

The Global Economy in the Epoch of Electronics

There persists among the people a great sense of unease, of anxiety and even anger, as if we all know deep down that we are a house built on shifting sands, and our times are characterized by instability, polarization, unrest and destruction. Everything is changing all around us, but these are really only the quantitative features or consequences of a fundamental, qualitative shift underway that puts humanity on an entirely different footing.

In 1965 Gordon E. Moore, a founder of Intel Corporation, put forth a projection that the number of transistors manufactured for electronic microprocessors will double every two years. Fifty years later Moore's Law continues to prove itself to be correct. In 2014, semiconductor production facilities made some 250 billion transistors, more than in all of the years prior to 2011. Between 1988 and 2003 the effectiveness of computers increased 43 million-fold. The pace of the quantitative development of this qualitatively new technology is accelerating, and it has profound implications for human society.

Computers and electronic technology are not just other tools, not just other machines. They are qualitatively new kinds of instruments that are unlike anything human history has ever seen, because inevitably it means automation, it means robotics, that is production without the use of human labor. This is why it seems as if the ground itself is giving way and we are being forced to leap for our very lives. The only kind of production system we have ever known, capitalist commodity production, is being destroyed and we have no choice but to begin to think of what kind of new society we must build.

It is estimated that 47 percent of employment in America is at risk of being automated away in a decade or two. Even low-wage China will use robots to slash labor costs by 18 percent. In South Korea it will be 33 percent, Japan 25 percent and in Canada 24 percent, according to the Boston Consulting Group. China is already building a "lights-out," fully automated factory in Cheng Du that requires no human labor at all. In Dubai a 3-D printer has produced a 2000 square foot office building, complete with the furniture inside, slashing labor costs by 50 percent.

DEVALUATION OF THE WORKER

Labor replacing production of electronics and digital technology is fundamentally antagonistic to the capitalist system. It is incompatible with a wage-labor system, where the value of commodities produced for exchange is determined by the labor-time of the working class. Automated production drives labor-produced commodities off the market. In this process, wages are dragged down to the cost of automated production. All pro-

duction by labor, including the production of the workers themselves, becomes superfluous. The ongoing process of this destruction is but the quantitative expression of the process of the destruction of capital that is objectively underway. Unprecedented production and unprecedented want describe our time.

As the pace of automation accelerates, the pace of job loss and the devaluation of the worker follow in its wake. No longer needed for production, these workers find themselves to be part of a growing global new class of permanently unemployed, underemployed, destitute and impoverished workers, who have no choice but to fight for the distribution of the necessities of life according to need.

An October 2014 jobs report shows that more than 92 million Americans, or 37 percent of the workers, are "no longer in the labor force." Globally, 200 million are unemployed, up by 27 million since 2008. Half of the world's population, some 3.25 billion people, live on less than \$2.50 a day. One-third of the Russian people live on \$1 a day. Unemployment rates in Greece are at 27 percent, and in Spain the percentage of unemployed workers under 25 is 43.8 percent. The richest one percent in 2014 possessed more wealth than the bottom 50 percent. The accelerated pace of electronics exacerbates the polarization of wealth and poverty world-wide.

GLOBALIZATION: OPEN BORDERS FOR CAPITAL

A characteristic feature of globalization is the flow of capital across borders, quite unlike the movement of capital in the previous period of empire and colonization. For example, China, long a low-wage haven, has seen its position in terms of gross domestic product rise to number one in the world, a position until now held by the United States. Along with this has come a rise in wages, which itself acts as a spur to China to automate and to invest globally. China is now also the world's leading trading partner, yet it is also shifting production to Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, and to the U.S., particularly to the South. Chinese investment abroad is expected to expand to \$2 trillion by 2020.

Capital now flows both ways across national borders in an increasingly integrated world-wide process. European corporations are investing in the U.S. and vice versa. The same holds with Japan and Brazil. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) regional economic blocs trade and export capital not only within their regions but across the globe.

China already has 30 establishments in South Carolina and another 47 in Georgia, including a \$500 million Volvo plant. China is now able to set up manufacturing plants in the U.S. South primarily because production

there is now "competitive" with China. For every dollar now required to manufacture in the U.S. it is 96 cents in China.

A case in point is the Chinese-owned Kerr Group, a cotton mill now operating in South Carolina. Residents are desperate for work even at depressed wages, cheap land and energy and heavily subsidized cotton. What is more, the work is highly automated. When Kerr Group opens a second plant soon, their combined workforce of 500 will be but a fraction of the thousands of textile mill workers across the South in the 19th and 20th centuries.

SPECULATIVE CAPITAL

The advancing rate of automated production, the ongoing destruction of value, and along with it the decline of value of the worker and the polarization of wealth and poverty, all lead as an inevitable consequence to the rise and domination of speculative capital. If money is not to be made in the production of commodities for exchange, then capital will seek to move money around, making money from money.

Laborless production means valueless production. Speculative capital does not create value but makes money largely from amassing vast sums based in debt.

Trillions of dollars have been poured into the economy by a federal government in the U.S. that has been taken over by speculative capital. As a result, the stock market has doubled since 2008, yet the economy has grown only at a tepid two percent rate during that time. Almost none of those trillions have gone to expand production or to employ more workers. 90 percent of the earnings of the largest corporations have been used to manipulate stock prices and to play the Wall Street casino. The debt bubble continues to grow.

