

RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

VOLUME 30, EDITION 1

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2020

RALLYCOMRADES.LRNA.ORG

\$1 DONATION

New Year, New Class, New Vision

Though the dates vary from deep winter to mid spring (and in some African countries, fall), every part of the world celebrates the coming of the New Year. We shoot off fireworks, accompany them with noisemakers, hold parades, make toasts and resolutions and eat foods like black-eyed peas for luck. For the most part, after the weather turns cold and we spend some time looking back at the year behind us, maybe singing “Auld Lang Syne,” this is the moment we turn our eyes forward.

In some ways, our hopefulness at New Year’s can feel naïve. Studies have shown most of those New Year’s resolutions last no more than a month. And, in parts of the country, New Year’s comes at the heart of the darkest, coldest, most unforgiving season. In the U.S. the winter cold kills twice as many people as summer heat. We have more heart attacks shoveling and scraping, we catch more epidemic flus, we get our gas shut off, and we freeze to death on the streets. We are all facing most of the same struggles in January as December (not to mention paying off our Christmas bills), and, in an election year, the mainstream news, if it’s even possible, will be more dominated than usual by the Republicans and Democrats funded by the ruling class, leaving almost no room for the stories of the rest of us out here fighting for our lives.

But the beauty of the New Year is that we recognize life is not simply a cycle of years, but a progression of new life from old. Winter is a necessary stage of growth – the destruction of the old makes way for the new and important processes that take place underground, preparing for the spring’s new awakenings. What we do now will prepare us for a very different 2020 than the year we’ve left behind. To do our work well, we need to constantly develop and spread a new vision of where we are at this precise point in history, where conditions allow us to fight forward, and what, ultimately, wants to be born out of the dying world that surrounds us.

THE CRISIS OF A DYING SYSTEM

Income inequality is at its highest rate since the U.S. Census began measuring it, and our population’s health reflects this directly with the wealthy living 10-15 years longer than the poor. While rich Americans actually pay less for their housing than in the past, housing costs have risen for working people and poor people, and homelessness is on the rise. The President’s Council of Economic Advisors reported in September that half a million Americans are homeless. As uprooted Americans have done since the Dust Bowl, most of the homeless have found their way to the West Coast, but 20 percent live



Hundreds of thousands of Americans are shining a light on the growing divide between a ruling class driven by the imperative to make profit, and a growing section of society striving to solve problems of environmental destruction and poverty. Photo: DisObeyArt

in New York City, and Washington, DC has the highest rate of homelessness in the country. What’s particularly telling are the increases throughout the rest of the country, with some of the highest rates in the Southwest, the South and the Midwest, Minnesota having seen a leap of 10 percent over the past four years.

Problems have only been made worse by civil authorities shutting down attempts at support by community groups and faith-based organizations. Corporate and governmental think tanks keep churning out new ways to abdicate responsibility for the homeless, using mental illness and addiction as reasons for inaction, while also threatening further criminalization and federal clampdowns.

These fights for survival take place against a global backdrop of perpetual war in the Middle East and heightened tensions regarding the U.S.’s relationships with China and neighboring countries. The next world war hangs on the horizon. Meanwhile, the American Institute of Physics reports the warmest temperatures in “tens of thousands of years” and the highest CO2 levels in our atmosphere “in millions of years.”

A NEW CLASS TO THE RESCUE

Yet, amidst all this destruction emerges a time of enormous opportunity. As bleak as the state of the world is, we also see average Americans more concerned with all of these issues than ever before. Health care and Medicare remain center stage in American politics, while economic inequality drives voters to one candidate or another seeking some kind of relief. This fall, an anti-communist organization once signed into existence by President Bill Clinton and chaired by President George W. Bush found that 70 per-

cent of millennial voters lean socialist. Ideas like the Green New Deal are spreading across America, bringing together the victims of corporate poisoning with traditional environmental groups. Working class Americans all across the country are protesting U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and traveling to the border to protest the immigration camps. They are organizing strikes on behalf of students and schools, and strikes to save the environment. Unlike in any other era, protest has become a common occur-

Continues on page 6

CONTENTS

<i>Inside: New Hope and Energy in 2020</i>	2
<i>From the Editors: Today’s Moral Imperative</i>	3
<i>Children at Center of Chicago Teachers Strike</i>	3
<i>Striking a Blow Against Corporate Rule in 2020</i>	4
<i>New Class, New Awareness for Puerto Rico</i>	5
<i>Celebrate the Life of Comrade Bob Brown</i>	5
<i>World Destruction, Polarization and Transformation</i>	6

SUBSCRIBE TO **RALLY, COMRADES!**

ONE FULL YEAR FOR \$20

Rally, Comrades! stands out, offering a sound and clear analysis of the way forward. We rely completely on volunteers and donations from readers like you to carry out this urgent work.

