaganda that’s put out through the media tries to convince the public that immigrants have no right to be here, and that the undocumented are blamed for the lack of jobs. The new class and its developing struggle for the basic necessities of life, for a life without fear, is something new. Revolutionaries show that the struggles against the police, within the Democratic Party and other fronts are part of the developing movement for changing society as a whole.

## A VISION AND A SOLUTION

Based on this objective situation, revolutionaries must entrench ourselves into this spontaneous movement, from the elections to the fight for water, against homelessness and poverty, against police brutality, etc. We must have the patience to understand its motion and direction, so we can reach this new class with an understanding of the problem and the way to solve it – a new society where what we need is distributed on the basis of need.

We can see that things are moving in Texas like never before. There are also dangers with these opportunities, like anything in life. We are positioned in the right areas and every day new revolutionaries are being born and pushed into the struggle for survival. We have developed the League of Revolutionaries for a New America to train these new fighters and have them ready for the next level of the struggle.

# The Corporate State Takeover of Georgia Public Schools

Education “reform” is running rampant throughout the country and especially in Georgia. Yes, the public education system needs improvement, but these “reforms” are designed to destroy public education. We must demand national funding to guarantee equal, quality education for every child. Either education will be the profit making private property of the corporations, or it will serve the public interests of the people.

The capitalists’ goal is to maximize profit. Thus, the privatization of the public school system is not just a policy, but it is a necessity to them. The value of commodities has been lowered because the value of labor has decreased, due to the glut of commodities on the market produced by robots. Thus the capitalists must find new avenues of profit making. For the corporate world, public education and all public resources are the last frontier to expropriate every last morsel of value and profit.

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Today marks the age of electronic production, where the robot replaces the worker. There is no need to educate someone the capitalists do not need. This is the basis of the school takeovers by the state of Georgia. It is part of the ongoing destruction of public education.

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The State at every level has merged with the corporations to restructure society to benefit corporations. Within the field of education, this destruction generates school closures, high stakes testing, a student debt crisis and attacks on public education employees’ wages, working conditions, and pensions. The attacks on public education in the minority communities are the opening wedge for the attack on the entire class. Capitalism will not educate those it cannot employ.

In Georgia, Republican Governor Nathan Deal has proposed the “Opportunity School District” bill (OSD) that would close 141 schools in Georgia that have scored below 60 in the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI). First passed as an Act requiring an amendment to the state constitution, it will be voted up or down in a referendum on November 8.

The “Opportunity School District” should really be called the “School Takeover” Act. It is a clear example of the merger of the State and corporations and is an assault on democracy. It was the brainstorm of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), led by the Koch Brothers and others in the corporate world, in order to privatize public education. Republican Governors have implemented this policy in Michigan, Tennessee and Louisiana. In all three states the takeovers remain in place

even though “children have seen negligible improvement – or even dramatic setbacks – in their educational performance,” according to the conclusion from the Center for Popular Democracy.

The OSD should be compared with the Emergency Manager law in Michigan. The people of Georgia will “vote on the referendum,” which makes it slightly different than the total lack of bourgeois democracy that forced Emergency Managers on the people of Michigan. However, both allow no input by those most affected. Everything is controlled from the top. The Emergency Manager in Flint, Michigan decided to switch the city water source to the Flint River, allowing contaminated water to flow into Flint residents’ water taps via corroded pipes, putting lead and other toxins into the people’s drinking water. Government officials and the governor were aware of the situation and did nothing to prevent it. Thousands of children now suffer with blood diseases and other health problems, in-

cluding brain damage.

Governor Deal’s proposal to create the OSD was passed by the state legislature in March, 2015. The constitutional amendment will be voted upon in a ballot initiative in November of this year. If approved by the voters, it will be effective for the 2017-2018 school years. It will be a campaign well funded by the corporate world. If enacted, the children of Georgia, like the children of Flint, Michigan will be negatively affected for decades to come.

The ballot initiative is worded in such a manner that it is basically a “trick” question. The following question will be on the ballot: “Shall the Constitution of Georgia be amended to allow the State to intervene in chronically failing public schools, in order to improve student performance?” Who cannot agree with this as worded? All parents want the best education for their children.