The hegemony of speculative capital today has to be seen as a worldwide phenomenon. It is an integral dimension of globalization in the epoch of electronics. The outbreak of crises both in Europe and Asia are but a continuation of the crisis of capital that was first precipitated by the 2008 financial crisis in the U. S.

The dictatorship of speculative capital is perhaps most graphically illustrated in Europe, particularly in how it has dealt with the collapse of Greece. The European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International

Monetary Fund combine as a sort of "troika" to force extreme austerity measures upon the nation of Greece time and time again. With unemployment already over 25 percent, the response to the terms of the latest "bailout" has been to slash more wages and jobs, raid more pensions and other benefits, and command a sell-off of state assets. Austerity and privatization are the twin aspects of the dictatorship of speculative capital as it seeks to appropriate every shrinking morsel of value still left to it. The outcome is not only the polarization of wealth and poverty, but expresses the objective antagonism between a ruling class bent on defending private property at all costs, and a working class increasingly left with nothing.

GLOBAL IMMIGRATION

Globalization means the movement of capital and finance across borders. It also means the movement of masses of workers across borders in a desperate search for jobs and survival. Immigration from Latin America to the U.S. is a major political issue, as anti-immigrant propaganda pits worker against worker, and seeks to build a mass social base of support for fascist solutions to the economic crisis. Thousands die at sea in the Mediterranean, attempting the dangerous crossing to Europe. Many thousands more are fleeing both economic and social unrest from the Middle East as well as North Africa. Nearly 800,000 are expected to take this path of migration this year. No walls can stop the rising tide of immigration.

Our time is a qualitatively new time in which the world as we have known it is falling away. It is a time of an actual revolution in the economic base of society, and it is experienced as crisis, instability, turmoil and destruction. It is a time of transition, and there is no going back to earlier times. We can only go forward, and that is why these are revolutionary times.

To go forward we have to remake the world on terms that are compatible with the new technology, and which are in the basic interests of a new class created by this new historical epoch. Here we see the world-historical significance of this rising global new class. It is their historic task to remake the world in their own interests. In the end it is in the interest of all humanity.

CONTENTS

Inside: History is on Our Side	2
The Fight for a New Vision of Education	3
Analysis of Forces: Indispensable for Revolutionary Strategy	4
21 st Century Fascism	5

Inside: History is on Our side

The polls have been telling us for some time now that the American people do not believe that the country is headed in the right direction. There is a sense that something is fundamentally wrong and that revolutionary solutions are required. As the vast majority of the people struggle in an economy that no longer produces for them, there is a growing awareness that, as the article, "The Global Economy in the Epoch of Electronics" states, as the pace of automation accelerates, the pace of job loss and the devaluation of the worker follows in its wake. Of course, some respond to this by attacking one another, blaming the immigrant worker or the Black worker, or yearning to go back to "better" days.

Now, though, the American people are deeply troubled and fearful. The ruling class is using the events in Paris and San Bernadino to shift the focus of concern of the workers from

the economy to national security. Demagogic and xenophobic rhetoric exacerbates the fear, preparing some sections of the populace to sacrifice democracy itself if necessary to be made "safe" again.

The ruling class is using current events combined with American history and culture during this election season to further consolidate a fascist base and implement a fascist police state. They are promoting ideas deeply imbedded in the psyche of the American people: that America is exceptional and superior, and drawing upon the history of slavery, the genocide of the native peoples and imperial conquests to launch a propaganda campaign of anti-immigrant and racist rhetoric and now terrorism. The growing antagonism and cultural differences between the ruling class and new impoverished and exploited class created by laborless production emerge as the ideological basis for attacking

the class, as exhibited by police assaults and murders, attacks against the homeless and the undocumented, the violence against women and children.

We have to look at this current crisis in the context of this process of change as it unfolds. "21st Century Fascism" points out that a developing global fascism is "based upon the objective social destruction of the capitalist economic system wrought by the economic revolution in production." As the U. S. struggles to maintain its global economic hegemony and its geopolitical domination, it pursues a strategy to destabilize the Middle East by breaking up old national sovereignties and pitting sect against sect and tribe against tribe; by isolating Russia and shifting its aim toward China, preparing for world war.

In the face of a growing polarization of wealth and poverty at home, the ruling class has to crack down here in order to gain compliance to carry out their international goals. The article "Analysis of Forces: Indispensable to Revolutionary Strategy" shows that while the new means of production is indeed destroying the capitalist economic system, it is creating a new class, those displaced by electronics and the robot, "who cannot survive without overthrowing the system and instituting a cooperative society." The ruling class is doing everything it can to divide, mislead, confuse and defeat the motion of this new class for its emancipation. The goal of the ruling class is to stop the revolution from proceeding on a class basis. Their aim is to prevent the unity of the new class precisely at that moment when unity of the class is objectively possible, based upon the common economic conditions and equality

of poverty.

The article "The Fight for a New Vision of Education" also takes note of how the process of the destruction of a capitalist economy takes its toll on public education itself. Mobilizing the human mind, the greatest productive power that exists, is essential to solve the catastrophic challenges that threaten humanity today.

But it is out of the very depths of the crisis we confront today that a new vision can emerge, that points the way to a new society. Alongside a San Bernadino there also arises a Chicago, where the young are rising as representatives of a new class that is leading the fight against police murder and a police State. Chicago is the latest of a growing list of the rising response and resistance to police violence, from Trayvon Martin to Baltimore to Ferguson to South Carolina to Staten Island to Cleveland. They are saying, we will not comply, and we will not go back.