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Please send this coupon with a check or money order payable to "LRNA" to the following address:

LRNA
P.O. Box 477113
Chicago, IL 60647

New Hope and Energy in 2020

Inside Rally, Comrades!

From the streets of Paris to the ancient cities of Baghdad, Beirut and Jakarta, to Chile, through Bolivia and Colombia, to the Southwestern border towns and bayous of Louisiana, to the fire-blasted California neighborhoods, to the industrial cities of Flint, Detroit, Chicago, and Philadelphia, to the mountains of Appalachia, the workers of the world are fighting to remake the world.

Tied together through the world market birthed by the electronic revolution, they share common demands not only for their basic survival, but also for their respect and human dignity. As they fight in the streets against the conditions that drive their lives further to the brink, they are coming to see they cannot get what they need without political change.

The article "Striking a Blow Against Corporate Rule in 2020," clarifies how the fight for political democracy cannot be separated from the battle for the basic economic demands of the new class: food, water, housing, health care, and education. People cannot meet their basic needs without political democracy, and ultimately, political democracy cannot be secured without economic democracy.

The world economy and society are being revolutionized by technological advances of the microchip, computers, smart phones, and artificial intelligence. Human labor is being eliminated from production and a new class of workers is increasingly forced to confront the system of private property to survive. In this sense, they are an objectively communist class.

Revolution is now a historical inevitability. The overwhelming political demand of today is to prepare the people for this inevitability, through the introduction of new ideas.

"World Polarization, Destruction and Transformation" shows how the antagonism between the developing productive forces (robotics) and the productive relations (capitalism) is giving rise to deep economic, social and political polarization within the country and around the world. Once polarization takes place, the opposing classes begin to stir and begin to fight each other. Only when there is motion – movement and struggle – on the part of the opposing social forces, is it possible for revolutionaries to play a role in history.

"New Class, New Awareness for Puerto Rico" illuminates how the massive "Renuncia, Ricky" protests were actually part of the popular eruptions of the new objectively communist class, challenging austerity policies imposed by ruling classes from Perú to Chile, Argentina to Colombia, and resisting neofascist uprisings from Brazil to Bolivia. These events are the ink with which the revolutionary writing on the wall is being drawn. For the flashes of consciousness expressed in these struggles to result in transforming society to meet the people's needs it will require developing a larger vision, based on understanding the economic system in which these struggles are embedded.

"From the Editors: Today's Moral Imperative" shows that while the enormous wealth being amassed in fewer and fewer hands has exposed a level of selfishness and inhumanity by those who rule this country, our class still feels and practices a fundamental morality that simply cannot tolerate the wholesale destruction of human life and are acting on that morality.

"Children at Center of Chicago Teachers Strike," shows that the most important achievement of the strike was to help develop the understanding that classes exist and the interests of these two class are not the same. A new vision is necessary to move forward, one where the basic necessities and a cultured life belong to all. A tremendous effort to unite our class practically and intellectually is necessary to bring this vision to fruition.

"Celebrate the Life of Comrade Bob Brown" bears witness to the contributions of Bob Brown, a life-long revolutionary and member of the Editorial Board of *Rally, Comrades!*. Bob had a deep and passionate commitment to a transformed future for humanity. As a founding member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, he understood the necessity of an organization of conscious revolutionaries at this time if our class is to achieve its ultimate aim. Bob also liked to say that he was "just a guy," and he epitomizes how all of us even as individuals can make a difference, can make a contribution to history.

All the conditions are in place for the world we desire. We need only to see that reality and act on it. "New Year, New Class, New Vision" confirms that with a clear understanding of where we stand in history, we can work together knowing it is within our power to end homelessness and hunger and war and environmental destruction forever. A cooperative society that works together to solve our problems, based upon the distribution of abundance according to our needs – a communist solution – is the practical response to the problems faced by a society which has too long been driven by private property and profit. With this vision in hand, we bring hope and energy to 2020 as the beginning of a new epoch in human history. **RC**

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.

Editors: Steve Teixeira, Mary Kay Yarak

Editorial Board: Brooke Heagerty, Kimberly King, John Slaughter

Photo Editor: Daymon Hartley

Design: Brett Jelínek

Reach us at: RALLY@LRNA.ORG

League of Revolutionaries for a New America

Today, whether through words or deeds, vast numbers of socially conscious people declare themselves revolutionaries in opposition to the degenerating social and economic conditions. The League's mission is to unite these scattered revolutionaries on the basis of the demands of the new class, to educate and win them over to the cooperative, communist resolution of the problem.

The demands of this new impoverished class for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a 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.

