

RALLY COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

The Poisoning of Flint: A Public Health Crisis

The poisoning of Flint water and the water cut-offs in Detroit are public health disasters. Both are a result of a failing economic system and a State apparatus, which is stripping all avenues of democratic governmental responsibility, through the dictatorial authority of the Emergency Management system. Rotting inside the corporate State lie the ruins of a public health infrastructure.

Historically, the U.S. public health system was administered locally and funded by a tax on sailors, administered by the Marine Hospital Fund and Service. Public health's military origin squarely placed it within the U.S. State apparatus. As such, it was organized to secure and protect the requirements of a capitalist class for a healthy productive source of labor power.

The needs of the industrial working class for illness prevention and health at times coincided with the needs of a growing capitalist society built around the system of wage-labor. Capitalists needed a public health system to stop disruptions in commerce and production, caused by the scourges of infectious diseases. Working class families benefited from vaccines, clean water, and the containment of epidemics. Along with the need for a capable military force, this defined and drove the government's development of public health. It also held the seeds of the 21st century starvation and privatization of public health, that have been so painfully exposed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and now the poisoning of the city of Flint.

A CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

The City of Flint was placed under the Emergency Manager Law in 2011. Ostensibly to save a little money, in April of 2014, Flint's Emergency Manager switched the city's drinking water source from Detroit's Lake Huron to the highly polluted Flint River. Almost immediately, residents complained of foul smelling yellow-brown water, rashes and other maladies. They were met with dismissive arrogance by all levels of government. It was the Governor's appointed Emergency Manager who cut off water to 91,000 Detroit homes and it was Flint's Emergency Manager, who refused to safeguard the quality of water when he switched its water source to the Flint River.

The refusal of government to act in the interests of the people of Michigan highlights the merger of corporations and government, reflecting the real intent of the Emergency Manager system. At the heart of the EM system, as well as the destruction of a meaningful system of public health, is the changing role of the State. For corporations like Veolia and Nestlé, water is the new gold. Removing Flint from Detroit's water system makes privatization schemes for the Great Lakes' waters easier. By October 2014, General Motors an-

nounced it would get off the Flint River due to the damage the corrosive water was causing to its production of auto parts. It seems that "what's good for GM" was not good for the rest of Flint. What the agencies of the government did in Michigan underscores the dysfunctional, starved and privatized condition of public health today.

The industry that grew the cities of Detroit, Benton Harbor and Flint has been devastated. Michigan has seen a 50% job loss in manufacturing since 2000. Flint's GM employment dropped from 80,000 in 1978 to less than 4000 today. The accelerated introduction of labor-replacing technologies in production has disrupted all former arrangements between workers and capitalists.

Increasingly, laborless production has forced the property owning class to use these ways to maintain existing property relations and power. Public health functions, by definition require democratic institutions in order to address the health of whole communities. Those functions are becoming superfluous as human labor in production is replaced by digitalization and robotics. The enactment of Michigan's Public Act 4 in 2011, established the sweeping powers of Emergency Managers to void union contracts, seize, sell and privatize public assets, and transfer any elected authority to an Emergency Manager. In this context, public health controls the public in the interests of private property, not the people.

In the decades following World War II, the labor and civil rights movements, along with thousands of dedicated scientists and technicians ramped up public health institutions and scored temporary victories. From freely distributed polio vaccines and OSHA laws, to the publicly financed Medicare and Medicaid, and the end of global smallpox, the working class benefited. Lead in paint and gasoline was banned and clean water laws were passed in the 1970's. Paradoxically, it was General Motors who promoted lead in gasoline in the 1920's and it was General Motors whose industrial parts were being corroded by Flint's lead-laced water in 2014. Corporations knew then as now that any level of lead is unsafe, especially for developing children. Neither gasoline, nor paint was intended to be ingested – but water is.

THE PERFECT STORM: AUSTERITY AND FASCISM

Those aspects of the public health system that benefited a productive workforce of the past, fell victim to austere budget cuts in the 1980's. Funding for public health programs were thrown back on the states, who in turn punted to county and municipal governments. Sequestration budgets cut public health functions by more than \$46 billion. Capitalists, losing the source of their profits from labor power, pivoted to privatization of public resources

and speculation. In turn, the corporate State reduced public health to a budget beggar at best and at worst, to a deceitful nonentity serving the interest of corporate private property.

Today there are 50,000 fewer public health care workers than 20 years ago. Sample surveys of local public health departments found that over 73% contract with private sources for core public health functions, resulting in muddled, or no public accountability. Private Medicare Advantage Plans have swallowed 32% of its public funds, and now 50% of Medicaid funds are in private managed care plans. Democracy – even limited democracy – becomes a strategic obstacle for the corporate take-over of public assets and functions. The Emergency Manager system is an expression of fascism in America.