These may appear to be dark times, but they are also times ripe with possibility. The antagonism between the mode of production and the mode of distribution is an objective reality. It is the basis for the unleashing of a new epoch of social revolution. We are in the midst of a social revolution that is now underway. It is a time of struggle, even as the process in which we participate is experienced as destruction, instability and antagonism. The new class of workers created by these times is engaged in a life and death struggle to secure the necessary means of life and is compelled to change the world, and to reconstruct society on a new foundation. History is on our side.

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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 Fight for a New Vision of Education

Electronic, computer-based technology engenders the new laborless production that is grinding through industry after industry, permanently eliminating jobs. Many of the jobs that remain, that have not yet been automated, are the contingent, disposable, temporary, part-time workers, also popularly described as “1099 workers,” “permatemps,” and “precarious” workers. These fundamental changes in the economy raise deep issues for public education today.

College students are forced into massive lifetime student debt even as the opportunities to work are increasingly disappearing. If workers are increasingly no longer needed to produce goods and services, then the education that used to be part of the cost of production of a worker is increasingly no longer necessary either. Therefore the labor of teachers is becoming no longer needed. This is what is driving the destruction of public education and what is forming education in the new economy.

A new vision for public education is beginning to rise. The #MillionStudentMarch in November 2015 took to the streets to demand free higher education for everyone, an end to student debt, and a \$15 minimum wage for workers at all campuses. Instead of waiting defensively for the next crisis, these revolutionaries are taking the offensive. In response to organizing by African-American students at the University of Missouri inspired by Ferguson, the football team, African American and white, united as one, including their coach, and voted not to play a game unless the President resigned. Two days later the faculty walked out and the President resigned.

Interwoven into every international treaty, from NAFTA to the TPP, is the understanding that public education is not a right, but a commodity – to be bought, sold, traded, more fodder for the casino economy to be restructured to guarantee private profit for a system of private property. In contrast, Chilean students have linked the demand for free public education to an offensive to drive corporations completely out of public education, since corporations have no business in this major branch of public wealth.

While corporations increasingly privatize and limit educational opportunities, a new generation is demanding that access be expanded so that everyone can thrive and maximize their abilities, gifts and contributions.

NEW CLASS, NEW VISION

Temporary, contingent workers in the U.S. are approaching 50% of the workforce. People under 40 overwhelmingly work temp jobs. Temp workers are a growing component of a new class created by laborless technology that is rising today. Young workers, particularly students, who have never known anything other than production with robots, comprise a significant portion of this new class that is left either with no jobs at all or who enter the workforce as contingent, temporary part-time workers.

Capitalism always configures public education to fit the labor market. “Education

ends poverty, education eliminates economic inequality” has always been the ideological justification for education in a capitalist society. With the temp economy this is out the window.

Laborless production means that workers without jobs and no money are denied access to the necessities of life. Laborless production under capitalism means that eventually most people will not work at all. A fundamental transformation is taking place in the objective economic base of society itself. As their “solution,” the capitalists are forcing fundamental structural changes in the system itself, including public education.

These are not “policy issues” and will not be fixed by simply fighting for reforms. The system is not sustainable. Society must take over the corporations or the corporations will continue to destroy society. The new class must have political power to achieve this goal.

A CORPORATE POLITICAL ONSLAUGHT

Today government at all levels, having merged with the corporations, is on the attack. Instead of advancing the interests of the public, government instead pushes the corporate agenda. The capitalists use their political power to exploit and reinforce their rule everywhere, but especially over the new class.

The old systems of public education are polarizing as labor power becomes ever more insignificant. Private, for-profit education offers “the 4Cs” — critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration — to the privileged, at a price. But a temp economy means a temp educational system for those the ruling class no longer needs.

In U.S. higher education now, 80% of the professors are adjunct, contingent faculty, working from contract to contract, semester by semester. Thirty years ago, professors were 80% permanent. Their students, of course, will work mostly at temp jobs. Meanwhile, the austerity agenda is cutting funds for higher education across the country.

President Obama has called for federal and state governments to make community colleges “free for all.” The catch is that they must introduce the “skills agenda,” which redefines college as an industry that trains workers for the global economy. The Democratic Party’s, “America’s College Promise Act” focuses on “occupational skills training programs” and calls for aligning community colleges with K12 schools based on “performance outcomes” and “competency-based education.” Two-year community college is becoming grades 13 and 14. This “Skills Agenda” focuses on measurable outcomes, especially numeracy and literacy, rather than critical thinking. New bureaucratic barriers reduce access and become “push-out policies” that drive even more students out of higher education.

The national Common Core test, imposed on K12 schools, is the pinnacle of the high-stakes testing regime. It also guarantees vast corporate private profit from the national education market, estimated to be \$787.7 billion in 2015. Common Core also fosters corpo-

rate-designed “performance objectives” that become the metric to re-structure the system. These facilitate the privatization of public education even as corporations transform it into temporary education. A generation ago, the majority of K12 teachers had a decade or more of tenure. Now they often are over and done in 2 years, only to be replaced by the next short-term teacher.

Student “value” is determined by how they score on the new corporate-driven tests, which purport to demonstrate “student ability to use complex problem solving.” Students supposedly further demonstrate their “mastery” by writing essays at various grade levels from third grade on. Ironically, these essays are graded entirely by temp workers, not teachers, mostly by college grads.