LRNA, P.O. Box 477113, Chicago, IL 60647
info@lrna.org | 1(773)486-0028 | lrna.org

**Visit the *Rally, Comrades!* website!
rallycomrades.lrna.org**

The *Rally, Comrades!* bilingual website provides online access to all issues of *Rally, Comrades!* It is a political resource for our readers, and provides up-to-date articles, statements and analysis of key questions of importance to revolutionaries.

Children at Center of Chicago Teachers Strike

The last thing teachers want to do is not to be in the classroom with their students. The Chicago teachers and school support staff went out on strike in October for more than better pay for themselves. They demanded that class sizes for children be smaller, that nurses, counselors, librarians, and other support staff be considered as a part of the educational environment for youngsters. They demanded that the lack of affordable housing be seen for what it is – a stumbling block to education. Teachers know first-hand that homeless and near homeless children are at a great disadvantage to succeeding in school. The strike really was a strike for and by the entire community against the inequalities of Chicago's schools and the city itself.

schools. Many educators opened their eyes to the fact that the city is making decisions that directly impact the well-being of the children they are with every day.

A remarkable quality of the strike is that it took up the demands of those support workers in the school system who work at poverty wages. These workers have to choose between paying the rent and putting food on the table. It represents a real awakening on the part of many teachers and others who are beginning to realize the city is turning its back on homeless children, children threatened with deportation and the breaking apart of families, destitute workers, and underpaid teachers, while it pours billions of dollars into private

The Chicago strike took up broad demands. The picket line and public pressure were used to secure things that will affect students and families on the ground. They addressed sanctuary protection in the schools, affordable housing assistance, rent control, and sustainable community schools.

The movement to save public education is contending with a wall of State power protecting the interests of the ruling class. During her campaign, Chicago Mayor Lightfoot and her allies stole from the militant teachers' union demands and made them a centerpiece of her vision for equity in Chicago. During the strike, teachers and the community demanded that she come through on her promises.

Yet she, along with the CPS (Chicago Public Schools), made the excuse that the city simply did not have the money. The city has somehow found the money to subsidize huge real estate developments in Chicago. As one teacher stated, "Equity centers around the most marginalized in our society and if we believe in it, then there must be a cost to the most privileged in our society."

Mayor Lightfoot and the CPS continue to protect the rich and most privileged interests of our city. If we can subsidize developers to the tune of \$2.1 billion to build real estate projects like Lincoln Yards and 'The 78,' if we can come up with \$2.3 billions in tax incentives and subsidies to lure Amazon's second headquarters, then we can fully fund our schools. We need leadership that is willing to do this by taxing the rich and by not subsidizing developers.

The strikers drew our attention to the fact that there are billions of taxpayer dollars for private property developments. So why can't we have nurses and counselors in every school, and class sizes small enough to allow our teachers to truly teach? Schools really are community centers where teachers and staff are on the front lines of dealing with all of the issues that are affecting the children, including austerity and the privatization of public

real estate development.

The struggle rested on things not typically fought for in a contract. It took up broad demands that are essential to bring students and families the schools they deserve. The picket line and public pressure were used to secure things that will affect students and families on the ground, in their neighborhoods. They addressed sanctuary protection in the schools, affordable housing assistance, rent control, and sustainable community schools.

Chicago teachers learned from the Oakland and Los Angeles strikes which used their contract negotiations to win bigger and broader demands at the bargaining table and out in the streets.

And this fight is far bigger than a strike of teachers – this strike is also special because of the environment of today's world. During the height of the industrial age millions of workers were needed in manufacturing and related jobs. Public schools were seen as important to ensure that qualified workers could perform these jobs. In today's world of the electronic revolution, most of those old jobs have disappeared. And despite what "experts" keep telling us, they are not being replaced with enough other types of good jobs for all.

It isn't a question of money. It's a question of political will. Many of the jobs that do open up require advanced education, but even those are being replaced through the use of robotics and Artificial Intelligence. Even though working class youth incur tens of thousands of dollars of debt to go to college, they are not guaranteed a job.

The growing contradiction of students being told to get educated, while a shrinking job market requires fewer "educated" appli-

TODAY'S MORAL IMPERATIVE

From the Editors

"I have only a short time to live, only one death to die, and I will die fighting for this cause. There will be no peace in this land until slavery is done for." – John Brown

During the Civil War the American people had to be taught that the destruction of slavery was the moral imperative. They had to be convinced the destruction of slavery was the defense of their own liberty. It took the Abolitionists, enslaved and not, to do it.

A broad cross-section of ordinary people today draw attention to the fact that our society is polarizing between the ruling class which owns and controls virtually everything, and a mass of people who are increasingly struggling to survive.

Out of this despair, a new round of abolitionists is being formed to fight for true economic and political democracy. The wealth being amassed in fewer hands has exposed a new level of selfishness among those who rule our country. And yet, there is still a fundamental morality amongst *our* class that simply cannot tolerate the wholesale destruction of human life. We see this in those coming forward to do something about children being forced into what really are concentration camps and the foster system.