As the public health crisis in Flint has unfolded, the political crisis has become clearer. Existing laws, science and regulations were ignored. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) disregarded the obvious, deadly implications of water-borne E Coli outbreaks and the subsequent dangers of carcinogenic total trihalomethanes (TTHMs). Eighty-seven cases of Legionnaire's, including 10 fatalities only resulted in 'boil water' advisories. No other information was given to the public, a core public health responsibility. The open hostility of the state of Michigan and the indifferent response of federal agencies made clear that economic austerity for the working class necessitated political fascism. Flint isn't only a water crisis; it is a national political crisis of democracy, and as such must be confronted politically. A unified working class response is necessary for the immediate needs of this city to be met now, by the government, without hesitation, conditions, or other limitations. The crisis in public health is both a cause and effect of a political crisis of democracy rooted in existing property relations.

CLASS UNITY: PRACTICAL AND POLITICAL

Enormous bureaucratic complexities, mired in a totalitarian culture that devalued human life, falsified and withheld information until the determined people of Flint con-

fronted the State. The complete failure of the State to protect the public health of the people forced residents to seek outside scientific verification of their worst fears, lead poisoning of children. Flint residents independently organized with scientists to adopt accurate protocols for lead testing of water. They took their children outside of Genesee County to get blood lead level testing and results they could trust. Amid calls for the Governor to step down, there is the beginning of a programmatic response to the crisis in Flint, that is both practical and political.

It is clear to many that Medicare for All should be applied to all residents of Flint immediately. There is precedent. Residents in Libby, Montana, the site of a deadly airborne asbestos contamination, have used a provision in the Affordable Care Act to guarantee Medicare, with no time limits, to all who lived in that northwest section of Montana during the exposure. The families of Flint deserve no less. But granting this would only verify the immediate need for government to guarantee that all public assets, including water and healthcare be nationalized in the interests of the public's health.

The workers of Michigan necessarily are relying on each other. Their struggle for clean, safe and freely distributed water objectively sketches the outlines for another kind of society that values human life above private property. The need for a lifetime of free publicly administered healthcare for all of Flint could not be any clearer.

Fighting in the interests of the children and families of Flint and against the Emergency Manager system is a fight for the future of the working class and society as a whole. Many cities and towns are experiencing scarcity in a land of abundance, as the old industrial infrastructures fail and along with it, any remaining democracy. Developing class unity becomes both a practical and political process. It unleashes the development of new ideas and incubates a vision of a cooperative, communist society that serves the interests of society, not the ruling class. Michigan is a harbinger of the future – our future is up to us.

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Inside: Finding Common Cause

The growing political polarization in America is being expressed in the elections. Increased dangers and growing opportunities are developing in the midst of the irresolvable economic crisis of capitalism. In the face of the fascist program of the ruling class, the workers are increasingly putting forward their demands for the government to meet the growing needs of the people.

One example is found in Flint, Michigan, where local community organizations are finding common cause and are petitioning for a common solution to the water crisis. They are demanding that the government provide Medicare for all 100,000 residents, poisoned by water from the Flint River. Flint residents are also demanding that Flint be declared a federal emergency disaster zone, enabling residents to receive federal disaster relief.

As the cover article, "The Poisoning of Flint: A Public Health Crisis" points out, it is clear to many that Medicare for All should be applied to all residents of Flint immediately. Residents in Libby, Montana, the site of a deadly airborne asbestos contamination, have already used a provision in the Affordable Care Act, to guarantee Medicare, with no time limits, to all who lived in that northwest section of Montana during the exposure. The families of Flint deserve no less.

Another example is how a section of the working class is using the message of the Sanders campaign, which appeals to the democratic and economic aspirations of the people, as a vehicle to fight for its concrete demands. This new, working class political motion is beginning to take shape, expressed by grow-

ing demands that the government provide the necessities of life to those in need. Out of necessity, these subjective expressions of objectively revolutionary demands are beginning to take root.

"From the Editors: The Meaning of the Elections" defines an America today where ninety-five million American workers are permanently unemployed. They are no longer even included as being a part of the work force. In a wage-based economic system, a worker with no job means no money. No money means that the worker and his or her family has no means to obtain even the basic necessities of life: food, water, shelter, education and health care. A growing section of the workers are being forced to fight for their very lives.

Just as the Sanders campaign and the situation in Flint are expressing the political unity of a section of the workers, the hitherto unknown breadth of equality of poverty is creating the basis for real class unity throughout the country. As "New Class Demands Distribution According to Need" shows, the intellectual grasp of unity must be fought for. The unraveling capitalist system and the growing equality of poverty that is the basis of the unity of the class is the reality that revolutionaries rely upon. The new class can only achieve their goals by fighting for a society in which all people can benefit from the abundance that robotic production promises.