Last year, Pearson, the multi-billion dollar education mega-corporation, operated 21 scoring centers around the country, and hired 14,500 temporary scorers. Graders used highly detailed rubrics to measure various “performance outcomes” in the essays. Unfortunately, this leaves them no time to communicate to the child their strengths and weaknesses. But that probably matters little, since they will never even see the child they are grading.

Corporations meanwhile are touting privately-owned Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and electronic learning platforms for every level, from the for-profit colleges to the elite private schools. But access to MOOCs is not equal for all. The trend for public schools is for MOOCs to become the only way for students to repeat any remedial work, which prevents them from moving forward. These are subjects they already did poorly in, with a human teacher. The dropout rates, not surprisingly ranges from 60% to 90%.

With a MOOC, the individual alone studies the content on the screen and then takes a test to demonstrate competency in a “performance objective.” Students can actually win online “competency badges” to show they have mastered one of the topics in the course! The corporations own all the data, plus the essays. The federal government in 2015 allowed student loans for MOOCs. Access to learning is reduced to online courses, online testing and online grading.

Corporate dominated society today, driven by corporatization and privatization, is now shedding its social responsibility for educating people. Today this obligation is increasingly shifted onto the students themselves.

THE FIGHT THIS TIME

The old system of public education on all levels is in the process of being destroyed, as the destruction of wage-labor and capital reverberates throughout society. Whether public or private, education has always played the role of socializing the workforce for the needs of capitalism. Public education has not yet disappeared, and the ruling class uses the schools to socialize and control the rising generation of the new class. The State is intervening directly in the “education” of our youth, and the schools themselves are being transformed into virtual prisons occupied by the police. In the U.S. today, both the public and

the privatized schools-to-prison pipeline is alive and well. Society could easily guarantee everything that humans need to thrive, including a quality education for everyone. But that will happen only when the technology of society is owned by the public.

This goal cannot be won by constant defensive struggles or by fighting backwards to a previous period. That tactic no longer works. An organized political onslaught can only be fought with politics and raising the necessity of class political power. Capitalism and its corporate attack dogs are fighting forward to a new system of private property that owns everything. Our new generation has no choice but to match them by fighting for a new society that supports everyone cooperatively.

The political struggle begins by seizing the initiative to determine the debate about the kind of society humanity needs and how to get there. Revolutionaries can show that the direction forward means developing the political power to transfer the means of production from private corporate property into public property.

Education at all levels is profoundly a relationship between human beings. Sharing and transferring experience, history, and knowledge requires a fundamental human connection. But private property reduces and limits this birthright of humanity to a miserable level. Real education that encourages critical thinking, and a deep understanding of the challenges that humanity now faces could be provided free for everyone.

Mobilizing the human mind, the greatest productive power that exists, is essential to solve the catastrophic challenges that threaten humanity today. This time around, it’s all of us or none of us. It’s either private or its public – there just isn’t any other way.

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Analysis of Forces: Indispensable to Revolutionary Strategy

In every quantitative stage of development the ruling class creates its own opposition that serves as a means of controlling the working class. The ruling class attempts to corral and dissipate the inevitable upsurges, while at the same time using these upsurges to mobilize and shape these forces to achieve ruling class goals. Their success with this tactic was made possible by the expanding capitalist system and the super profits yielded by U.S. imperialism. The ruling class allowed a modicum of reforms in answer to the demands of the working class, and then was able to use these reforms to create a narrow stratum of bribed leaders, who could tie the entire class to the overall interests of the capitalist class. These reforms served to strengthen the capitalist system and to tighten its grip on the lives of the working class.

Today, the ruling class is faced with an irresolvable dilemma. On the one hand, it is doing what it has always done. It is creating its own opposition for the new situation, a magnet for discontent and a means to dissipate and channel that discontent. It is using these forces to assist in its efforts, not to better the lives of the American working class, but to impose a revolutionary fascist solution as a means of protecting private property in the face of qualitatively new conditions.

On the other hand, the movement the ruling class is confronting this time is qualitatively different than in the past. Qualitatively new means of production are destroying the capitalist economic system. These new means of production are creating a new class. This class cannot survive without overthrowing the system and instituting a cooperative society. This demand of this objective communist movement is challenging the methods of control of the ruling class. The general social movement that is getting underway from both the right and the left is shaped by, and must eventually align itself with, this reality.

Those who are and will be moving into social activity cannot achieve their demands for reform without revolution, and the objective conditions of their plight drives them into motion for the basic necessities of life. Yet, the

ruling class has disarmed them by anti-communism and a host of anti-class ideologies, that impede their search to find the intellectual, political and organizational wherewithal to win their fight. Revolutionaries have an indispensable role in resolving this contradiction. If we do not, the aspirations of humanity will be routed, and the next stage of human development will be a fascist police State instead of a peaceful, cooperative society.

REFORM TO REVOLUTION

As long as capitalism has existed, there has been a spontaneous movement for reform – an ongoing fight between capital and the workers over who will get what share of the pie. The capitalists granted reforms when it suited their interests, and withdrew them when it suited their interests. This struggle could not progress beyond a reform struggle so long as reform was possible within the existing property relations. The advent of labor-replacing technology sets the stage not only for the end of capitalism, but for the end of private property itself. None of the reforms the spontaneous movement seeks today can be had, except as a byproduct of a communist revolution. Thus today the spontaneous movement is objectively a movement for communism.