Changing the Georgia Constitution allows unfiltered authority to the Governor’s office. Most people don’t understand what the constitutional amendment would really mean. The state determines the definition of “failing,” and the state would take over any school that it deems failing. The state’s school superintendent can shut down any school and create a “conversion charter school.” Teachers and parents would not have any input in the con-

version. The state can take over local funds to run the schools and contract out management services to “for profit” corporations.

## HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH

Historically in the South, education was limited to the children of the ruling class. Before the Civil War, there was no public education in the South. It was illegal for a slave to be educated. The children of the white poor also received no education. Public education was first established under the Reconstruction governments. The Supreme Court case of Plessy vs.. Ferguson (1896) upheld segregation in schools, as long as Blacks and whites had parity in the quality of education (“separate but equal” principle). However, few Black students received equal education. They suffered for decades from inadequate funding, outmoded or dilapidated facilities, and deficient textbooks. High schools became available to whites (and some Blacks) in the cities after 1900, but few rural southerners, Black or white went beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade until after 1945.

During industrialization in this country, public schools were set up to train factory workers. Large classrooms, regimentation, obedience to authority, and rote learning prepared the young workers for the assembly line, the foreman, and how to take orders from above authority. Schools in this country have never been run for the interests of the children of the working class. The majority of Americans have never controlled the schools, or participated as real owners of a system that determines the life opportunities for their children. The purpose of school in America is to provide the kind of labor force needed for the production of goods and the creation of profits.

Today, schools that African American and poor white students attend lack funding and resources due to the inequality of the way schools are funded. Higher performing schools are located in the wealthier school districts where the tax base is larger, collecting more funding.

Over the last decade, Governor Deal and the state legislators reduced the education budget by \$8 billion. Some of the rural areas in the state cut their school year to 140 days. How can these students receive a quality education? This year the governor has proposed an education budget of \$8.49 billion, still 470 million dollars short of what’s needed.

Today marks the age of electronic production, where the robot replaces the worker. There is no need to educate someone the capitalists do not need. This is the basis of the school takeovers by the state of Georgia. It is part of the ongoing destruction of public education. More than one in four Georgia children, or 27 percent, live in poverty. The Georgia education system ranks 32<sup>nd</sup> overall in the nation. And Georgia, Nevada and New Mexico are at the bottom with the highest school dropout rates.

Presently, there are examples of veteran teachers, many of whom are Black, being laid off and replaced by “Teach for America”

candidates. School systems around the country are hiring less experienced teachers to replace veteran educators so they can pay less to a teacher right out of college with no experience.

## NEW ORLEANS SCHOOL SYSTEM- A MODEL FOR GEORGIA’S OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

When Hurricane Katrina hit, New Orleans had 4, 600 teachers – nearly 60 percent of them Black women. Those numbers have plummeted since the storm. The state in Louisiana took over the schools in New Orleans after Katrina and converted the whole system to charter schools. Governor Deal and a hand-selected group of Georgia legislators visited New Orleans to see how the city took over as many as 100 public schools and created a state-run district. He used this example as a model for the state takeover of public schools in Georgia.

The evaluations of teachers in Georgia were geared to the scores of children. “Pay for Performance,” caused teachers undue anxiety and fear for their jobs, if children didn’t perform high enough on the test. The “Opportunity School District,” is far from being an opportunity offered to all students. In this bill there is no intention of offering vocational technical schools to students, or any state funding for those students with special needs.

## EDUCATION OF, BY AND FOR THE PEOPLE

The actual goal of the “Opportunity School District” is to privatize public education by creating more “for profit” charter schools. Many parents and the education organizations see through the façade and are against this initiative. A coalition of organizations has been formed to campaign to educate voters to defeat the OSD initiative.

Meria Carstarphen, the Superintendent of the Atlanta Public Schools, has proposed closing schools and turning others over to charter school groups in an attempt to keep Atlanta schools out of state control, if voters approve of the governor’s plan. If the superintendent follows through with this, as many as 400 district jobs could be affected. Those fired would have to reapply for their jobs.

The “Opportunity School District” is a misnomer and a statement that was created to mislead the public. Instead, it should be called the “State Takeover of Public Schools.” It must be defeated. However, it is only the beginning of a longer fight for a quality education for all. Nationalization of education is a battleground where the interests and program of the class can be fought out. We must demand national funding to guarantee equal, quality education for every child. Either education will be the profit making private property of the corporations, or it will serve the public interests of the people. This is what is at stake in Georgia and the nation.