"Elections 2016: The Fight for the Basic Demands of the Class is the Fight against Fascism" shows that regardless of who wins the election, the bourgeoisie is step by step imposing a fascist order on society. "Fighting the right" is the natural impulse of well-inten-

tioned people. However, this tactic no longer fits the conditions of today. Today, fighting for the basic demands of the class, fighting for the program of the class, is the fight against fascism. This requires us to focus on the fight for the immediate demands of the workers by insisting that the government provide for our basic needs.

The rising demand that the government resolve the problems of the people, and the open discussion of socialism are developments of extreme significance. "Which Way for the American People?" points out that in the 2016 elections the idea of socialism has been embraced by many people. These views represent a sense of what the world can be. They are fueled by the enormous loss of jobs and the consequent lack of education, health care, and general well-being. The Sanders' message of political revolution has drawn hundreds of thousands of people to his rallies, and millions of people to vote for him in the primary as a vehicle to fight for these things.

"The Tasks of Revolution and the Mission of the LRNA" is to create an organization that can be a lightning rod for revolutionaries. The movement for food, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities of life is objectively headed in the direction of communist revolution. The aim of the LRNA is to become an organization of revolutionaries inseparably connected to this spontaneous movement. The LRNA's mission is to unite the 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.

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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Which Way for the American Working Class?

In the 2016 elections, the idea of socialism has been embraced by many people. Recent polls report that 31% of Americans “react positively” to the word socialism; among 18 to 29-year olds, almost half view socialism favorably and only 47% view capitalism as a good thing. This means that 31% of Americans believe some part of the idea that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned by the community as a whole.

that were organized to manage the new industrial machinery for the benefit of their populations. In Russia the battle between the old feudal lords, the new bourgeoisie and new industrial working class ended up with a new workers socialist State being established. Industrialization in the Soviet Union had to first strengthen the country’s ability to defend itself by producing war material and the means of subsistence. After both the Civil War and WWII the State turned its at-

care, entertainment and other comforts. These needs can be satisfied with the ever expanding technology.

So how do we go from what we live with today to such a system? It sounds impossible, but history shows that with the changes in the various forms of manual and animal motive power (the bow and arrow, animal husbandry, agriculture, manufacturing), and machinery, society has necessarily had to change to accommodate the new ways of producing. With the introduction of the microchip and the exponential development of electronic production, the society developed for industrial production is impossible to maintain.

This revolutionary process underlies all of the small and large changes society is going through today. It is transforming the entire world.

The ruling class has its own vision for a world based on electronics, and it doesn’t include all of those being pushed out of the economy. As long as the means to produce the necessities of life are privately owned, those necessities will not be distributed according to need. As the need for labor is replaced by robots, the things being produced have got to be distributed without money. The ruling class has no intention of giving up their wealth and privilege. The only way for them to maintain private property is to replace the bourgeois democracy we have known with outright fascism. That is exactly what is happening.

With more workers being replaced by computerized production in every aspect of the economy, and an abundance of goods being produced, the State has to manage the interests of the ruling class more actively. The State is stepping in to protect the interests of the corporations, rather than guaranteeing that the abundance of the necessities of life are distributed to those who need them.

It does this in many ways, such as protective legislation, privatization of public goods and services, and transferring social welfare to corporate welfare. It backs up its actions with the police, the armed forces, the courts, and prisons. We are seeing this happen with the replacement of local elected officials especially in Michigan, with the Emergency Manager dictatorship. Public assets are privatized and handed over to the corporations. This is becoming common practice.

Teaching the people why society is unraveling, while promoting a vision of peace and well being, is a responsibility revolutionaries are being handed. Where do we start, with a working class that doesn’t see itself as a class; one that lacks a basic sense of unity with others who are living in the same worsening conditions?

The battles people are fighting today are coming into conflict with a State that is representing the corporations. Revolutionaries put forward the idea that the State must be forced to act in the interests of the people. We have to talk about the nationalization of critical elements of the economy at the expense of the corporations. In many parts of the country, water is being privatized, and people who cannot pay for water do not get it. No one can live without water.

The elections express growing evidence that people want to right the wrongs and that their thinking is different than in the past. They are beginning to make demands that the government be accountable to the people and act in their interests. It is through this process that the working class can learn that their demands will only be met if they take over the State and transform private property into public, communal property.

The American working class faces the serious question of how it is to move forward. How do we contend with a system that allows people to be intentionally poisoned through toxic water?

According to Pew Research polls, “Fewer than three-in-ten Americans have expressed trust in the federal government in every major national poll conducted since July 2007 – the longest period of low trust in government in more than 50 years. In 1958, when the American National Election Study first asked this question, 73% said they could trust the government just about always or most of the time.”

These views represent a sense of what the world can be and are fueled by the enormous loss of jobs, the lack of education, health care, and general well being. Hundreds of thousands of people have gone to rallies for Bernie Sanders, drawn to his message as a vehicle to fight for these things.