However, the goal of communism cannot be realized unless someone introduces class consciousness into the spontaneous movement. The ruling class understands this, and thus their agents are also on the battlefield, trying to confuse, divide and mislead the movement in various ways.

Given the lack of clarity among the working class, the ruling class may be successful in some cases in disorienting or crushing the organizations that the workers create, or they may succeed in pulling them under the leadership of organizations that are fronts for the ruling class. But revolutionaries can rely on the fact that the ruling class cannot overcome the underlying objective process.

There is very little truly “spontaneous” about the spontaneous movement. It is the activity of socially and politically conscious people, who are acting to design strategies, tactics and forms of organization to deal with the crisis they see. Some of these arise out of the struggle and reflect the demands of the class. Some of these organizations are formed by the bourgeoisie themselves in an effort to mislead the movement.

Let’s review the past period and see how things evolved to where they are today.

POST-WORLD WAR II PERIOD

The goal of the U.S. ruling class in the post-World War II war period was the expansion and domination of U.S. imperialism. Their immediate goals were the destruction of the direct colonial system (including integration and restructuring of the U.S. South) and the establishment of neocolonial regimes, whose markets, raw materials, and enforced cheap costs of production would be open to exploitation by U.S. multinationals and inter-

national finance capital.

To accomplish this, the ruling class had to destroy those organizations, leaders and ideas which could not or would not facilitate this goal, and replace them with those that could. This process began in earnest after World War II with the destruction of whatever remained of any sense of class among the workers and their organizations. The communists were driven from the trade unions and replaced with a stratum of bribed, pro-capitalist leadership. The workers movement was suppressed with business unionism and the growing expansion of the U.S. economy and imperialism. The communists were driven from the various social organizations, thousands were blacklisted in every walk of life, and anti-communism became a key weapon (coupled with racial ideology) to block any form of social progress that did not benefit ruling class goals and interests.

In an effort to dismantle the direct colonial system and replace it with a neocolonial system friendly to U.S. imperialism, the U.S. formed a bloc with petit-bourgeois nationalist forces in the colonies. This gave the appearance that the U.S. ruling class was supportive of the struggle of oppressed peoples both at home and in the world. It was merely part of the overall strategy to create a system of neocolonies favorable to U.S. interests. Communists or anti-imperialist leaders who presented a threat to these goals were killed, debilitating the communist movement up to this day.

At home, the ruling class used the Blacks’ historical aspirations for freedom to break up the Jim Crow, segregationist legal and political system that blocked the further exploitation of the South. Their fight to shape the Freedom struggle as a “Black struggle” and reliance on the history of all-class white unity blocked any attempts to challenge the colonial exploitation of the South, or its status as an economic and political reserve for the ruling class. When the movement began to outrun the goals of the ruling class, the revolutionaries were killed off and leaders of all colors were promoted, who could tie the masses to the capitalist system, and to the evolving forms of syndicalism, now dubbed “identity politics.”

As the dust settled, a new world system had been created that was dominated by the U.S. The path had been cleared for the expansion of capitalism to a world system. Imperialism and the mechanisms of class oppression and exploitation had been kept in place, and racial ideology had been strengthened. The U.S. and Western Europe entered a period of unprecedented expansion based on this imperialism. This expansion provided the material foundation for the bribery of a stratum of workers in the U.S. and Europe, and helped form an upper stratum in the neocolonies.

In the U.S., the Civil Rights legislation of the 1960s completed the process of the breaking up of the Blacks as a people, and opened the way for Blacks to enter their respective classes. A new stratum of leaders of all colors was promoted to tie the masses to the capi-

talist system. Racial ideology, that is the political and social ordering of people based on their “race,” became even more entrenched, expressed as identity politics on the left and white supremacy on the right. The left had been almost completely routed, foundering on the shoals of the transition from the struggles between capital and labor of the interwar period to the struggle between the national liberation struggles and imperialism of the post-World War II period. Revolutionaries who understood the contradictions regrouped and prepared their forces for the next round of struggles.

GLOBALIZATION

As the effects of labor-replacing technology spreads and capitalists compete for markets, national barriers are being torn down by international capital, dominated by speculative capital and the unfettered reign of the global corporations and their interests. A global ruling class of all colors has begun to emerge, in which are also included some of the wealthiest capitalists from the former neocolonies. In the U.S. there are rulers of all colors, from generals and police chiefs to state and national political leaders.

At the same time, the antagonism between the qualitatively new means of production and capitalist production relations has given rise to an objective communist movement. This objective communist movement, just beginning to show itself in the 1980s, and most starkly revealed in the fight over homelessness, cannot solve its problems within the bounds of the capitalist system. Labor-less production has heralded the end of the capitalist system, and society began to leave the era of reform and embark on an epoch of social revolution. Regardless of the form of its demands or its activities, the struggle of this class is for communism.

As the consequences of the new means of production were generalized through globalization, this movement became global in scope. And so became the attempt to control it. Government and private foundation money was poured into organizations throughout the world that were fighting against every aspect of the social ills produced by the spreading effects of electronic production. The rise of these kinds of organizations paralleled the decline of workers’ and social organizations decimated or destroyed by the ongoing economic crisis in cities and towns across America.

Organizations such as the World Social Forum and the US Social Forum have served as a magnet to forces eager to come together to solve the crisis. In the U.S., literally thousands of progressive-oriented organizations exist on the basis of foundation money. The ideological outlook cultivated by the ruling class, and in many instances the constraints of funding, limit these forces from moving beyond their critique of the results of the capitalist system to a unified and programmatic strategy to overturn the capitalist system.