# The European Union and the Fall of Social Democracy

Social Democracy originated as a political ideology with the goal of establishing “democratic socialism,” through reformist and gradualist methods. Social Democracy in Europe, as it developed in the post-WW II era, advocates reforming rather than replacing capitalism, through regulation of the economy, support for collective bargaining, social service provisions, and redistribution of wealth. European Social Democratic parties, supported by trade unions, dominated through the 1970’s, in a period when world capitalism was still able to expand. Many policies such as universal health care, free education, and strong social services support for families, aged and disabled were established at that time. Since then, the social democrats have lost influence to centrist and right-wing parties.

Europe has often been cited as an example of how capitalism could be regulated and restrained to provide a decent life where everyone could thrive. However, as recent events have unfolded, it has become clear that Europe is subject to the same inexorable march of capitalism for expansion and profits, within the context of the qualitatively new laborless means of production, and that the so-called welfare state in Europe is being dismantled.

## THE EUROPEAN UNION AND AUSTERITY

The European Union in its present form was established in 1993 by the Maastricht Treaty, and has developed a single economic market through a standardized system of laws that apply in all of the 28 member countries. Nineteen of them are in the Eurozone, using the same currency, the euro. There are also many side treaties, such as the Schengen Agreement, which established open borders between most members of the EU. The EU has seven supranational institutions, only one of which, the European Parliament, is elected by the citizens of Europe every five years.

The European Union was created for, and is dominated by, the needs of capital. In this regard it is like NAFTA and other free trade agreements that the U.S. has enacted with other countries. The European Court recently issued a ruling that labor laws and legislation in each country are subordinate to the free movement of capital. The European Commission and the European Bank, together with the IMF, are commonly referred to as the Troika.

Instead of responding to the 2008 financial crisis by regulating banks and banning high risk financial dealings, the Troika, led by Germany, has been instrumental in the imposition of austerity policies. This is what the IMF has always done in the developing world and what emergency financial managers are doing today in the U.S.. Overall in the EU, the number of public employees has been cut by 20%, public sector wages have been reduced from 5-40%, and pensions 15%. Of course this has meant the cutback of public services and the privatization of previously public entities. Inequality in Europe is the highest it has been for 50 years.

The worst is in the countries of Greece, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland, which were “bailed out” in response to their sovereign debt crises. A sovereign debt crisis is generally defined as economic and financial problems caused by the inability of a country to pay its public debt to banks. This usually happens when a country reaches critical high debt levels and suffers from (perceived) low economic growth. Austerity measures, labor market reforms, and privatization were supposedly enacted to bring those countries economic stabilization. In reality the goal of the bail-out plans was to save European banks and the euro, at the expense of the national economies in question. The debt load of the bailed-out countries has increased substantially, their national output has been seriously undermined, and unemployment remains high. The worst is 25% in Greece and 22% in Spain, and close to 50% for young people. In Ireland, 10% of the country’s population has emigrated looking for work.

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The experience of social democracy in Europe helps to illustrate that revolutionaries must carry out widespread propaganda about the nature of the crisis, and present a vision for a cooperative society, and the road to get there.

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Currently, Europe struggles to maintain a limited recovery. In order to prevent a spiral of falling prices, the European Bank first tried negative interest rates and then went to quantitative easing to deal with a shortage of credit and high unemployment. The EU’s economy, especially that of Germany, is more and more tied with China as a trading partner, and is thus affected by China’s current economic downturn. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a proposed trade agreement, a companion to the Trans Pacific Partnership. Like the TPP, it would reduce the regulatory barriers to trade for big business, such as food safety law, environmental legislation, banking regulations and the sovereign powers of individual nations.

## POPULAR AND POLITICAL RESPONSE

In 2011, masses of young people protested all over Europe. The May 15 *indignados* movement took over public spaces in 58 cities in Spain, much as Occupy Wall Street did in the United States. In Portugal in March, more than 300,000 of the *Geracao a Rasca*, (Struggling Generation) demonstrated in 10 cities. On October 15, 300,000 in Rome and a million people throughout Spain came out as well, with more in many other countries. Greece had its own “Indignant Citizens Movement,” organized on Facebook.