The American working class faces the serious question of how it is to move forward, not simply as belonging to one society or another; one ethnic group or another; one country or another; suffering under one form oppression or another, but as human beings. How will we contend with a system that allows people to be intentionally poisoned through toxic water?

It may appear as though any person, groups of people, political organizations and classes can simply put forward and fight for an idea and those who garner the most forces can possibly win. History, however, shows that the process of change is much more difficult and complex.

The political revolutions around the world during the 20th Century coincided with the transition from agricultural production to industrial production. This was a huge leap forward, and created large scale production that brought the entire world into a new era. Words are lacking to describe the human suffering, war, turmoil and progress this era brought forth.

Communist revolutionaries in Russia, and later in China and other parts of the world, seized power and established socialist states that tried to build the means of production up to the point where they could begin to introduce communism. These countries had States

attention to producing more for the needs of the people and efforts to rebuild the country. The Russian Ministry of Defense estimates that the total Soviet population loss due to the WWII was 26.6 million, including military dead of 8.7 million. They had a huge task to recover from these losses.

Developments since WWII have thrown the world into a new epoch of social revolution. Robotic and electronic production are overthrowing the industrial economy, just as the double acting steam engine did away with economies based on agriculture. Electronic production is doing away with human labor in every sector of the economy, while at the same time it is producing the possibility of untold abundance. A new kind of society is possible. Are we to settle for extreme wealth alongside of extreme destitution? The new epoch of social revolution demands new thinking and new ways forward.

The American people face a very important question: What is to be done with the people who have been driven out of the labor market and yet must consume? Today, the need for a transformation of society is being forced upon people. Communism is no longer an abstract, ideological consideration. People are beginning to organize and fight to get what they need for their daily lives. The goals of peace, freedom and social democracy are only attainable with a collective or communist system. It is along these lines that revolutionaries introduce new ideas that take the class through stages of thinking, to become conscious of its class interests and the necessity for a new society.

The United States has fully developed the economic basis for communism. With the capacity of the new electronic production, a truly communist society can be realized. Private property can finally be abolished.

In essence, communism is a way of organizing a society in which the socially necessary means of production are publicly owned. It is the rational distribution of the necessities of life according to need, including food, shelter, clothing, education, culture, health

Why I sell subscriptions to *Rally, Comrades!*

A reader shares his experiences

I have sold or made a gift of over thirty subscriptions to *Rally, Comrades!* I view the subscriptions as a political connection between me and whoever I am working with. Selling the subs come out of being involved, and establishing a political relationship with a person. When they have a subscription, they read the paper, and there is a connection between them and me, and the paper and the League. That way they get the League’s perspective whether I see them or not. It helps to get people of different experiences and levels all on the same page. Since we do not sell ads, we must remember that every penny raised through subscriptions, donations and fundraising goes to the work of the League and should be uppermost in our minds. The more people who get the paper and read the paper, the more successful we are going to be moving them forward. I also get great satisfaction in hearing the words in the newspaper being spoken by someone else.

— LRNA member, UAW retiree, Detroit

Elections 2016:

Fight for Basic Needs *is* the Fight Against Fascism

The 2016 Presidential elections are unlike anything this country has seen in decades. The question on everyone's mind is why, and for those dedicated to making a better world, what is to be done?

The 2016 Presidential election is happening within the growing polarization that is taking place throughout the world capitalist system. The world concentration of wealth has reached obscene proportions, while the capitalist class does nothing to redress the grievances of the mass of workers.

Domestically, the lowering of wages and rising unemployment continues, and the ruling class refuses to provide health care, education, or even such basics as housing and water to a growing mass of workers. Internationally, the U.S. is losing its dominance over the global economy. It is locked in a fierce competition with other powers over markets and resources. All of this is conditioning the electoral process and what the ruling class is trying to accomplish through the elections. While there may be tactical differences within the ruling class (some of them expressed in the candidates' positions on issues), they are united on a common objective: to remain in power and to defend private property at all costs. The only methods they have to accomplish their goals under these conditions are fascism and war.

Underlying all this turmoil is the massive transformation in the economy, as labor replacing technologies destroy the capitalist system. Electronic production is doing away with human labor in one sector of the economy after another. It is creating an untenable situation for those workers pushed out of the economy altogether. We refer to these workers as a new part of the working class; a new class. The new class has no choice but to fight for their basic needs in order to simply survive. The ruling class has to contain and destroy that fight.

A WAY BEING OPENED FOR NEW IDEAS

The LRNA is going into this election with the purpose of arousing as much revolutionary thinking as possible, connecting with those who are serious about not just changing an elected official, but changing a system. The workers are being pulled into the process of the elections (working in the campaigns themselves, participating in the rallies, bringing up the issues in their churches, schools, organizations and communities), seeking redress of their grievances. At the community level, people are raising issues such as homelessness, hunger, unemployment, health care, and they want these problems solved. Peoples' lives are being wrecked, and they are demanding the government do something. They need to understand the process they are part of, the solution to their problems, and what they must do to resolve them.