Continues on page 6

Join the Discussion

LRNA political reports offer revolutionaries a fresh perspective! They offer analysis and vision, and outline the role revolutionaries play in a strategy to achieve that vision. Share them with others, use them in your classes, discussion groups and study circles. Spread the vision of a new world and the possibility of achieving it.

21st Century Fascism

The fundamental characteristic of fascism is corporate economic power merged with the political power of the State. Fascism in Germany and Italy during the 1930s was politically imposed as a reactionary alternative to bourgeois democracy. Fascism today has objectively arisen and matured as a result of the new, qualitative change in the economy that is destroying capitalist society. It is not a choice of the ruling class, as it was during the period of capitalist industrialization in the 1930s.

New labor-replacing means of production – the computer and the robot – are destroying the economic foundation of capitalism, which is the buying and selling of labor power. This fundamental economic relationship was the basis of producing value for capitalist market exchange and distribution. With its destruction comes the destruction of value and the destruction of the market, exchange and distribution.

The 21st century global fascism of the corporate State is based upon the objective destruction of the capitalist economic system wrought by the economic revolution in production. A fascist program is being implemented by a global capitalist class to protect private property. In countries around the world, fascist economic and political policies have been maturing by varying degrees over the past two decades.

NEW GLOBAL REACH OF FASCISM

The demands of globalization play a particular role in the objective evolution of fascism. Any barriers to the global mobility of capital must be eliminated. These barriers include the institutions of bourgeois democracies and existing laws. Governments of different countries act in concert to break down any remaining barriers – be they legal or political – to the integration of the global market.

To extract and accumulate more wealth and property the United States ruling class is leading the initiative for two new global trade blocs and new rules for globalization. The first is the 12-country agreement called the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which awaits final passage by the U.S. Congress. The second is the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the United States and the European Union, which is still being negotiated. The people of these partnership countries have no say and no vote on these agreements.

Both the TPP and the TTIP are designed to isolate and weaken the economies of China and Russia. Both initiatives are similar in most respects. They are negotiated in secret and contain the same provision, called “Investor-State Dispute Settlement” (ISDS). This is designed to allow global multi-national corporations to challenge the customs or laws of any partner country deemed to be a detriment to corporate investment interests. Arbitration panels made up of global corporate lawyers meet in secret to decide if a violation of the agreement has occurred, and

if so, how much the taxpayers of the violator country must pay as a fine to the corporation whose investment was violated by the custom or laws governing their country. The national sovereignty of any partner country is thus undermined and trumped by an agreement designed in the interests of global corporations and written by global corporations. These agreements represent the new global reach of an evolving fascist order.

U.S. FASCIST ECONOMIC POLICY

Fascism in the U.S. today is also an objective economic process where the corporations have merged with the State as a result of this qualitative change in the economy. It is the objective reflection of economic development. As the economic base of society is transformed, the social and political superstructure that rests upon that base must also be transformed. This objective process was already underway when the banking sector’s subprime mortgage bubble broke in 2008, causing the global economic crisis. The process was accelerated and fully completed when the U. S. government swiftly intervened in the economy and bailed out the banking sector, the auto industry and others to the tune of \$8 trillion and still counting.

The first two bailouts were enacted in October 2008. They were the Treasury Department’s Troubled Asset Relief Program and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act. This was followed by the January 2009 inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States and his appointment of Timothy Geithner, former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, as Secretary of the Treasury.

Immediately, teams of bankers and other corporate managers assumed positions inside the federal government, and a new “Financial Stability Plan” was rolled out of the Treasury Department. It was closely followed by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 that was signed into law by President Obama. In total there have been nearly 1200 corporate bailouts, with additional bailouts continuing to this day.

FASCIST POLITICAL AND SOCIAL POLICY

Private corporate interests are penetrating U.S. society at every level, as the government assumes responsibility for the profitability of the corporations. Throughout America every level of government is slashing, cutting and eliminating social programs that provide basic needs for adults and children, including programs that care for the sick, the disabled and the elderly. Across the country government is opening the way for the corporate privatization of virtually everything in the public domain. Everything from public water to public libraries, public education and public parks is being transformed into private property.

New laws are enacted, transforming the legal structure to protect and facilitate the

interests of the corporations and the capitalist class, while revoking the limited democratic rights of the people. The extension of corporate personhood for the purpose of electoral campaign financing by the Supreme Court with its ruling on the Citizens United case, its ruling on *Harris v. Quinn* that dismembers public employee unions, increased state-by-state voter disenfranchising and state Emergency Manager Laws imposed on local governments are all examples of this new level of corporate protection and facilitation.

FASCIST DEVELOPMENT OF A POLICE STATE

American fascism is rapidly accelerating its grip on society, as witnessed through the maturing of the police state. A social environment is being created where the lives of a section of the American people are being rendered worthless. This is being directed at the growing section of our class being thrown out of, or to the margins of, the economy and society. It is here where we find the majority of those being systematically marginalized, criminalized, violently attacked and increasingly murdered by the police.

The objective changes in the economy present a direct challenge to the laws of private property. Fascism arises to protect private property and deal with the objective changes and consequences in capitalist society – the various causes and effects – from the manifestations of society’s ongoing social destruction to the interventions of the State that block the distribution of the necessities of life to those in need.