These protests were a response to objective conditions and were inspired by the Arab

Spring, rather than any established European parties or trade unions. The traditional labor movement is tied to social democracy, which is paralyzed by its commitment to capitalism and the EU. As writers have repeatedly shown, while social democracy has always supported the establishment of a single market, the treaties and laws of the EU, which promote austerity and labor law reform, have outlawed their traditional Keynesian stimulus policies in any member country.

The vacuum of leadership left by traditional social democracy’s move to the right, as well as that of Socialist parties, has polarized European politics and given rise to or strengthened other parties of both the left and the right. Most notable on the left have been Syriza of Greece and Podemos of Spain. Examples on the right are the Danish Peoples Party and France’s National Front, which have grown significantly, exacerbated by the migrant crisis and the terrorist attacks in Paris.

Launched in January of 2014, Spain’s

anti-austerity party Podemos, within a year had the support of 28% of the population. The existing radical left coalition Syriza in Greece became an anti-austerity unitary party in 2013 and by 2015 was in leadership of the country. As dramatic as the rise in popularity of these parties has been, they cannot effectively respond to the anti-austerity demands of their supporters within the bounds of capital’s grip on the EU and the Eurozone. Being in the Eurozone means they lose complete control of their financial system in their respective countries. The majority of people do not understand that they have to leave the Eurozone to enact anti-austerity policies.

There are also developments in existing parties. In Ireland, Sinn Fein, most known for heading the Irish Republican cause has converted itself into an anti-austerity party. It has been consistently polling over 20% of the vote, as a fight is mounted against the new water charges, a punitive austerity measure imposed by the Troika. UKIP, the United Kingdom Independence Party, is a right-wing populist party, which has gained popularity since the recession and is heading up a current campaign known as “Brexit,” to get the UK out of the European Union. In all parts of Europe, new coalition governments abound, as all the parties jockey for position.

## THE REFUGEE/MIGRANT CRISIS

Europe has also been thrown into turmoil by the entrance of millions of political and

economic refugees over the past two years. The top nationalities include Syrians (48%), Afghanis (21%) and Iraqis (9%), but also included are many from Sub-Saharan Africa. EU member countries have received about 1,900,000 asylum requests in 2014/2015, two thirds of them in Germany, Sweden, Italy and France. An indication of the complexity of the situation is that Germany, a country of 80 million, accepted one million migrants, partly because they have a worker shortage. Sweden has also accepted many refugees, straining their well-known “welfare state,” which was primarily designed for only Swedish citizens.

The origins of the migrant crisis are extensions of the scramble for global positioning and markets engendered by the global economic crisis. It goes beyond Syria: The U.S./UK invasion of Iraq, in which 1.5 million died, and the subsequent occupation ignited sectarian conflicts which have displaced millions. Another factor is the violence of ISIS in the Middle East, an outgrowth of the invasion. Africa is also affected by its history of colonization by Europe, the demand of Western multinationals for minerals for tech production, which leads to warring militias and the effects of not-so-natural disasters of drought, desertification, and famine.

The EU has given assistance to its member countries for refugee aid, to deflect the impact, as it desperately seeks to maintain the open border policies of the Schengen Agreement, which are essential for regular commerce. The EU has also agreed to give extensive cash aid to non-EU Turkey, in order to keep the two million asylum seekers in Turkey, instead of crossing into Greece. France, Germany, Austria, Sweden and Denmark have all introduced temporary border checks to control migrants, in a suspension of the Schengen Agreement.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE?

The consequences of the global capitalist crisis within the context of the qualitatively new laborless, electronic, automated means of production are reaching all parts of the world. As people and parties try to deal with those consequences, they first try to reform capitalism into a “kinder, gentler system,” or turn the clock back to what they see as better times. The experience of social democracy in Europe helps to illustrate why that path is a dead end and that we need to chart a new course.

In these times, the political landscape is changing rapidly. As we are learning in the U.S. presidential election, splits and polarizations appear that give us the opening to reach new people. Even more dramatic changes are in store and we have to be able to take advantage of the opportunities and circumstances that are presented to us to carry out widespread propaganda about the true nature of the crisis, a new way of looking at the world, the vision for a cooperative society, and the road to get there.