The rulers are aware of the danger posed by these changing conditions, especially the groundswell of the workers demanding that their government and their elected officials act in the interests of society and not the corporations. Most alarming to the rulers is the potential for a section of these workers to unite politically. Such unity could awaken larger sections of society to the plight of the new class. This could intensify a process already underway – for society to group around the demands of this new class, rather than the fascist solution the rulers are offering.

Within this struggle and debate over the future of America, we can see the significance of the Sanders campaign to the revolutionary process of developing consciousness, regardless of the outcome of the Democratic National Convention, or who wins the general election.

The message of the Sanders' campaign appeals to the democratic and economic aspirations of people. A section of the working class is using this message as a vehicle to fight for its concrete demands. The rising demand that the government resolve the problems of the people and the open discussion of socialism is a development of extreme significance. It paves the way for a real discussion about what it will take to reorganize society in the interests of humanity and the steps to achieve it. The message of the Sanders campaign has opened the door to talking about socialism, about what it really is – an economy where the means of production are government owned (under a government controlled by the people) and the necessities of life are distributed to the people. Socialism is simply the practical solution to a crisis brought on by labor-replacing technology. It is a step toward a cooperative society and a new humanity.

FIGHT FOR THE UNITY OF THE CLASS

Of course the unity of the class will not automatically take place. History shows us dying ideological systems fight to stay alive. The longing for the “good old days” becomes a social vision in periods of transition. This reactionary longing is automatic. The revolutionary vision – a vision based on the capacity of the new means of production – must be fought for. Special organizations must be created to carry out this fight. Until there is a new vision, even the most “revolutionary” fighter's end up looking backward and fighting to recover what was lost.

The ruling class is fighting to build a mass base for fascism. Just as importantly, we can also see that a class-based position has emerged among the ranks of the new class, as the workers struggle for the basic necessities of life and against the destruction of their lives. Revolutionaries must grab hold of and develop these arising seeds of awareness of class interests, no matter how contradictory and embryonic they may be.

Objectively, what is beginning to take shape is a class struggle for political power. There is no longer any meaningful struggle between polarities within classes. Instead, there is a growing struggle between economic classes. That struggle is not “fight the right,” which implies supporting one section of the capitalist class against another. The struggle is over which class will control the State and restructure society and for what purpose.

Revolutionaries need to take the demands of the new class into every possible forum, using these demands to build unity on a class basis. Class unity is possible today because the new class is objectively united across lines of color and nationality by its common economic condition. However, history only creates the possibility of class unity – this unity still has to be fought for by conscious people.

Revolutionaries play a role in preparing the workers for this struggle. The demands

and program of the new class have to become part of the debate during the elections. The propaganda and immorality of the ruling class must be challenged.

Revolutionaries rest on the basic demands of the class to show that a cooperative society is not only possible, but is the practical solution to the problems of today. Revolutionary propaganda plays the role of finding and influencing the emerging leaders, so they can influence others.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The elections have highlighted the developing polarization within, and perceived ineffectiveness of, the Democratic and Republican parties, which is setting the stage for the breaks in the continuity of the current political party system. Whether and when the polarization is expressed in the formation of a centrist party, a social-democratic party or a

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From the Editors: The Meaning of the Elections

Ninety-five million American workers are permanently unemployed, according to a recent Harris poll. They are no longer included as being a part of the work force. In a wage-based economic system, a worker with no job means no money. No money means that worker has no means to obtain even the basic necessities of life: food, water, shelter, education or health care.

This is the situation in America today. And the real cause of it is that the American workers are being placed in the untenable position of having to compete with the robot. It is not the fault of the Mexicans, it is not the fault of the Chinese, and it is certainly not the fault of the American worker, no matter your color, nationality or gender. The real cause is that the new electronic, automated technology means that millions of workers are no longer needed. In an economic system based upon human labor and private property that means the system is irrevocably broken. The ruling class is desperately putting forward all kinds of “solutions” to fix, repair or reform the system so that it works again.

There is no going back. History shows that there have been times like these, when the only solution is to move forward to reorganize society on a new basis, in alignment with the new economy and its new tools. The year 1860 was such a time. American history up until that time had been dominated by a slave-based agrarian economy. Capitalist industry was rapidly developing in the North, fueled by new steam-powered machinery. Out of the developing polarization, a new third party, the Republican Party led by Abraham Lincoln, won the election in 1860 with 40 per cent of the vote. Only the Civil War was able to finally resolve the conflict in favor of the new industry.