21st century fascism is objectively revolutionary, in that it seeks to guarantee a transition to a new society while preserving private property. It is not based upon a reactionary program of trying to go back to some past form of capitalist relations. The goal of the ruling class is to guarantee the preservation of private property under some kind of new economic system.

AMERICAN CULTURE AND RULING CLASS PROPAGANDA

The U.S. ruling class is carefully disseminating cultural propaganda to convince the American people to accept fascism. To develop a fascist culture they dig into and revive the most violent and horrific aspects of our country’s history. They use the country’s violent, brutal and racist history that included slavery and fascism in the South, the genocide of the Native Americans and its global imperialist conquests and expansion.

Culture is a way of life of groups of people – the learned, cultivated and assumed, socially transmitted behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols – that they accept, accumulate and then pass from one generation to the next. Culture progresses largely without people thinking about it.

For instance, the ruling class is using current events, combined with American histo-

ry and culture during this election season to further consolidate a fascist social base. They promote ideas of American superiority and exceptionalism. They unleash populist, anti-immigrant, racist rhetoric to make fascism appear as the obvious solution, based on simple “common sense” premises.

Simultaneously, the growing new class and cultural differences with those of the ruling class – not color – are emerging as the ideological basis for the “blame the victim,” police assaults and murders of the poor of all colors.

The ruler’s goal is to stop the revolution from proceeding on a class basis. Their aim is prevent the unity of the new class, precisely when it is objectively possible for sections of the class to unite based on their common conditions and the growing economic equality of poverty.

DEVELOPING STAGES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The new class – the growing section of workers replaced by the robot and the computer – is also objectively revolutionary. The new class seeks the distribution of the necessities of life based on need, an objective goal requiring the abolition of private property and the creation of a new cooperative, communist society. However, the new class is not conscious of itself as a class, or of its objective goal.

The growing new class needs housing, food, health care and other basic necessities of life. Revolutionaries rely upon and focus on this objective reality. A new movement for these demands is developing social awareness. As the movement realizes that the State will not provide the needed necessities of life, the demand for new solutions arise from within the movement. It is here that revolutionaries identify the leaders of the class, to develop the necessary stages of consciousness from within the movement. This requires revolutionaries to be propagandists inseparably connected with the movement, while working from the inside of the organizations that are fighting for the demands of the new class.

Time is of the essence. A rapidly developing fascism is not taking pause. There is no possibility of “overturning fascism” today and “restoring democracy.” No reforms are possible. There is no going back. The old society is being destroyed by objective forces. The future is going to be either fascism based on the robot, or communism based on the robot.

The only way to have true democracy and to get the much needed necessities of life is to fight through each step, completing every stage of the revolutionary process into a cooperative society, where the distribution of the social product is based on need.

Analysis of Forces... (Continued from page 4)

The League has always united with, and where it does not deviate from our strategy and concentration, supported all organizations that fight for the demands of the new class. The point we are making is that the ruling class is tethering these organizations to their interests. These organizations limit the class from addressing systemic ills, regardless of the intentions of those who work with or for them, who are drawn to them, helped by them or organized by them. Increasingly, the fighters are coming to see the limitations placed on them by what some have called this "Non-profit industrial complex." The League's focus is to seek out, and become involved in, the organizations that are actually fighting for the demands of the new class.

As importantly, this period has seen the spread and consolidation of ideas that further disarmed the workers intellectually. Anti-communism and syndicalism have come to permeate the subjective side of the movement. Conceptions of class interests and class program have been dislodged and replaced by identity and coalition politics. Anti-leadership and anti-organizational philosophies have become dominant. The role of the State in preventing fundamental political change has been rendered almost invisible, replaced by a belief that political change can take place by building a bigger movement, or the belief that we can simply decide to live outside of capitalist relations. Much of the American left has become little more than a stew of reformist, anti-class theories promulgated and promoted by the bourgeoisie over the last 60-plus years.

There is no more telling example than that of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA). It has so completely absorbed the outlook and program of the bourgeoisie that it is no longer identifiable as a communist party, or even an independent political entity. "A Radical Third Party. I agree!" written by the national chair of the CPUSA John Bachtell, and former CPUSA chairperson Sam Webb's, "A Party of Socialism in the 21st Century," both which advocate complete subservience to the Democratic Party, are two such examples.

The ruling class looks at the entire battlefield. It uses the forces of the right as well as of the left. The way the ruling class used the struggle over the end of Jim Crow and segregation to preserve the colonial exploitation of the South, to maintain divisions within the working class along racial lines, and to realign the two-party system to contain the new political necessities is only one example. For decades after, the rise of the religious right and the consolidation and spread of the "Southern program" was made possible with these forces. More recently, the increasingly extremist forces in the Republican Party have bestowed a growing legitimacy of fascist solutions to the problems faced by the American people. At the same time, various organizations scattered throughout the country, such as the small openly fascist parties, the anti-immigration organizations, the border militias, the various off-shoots of white supremacists, neo-confederates, sovereignty

and secessionist groups etc., are allowed to function relatively freely, and are integrated into the police and State forces.

This vast, extended, and powerful network of control through organizations, money and ideas, is in turn, entangled in, tied to and controlled one way or another politically by the Democratic party on the "left," and the Republican party on the "right."

The ruling class sows disunity and confusion throughout the American working class, guaranteeing that it functions along the lines of its own class interests, establishes organizational structures that ensure a general unity of action, and, to achieve its aims, shows itself prepared to alter its views, strategies and tactics as conditions change.