We face a similar situation today. A new technology is forcing the leap to a new stage in human history in which society is reorganized on a new foundation. It is this reality that is finding expression in the elections today. More than two-thirds of the American people understand that the country is headed in the wrong direction and that something must be done. After all of the turmoil of the electoral season and the demand to move in a different direction, we get the two most unpopular nominees in history, the candidates no one wants.

The meaning of this election is that nothing is being resolved by it. The elections are only preparing the ground for the battle to continue. The demand of this moment is to advance the process in which a “political revolution” is carried forward on the basis of this new class, united around a program designed to finally decide the matter in their own interests.

We are in a battle for the future of America. For the revolutionaries, those who understand that fundamental change is necessary, it means the building of a political revolution that will truly transform America in favor of humanity.

The Tasks of Revolution and the Mission of the LRNA

In order to be effective, revolutionary organizations must constantly step back, assess and examine the environment and conditions within which they work. From this examination they must develop a strategic overview, that directs them in the overall class struggle to achieve the goal of a cooperative, communist society. This means revolutionary organizations must always be asking – how do we participate in achieving this goal? How do we accomplish our tasks?

For the first time an objective communist economic class is forming to become the foundation for a communist political movement. The destruction of value and the emergence of a communist class have shifted the communist party – the subjective expression of the actual movement – from an ideological to a concrete and practical, i.e., political, base. The old ideological communist party is obsolete and must be replaced by a practical, political communist party that represents the motion of an actual communist class. Such a party does not exist. History cannot move forward without it. How is such a party to be built? What kind of an organization of revolutionaries is needed to build such a party? These are some of the questions this growing social motion has thrust upon every revolutionary.

CONTRADICTIONS OF THE PAST

Since the formation of the Communist League in the 1840s, revolutionaries have had to grapple with a contradiction that, while impossible to overcome, could not be avoided. That contradiction is that the communist movement was born within, matured within, and achieved its many victories within the struggle to make the transition from agriculture to industry. It had to overthrow the State and a ruling class based on agriculture and then struggle to establish an industrial economy and the corresponding State to facilitate the development of that industrial economy.

The victories of the Communist Parties in the developed industrial States fought for achieving the goals that were at least abstractly compatible with the bourgeois State. Such victories included the struggle for civil rights of the oppressed peoples, the establishment of the trade unions, the victorious wars of national liberation, and the defeat of fascism. Until recently, there have been only subjective or ideological movements for communism. The communist parties have led numerous, militant, objective, mass movements for reform goals within the capitalist system.

In the countries where the communist movement triumphed, it was done by forming a communist party to guide a revolutionary, but noncommunist, movement. Eventually, whether by design or by the logic of the movement, the party must be the “subjective expression of the objective process.” History shows us that if the communist party cannot subjectively express a communist movement, it will become the subjective expression of the reform movement, despite its name.

Until now, this contradiction has been

held off by concentrating on the ideological conviction of the class wherever they have achieved power. Karl Marx once wrote that prosperity is the death of a revolution. He meant by this that the struggle against the capitalist system arises during a time of economic crisis. The workers can become very militant in such periods. Then, as the crisis runs its course and relative prosperity returns, the revolutionary movement disintegrates. Applied to the communist led countries, it would seem the statement doesn’t make sense. Prosperity should make the workers even more militant in safeguarding the fruits of their revolution. Rational or not, this statement of Marx has been confirmed by history also in this regard. Communist countries were destroying feudalism and imperialism, and while they were reconstructing their societies and achieving a measure of social wealth, they were class conscious, militant and on guard.

The rising struggle for food, clothing and shelter is objectively headed in the direction of communist revolution. But that revolution cannot happen without the introduction of new ways of thinking that only revolutionaries can provide. It will not happen without a vision of what’s possible, and a strategy to achieve that vision. It will not happen without an organization of revolutionaries that is organized to carry out these tasks.

However, as that prosperity was achieved, consciousness declined and material bribery set in. One by one the revolutions in these countries were overthrown. The working class of these countries were not objectively communist because of the steadily and unevenly, expanding industrial base. The communist class arises only when a significant and growing section of the working class is forced outside bourgeois society by qualitatively new productive forces, of such magnitude that they must be transferred into public hands to produce according to need, or this class will actually die of want. This is now happening. The lasting victory of communism can only come about if a communist party actually expresses the political aspirations of an objectively communist class.

EMERGENCE OF OBJECTIVE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

In this light, let us quickly review our motion over the past period. As the above became clear, the LRNA wrote and published *Entering an Epoch of Social Revolution*. Based on that report, we stated the obvious contradiction of a Marxist organization calling itself the communist movement, when at best it can only

express that communist movement. In reality, a communist movement was beginning to form. It was composed of people at the periphery of, or outside of, bourgeois society. This class in formation had no idea of its significance, but from the standpoint of history, it was the class that was raising the demands of communism.

The moment the communist class raises its demands, the communist organizations must drop their own programs and adopt the program of this class. But since this movement is objective, it belongs to all communists from the *Catholic Reporter* to the most left-wing group in the country. Communism is a historical movement. Marxism is a very important current in the communist movement, but it is not the movement itself. The LRNA has never strayed from its vision of a peaceful world and a happy, contented humanity. Neither has it strayed from seeing commu-

tem, but they have no idea of what to replace it with. Before there can be a serious communist party, the revolutionaries must be gathered together on a non-ideological basis. The subjective expression of the objective movement cannot be a Marxist or Catholic party. It has to be a party of communism.

The first step is to create an organization that can be a lightning rod for the scattered revolutionaries. The spontaneous, objective movement for food, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities of life is objectively headed in the direction of communist revolution.

The aim of the LRNA is to become an organization of revolutionaries inseparably connected to the spontaneous movement. The LRNA has identified its mission as “...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 cooperative society. Such a society must be based on the public ownership of the socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the social product according to need.

The LRNA’s propaganda activity is to facilitate this process, to offer an analysis of the problem, a vision of the solution and a strategy and tactics to get there. We are attempting to rally these emerging revolutionary leaders, to prepare them to form a broad core of conscious communists, who will stabilize and lead within the objective communist movement, as it strives to find the form to politically express its demands for the basic necessities of life.

It is important that we understand the internal relationship of a dialectical process. Since, as Frederick Engels points out, sex is the ultimate proof of dialectics, let’s take an example. The child reaches puberty and begins having sexual urges. The object of the affection does not respond. The objective process, aimed toward the continuity of the human race is at least temporarily thwarted and cannot move forward. The same thing happens in the social process. If there is no subjective response to the objective motion, that process is inhibited or even temporarily stopped.

Revolutionaries have profound responsibilities today. Our task is to guarantee the subjective response of society to each stage of the objective motion. The historical trajectory is toward communism, but it will not happen without the introduction of new ways of thinking that only revolutionaries can provide. It will not happen without a vision of what’s possible, and a strategy and tactics to achieve that vision. It will not happen without an organization of revolutionaries that is organized to carry out these tasks, in each of the various stages of development that the struggle of the working class against the capitalist class must go through, and which always and everywhere, represents the interests of the movement as a whole.

nism as the cause of humanity and the foundation of that vision. But all else changed, including how to achieve it.

THE MISSION OF THE LRNA

The *qualitative* program for the communist movement can be summed up in a few words: Abolish private property! Yet, the goal of communism can be achieved only after the completion of a rather long and complex leap through *quantitative* stages. Points along this leap include on the objective side, the destruction of the present society, dialectically coupled with the subjective side, the consequent consciousness and politicization of the new class.

Let’s look at the goal, or the content, of the present quantitative stage of revolution and we can see the indispensable mission of the LRNA. Our goal is the formation of a communist political party of the communist class, as it reaches that stage of development. This party is absolutely essential, if the revolutionary process is to advance. The first task or mission is to group the revolutionaries together and win them to communism. How do we do this? The objective process itself creates literally thousands of revolutionaries who are in battle with the sys-

New Class Demands Distribution According to Need

The introduction of labor-replacing technology is giving rise to a whole new class of workers, rendered superfluous to a system which no longer needs their ability to work. This is a new proletariat, a global new class drawn from almost all social strata. Within the employed sector, nearly a third is part time, contingent, below minimum wage workers. Many are recent immigrants. Many more are youth, abandoned by society, with no future. Growing numbers are formerly securely employed workers, once the stable base of support for capitalism, now being forced into homelessness and absolute destitution.

The element that places the new class in this position is robotics. Step by step robotics eliminates workers from the workplace. The wholesale destruction of various divisions of labor makes whole sectors of the workforce permanently redundant. This means permanent unemployment for large segments of the working class. Capitalists will not feed those whom they do not need.

This segment of the population that no longer exists for capitalism is external to capitalism and is therefore in an objective position to reorganize society in its own interests. Permanent exclusion from the means of obtaining their basic needs compels these work-

American children were homeless in 2013, a total of 2.5 million children. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that the number of homeless veterans tripled in two years, to nearly 50,000 in 2013. With the increasing trend toward passing laws criminalizing the homeless, greater numbers of homeless are seeking shelter in hiding, away from possible prosecution. The Vehicle Residency Research Program found that about 50% of Seattle's homeless population is living in vehicles.

In Silicon Valley, the contrast is enormous. *Business Insider* reported that nearly 55% of workers do not make the \$90,000 annually to afford housing. In 2014 the area had the fifth largest homeless population in the country. Then, in December 2014, San José moved to dismantle one of the largest homeless encampments in the country, "The Jungle," in the shadows of the capital of Silicon Valley wealth creation. Meanwhile, in viaducts all across the Rust Belt, tents have been erected to house the absolutely destitute. Some of these are employed, well-educated, and students.