POLARIZATION

Polarization is taking place throughout the apparatus of control the ruling class has constructed over the past 50 years. The emergence of a new class striving for the basic necessities of life threatens the ruling class strategy and formula of control. Its demands are already polarizing the thinking of those moving into activity regardless of color or ideology. It is clear that workers are beginning to discern the different class interests. Simply fighting back is no longer enough, and the workers are beginning to put forward programs in their interests. This means something fundamentally new for the revolution in America. These developments are of the utmost importance, as they define the League's role as an organization of revolutionaries.

The class is beginning to shift from social awareness to an embryonic social consciousness. Social awareness is the realization that something is wrong in society. With social consciousness the workers come to understand that they are members of a class and that they need class solidarity. They come to understand that their class is exploited and that they must fight that exploitation as a class. We have seen flashes of this embryonic social consciousness in the growing response to the attacks on our class.

These flashes of social consciousness are embryonic, but direction is more important than velocity. We do not evaluate what the class is capable of simply by what it is now, or what it understands now. We understand there is always a lag between what is actually changing in the real world – and its possibilities – and people's understanding of those changes. We rest on science. Social being determines consciousness. Change comes from a new quality being introduced from the outside. The entire history of the revolutionary movement, including that of the bourgeoisie, shows this. Dialectics tells us that objective development sets the stage for polarization, and intellectual development helps it come to fruition.

All forces struggle to align society to the new means of production. Greater polarization develops as one pole fights to create society based on private property without capitalism, and the other pole fights to create so-

ciety based on the distribution of the social product according to need.

Revolutionaries' role is to develop this polarization along the lines that set the conditions for communist revolution. Revolutionaries begin from uniting with these basic demands of the people – they must eat, they strive to live and to take care of their families. We do not begin from the color of their skin, or the sex of the combatants, or even, in a general sense, what they think – or think they know – now. We aim our propaganda at the point where the connection between them and the ruling class is being broken. We show them a different and realizable vision of the future, and a strategy to get there. Certainly, the ruling class understands this very well, and is spending billions in the current environment to win a section of the workers to their strategy.

It is the economic crisis that is pushing people into the streets to right what they perceive as wrong. But it is revolutionary propaganda that points out class interests, that unmasks the enemy, and that points the way forward with a vision of a new society that makes the difference. Revolutionary propaganda will be decisive in securing those flashes of consciousness as nodal points in the thinking of the American people. The greater the activity, coupled with the intellectual development of the combatants, the greater the polarity. That depends on the revolutionaries.

FROM IDEOLOGY TO OBJECTIVITY

How do revolutionaries go about finding the means of dealing not with the ideologies of those who are being forced into motion, but their goals, what they are trying to accomplish?

First, what are they trying to accomplish? A decent life, a home, education for their children, a decent job, health care, and so forth. They have to fight for these things, even if they have different ideas about the source of the problem, and how to go about solving it.

For the first time the objective conditions exist for the unity of the class across historical divisions of color, presenting the possibility of breaking the historical form of capitalist class rule in America. Historically, racial ideology has been backed up by social privileges granted to white workers over Black workers. Unequally oppressed and exploited, they could not unite. The ruler's 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. At the same time, the hitherto unknown breadth of equality of poverty is creating the basis for real class unity. Although it will be a long and difficult process, it is objectively possible today for a section of the class to unite around the program that is in its common interest – regardless of historical divisions – thereby making it possible for the class to lead society to communism.

Of course this is no simple thing. The

divisions within the working class are very deep and can only be overcome through intellectual struggle, linked to daily practical experience. Yet once again we turn to science. Change in thinking takes place like any other change. It occurs as a leap. The leap is the destruction of the old mode of thought and the creation of the new. It starts with the introduction of an elementary stage of the new quality of thought and the quantitative struggle to destroy the old quality of thinking. Stage by stage, revolutionaries introduce and struggle to replace the old ideas with the new that will push forward the revolutionary process. Today, the overriding idea is of a class united around distribution based on need – which is, in fact, what the workers are already objectively fighting for.

Revolutionaries do not strive to direct the movement, to keep it under their wing, or try to pull it in a certain direction as was common with the struggle for reform. We develop the tactic of pushing it forward from the inside. That means recognizing that it does have an objective goal, accepting the actual struggle of the revolutionary section of the class as a basis for our program, and pushing for its accomplishment. Every revolutionary spontaneous activity, every struggle of the class within each stage of development, must be used to explain the quality of their activity. The only way to win them over to communism is to show them that they are communists and what they are doing is communism.

Examination of the real world shows the transition from communism as an ideological movement to communism as an objective, practical movement. As a result, revolutionaries must make the transition from a revolutionary outlook, activity and organization based on ideology, to a revolutionary outlook, activity and organization based on program.

The objective process of causality makes things possible, but it is human activity that makes things happen. Political and revolutionary organizations are how human beings have historically "made things happen." Individuals play critical roles, but they do so in relation to the efforts of organizations. The League of Revolutionaries for a New America was organized to participate in, and make a contribution to, the process of transformation society is undergoing, based on the leap in the productive process.

This question of the objectivity of the communist movement today lies at the very core of what the League is trying to do. It is not simply what makes the League different from the ideologically-driven left in America, or the broader social movement. It is a proclamation of the radical break with the past period, and the call to play a part in the development of a new world communist movement, on the new foundation.

Political Report of the Central Body, LRNA, December 2015