The progression of the introduction of electronics has now hit the more stably employed sector of society. This formerly bribed sector of the industrial working class, along with a section of the intelligentsia, historically connected the mass to the capitalist class. The destruction of this economic middle section of the working class is of the greatest political importance. It is here that we find the recently dispossessed section of the new class, which is educated, socially conscious and used to organization. This employed sector is constantly being hurled into the growing ranks of the structurally unemployed and into absolute destitution.

The rulers' goal is to stop the revolution from proceeding on a class basis. Their aim is to guarantee that the new class does not unite. They use every divisive ideology history has handed them. In the past period of industrial development, temporary unity of the privileged section of the working class was possible. It was not possible for the workers

to unite as a class. Racism, backed up by the social privileges granted white workers over Black workers, kept people divided. Today, white workers are finding themselves on the street corner begging for food alongside Black workers. Whether the new class recognizes it or not – white, Black, immigrants are all victims of the capitalist system.

The hitherto unknown breadth of equality of poverty is creating the basis for real class unity. This is the historic role and possibility of the new class. It does not mean unity, no matter how objectively necessary, will be easy to attain. Consciousness lags behind the objective changes we are observing. Therefore, the intellectual grasp of unity, the subjective side must be fought for. The destroyed relationship between capitalism and this new class, combined with the objective equality of poverty that is the basis of their unity, is the reality revolutionaries must rely upon. The new class can only achieve their goals by fighting for a society in which all people can benefit from the abundance that robotic production promises.

This Building Block article is one of a series that explains a basic concept of the revolutionary process, challenging readers to explore its meaning for political work in today's environment.



This new proletariat is the only class placed in a position to overturn the system that has expelled them. There is no reform they can gain. They must reorganize society in their interests.

Electronics has expelled these workers from their former relations to the capitalist class, which owns the means to produce wealth in society. No longer able to bargain for better wages and working conditions, this new proletariat is the only class placed in a position to overturn the system that has expelled them. There is no reform they can gain. They must reorganize society in their interests.

Class refers to people's relationship to how the wealth of society is produced, not simply income. Throughout the twentieth century, as industrial capitalism advanced, wealth and poverty polarized. As long as capitalism had room to expand and workers and capitalists fought over how the social product would be divided, reforms were possible.

Today that polarization is qualitatively different from what we have experienced in the past. It is a result of a fundamental eco-

ners to fight for the distribution of the social product according to need. This is what makes the new class revolutionary, despite the historical social divisions in the working class, created and fostered by capitalism.

Absolute impoverishment characterizes a sector of the new class. The cutting edge of American destitution is homelessness. A 2004 U.S. Conference of Mayors survey of 27 cities found that African Americans make up 49% of the homeless, with whites at 35%, Latinos at 13%, Native Americans at 2% and Asians at 1%. However, in rural and suburban areas, where poverty is growing faster than in the cities, the majority of homeless are white. HUD estimates that the number of homeless in suburbs and small cities is almost 50% of all homeless.

According to a report from the National Center on Family Homelessness, 1 in 30

Fight Against Fascism... (Continued from page 4)

fascist party (or some combination), some sort of bourgeois political party realignment will set the conditions to accelerate the political polarization and political formation of the new class. A third party is an absolutely indispensable stage in the revolutionary process. It will serve to further develop the consciousness of the separate interests of the masses of American people against those of corporate interests, a prelude to fighting for a cooperative society.

A key tactic along the strategic path of getting the workers to see that they are in a fight for a cooperative society is nationalization. For the workers, "nationalization" simply means forcing the government to intervene in society to guarantee that the needs of the people are met. Nationalization is a battlefield that both classes need – to serve their

economic and political interests. Calling for nationalization leads the people into a political struggle not only against the government, but it forces the government to act as *their* government. The political demand must be: since the corporations can't or won't provide for the people, then the government must. Ultimately, society either brings these corporations under its control, or the corporations will control society – with all of the devastating consequences. With conscious revolutionaries politicizing these battles, the people will come to see that their livelihood depends on actually taking over the corporations and creating a new society.

The LRNA is trying to build the revolutionary forces by making it clear to the workers where their interests lie. Revolutionaries utilize the struggle and the ferment created by

the election and the propaganda and actions of the ruling class, to advance the process of moving our class from the defensive – defending the capitalist system and what they once had – to the offensive, fighting for a cooperative society that is possible.

Regardless of who wins the election, the ruling class is step by step imposing a fascist order on society. "Fighting the right" is the natural impulse of well intentioned people, but we have shown how this tactic no longer fits the conditions of today. Today, fighting for the basic necessities of the class is the fight against fascism. This means focusing on fighting for the immediate demands of the workers, and insisting that the government provide for their basic needs.

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