One woman, interviewed by National Public Radio on November 12, 2019, fostered one of the children separated from her family at the U.S.-Mexico border. When asked if she felt evangelical Christians have fallen short in addressing the separation of families she stated, "Absolutely. I think that falling short actually comes from this idea that pro-life is anti-abortion. And I believe that if the evangelical leadership is going to get in the right place when it comes to immigration, it's got to start with really recognizing what pro-life means in a robust manner. ... if we're not pro-life when other people are pulling families apart – you know, we talk a lot about family values as evangelical Christians. And if we are going to be for family values, then we need to be for family reunification."

When ICE agents arrested nearly 700 undocumented migrants in Morton, Mississippi, families were left to struggle to survive without jobs. The 300 people released, and others, live in fear that the raids will be repeated. Many in Morton rallied to help families pay rent, and electric, water and gas bills.

Across America, millions face being, and are becoming, destitute. Each situation adds up to a system that no longer provides for the needs of people for food, water, good health care and education.

The ruling class turns to force and violence to control the situation. The growing number of restless people of this country, who love it and are willing to fight for it, must come together as one. We must guarantee that the changes wracking America result in a better life for the common people. We must guarantee the new tools of the high-tech economic revolution reach the potential for our well-being through public ownership of those tools. This is today's moral imperative. **RC**

cants, is why all battles for education today face steep resistance. It has become harder and harder to "win" anything for Chicago's students. Under Mayor Rahm Emmanuel there were massive school closures, even though the majority of Chicagoans protested that this meant gutting neighborhood communities.

Privatizing the schools and selling off public education to charters continue unabated even though charters have not produced better results than public schools. This was done to undercut the teachers' union, but also to transfer taxpayer money away from improving the public schools into the pockets of corporations and administrators running the charters.

Strikes like this, which involve the entire community, will continue and are part of the fight to transform society to take care of all of us. Educating children should not be looked at as a benefit for corporations. The education of the up and coming generation is important to the progress of human society.

The movement that is arising will continue to develop and grow in consciousness and power. The Chicago teachers' strike is notable for helping develop the understanding that classes exist in America, and that the interests of each class are coming into sharp conflict. That is the most important achieve-

ment of the strike. In the past, teachers may have seen their sphere of influence as being limited to the classroom and school system. Now, many see this strike as so important because they are shining a light on the role the huge real estate and other corporations are playing in the destruction of public education. This was also evident in the statewide teacher strikes in Arizona, Oklahoma, and the wildcat strike in West Virginia. In Indiana, at least 147 school districts canceled classes for the "Red for Ed Action Day" in November.

A new vision is necessary to move forward. It is clear that hunger and destitution resulting from the destruction of a wage-based economy is not due to a lack of food, clothing, or homes. There is an abundance of those things. Distribution of the basic necessities of life and the real development of a cultured life requires the transformation from society organized to protect private property to one that makes that property public and controlled by our working class. We have to engage in revolutionary transformation to build a system that allows every person to contribute to society, and that distributes the necessities of life according to need. A tremendous effort to unite our class practically and intellectually is necessary to bring this vision to fruition. **RC**

Striking a Blow Against Corporate Rule in 2020

America is increasingly heading into full-blown constitutional crisis. As impeachment hearings proceed, traditional processes of law and democracy are breaking down. Subpoenas are defied. The president tweets threats of civil war. Witnesses are threatened. The authority of Congress is denied. Election interference is openly solicited. Phony “national emergencies” are declared.

The administration aggressively disputes, ignores, flouts the law, and may even refuse to accept the results of the 2020 elections.

Around the country, voters have been purged and blocked from casting ballots. States are enacting laws to make it a felony to protest. In Kentucky, the president of the State Senate tried to overturn the recent election for governor. In Florida, the legislature acted to nullify Amendment 4, the voter-approved initiative that re-enfranchised the formerly incarcerated. In Texas, after 19 African American women judges were elected, there is a bill in the legislature to abolish judicial elections.

Wikipedia defines a constitutional crisis as “a problem or conflict in the function of a government that the political constitution or other fundamental governing law is perceived to be unable to resolve.” Constitutional crises can lead to paralysis, collapse of governments, loss of political legitimacy, and even civil war. The most serious constitutional crisis in America was the secession of the Southern slave states and Civil War in 1861. But there have been other crises as well, like the disputed election of 1876, that led to the violent overthrow of Reconstruction state governments in the South. Constitutional crises may appear to be matters of self-interested political infighting, but we ignore them at our peril. They have life-and-death consequences for millions of people.

The constitutional crisis in America today is not just about Donald Trump. There is no question that Trump must be impeached. The country cannot tolerate his criminality for another moment. But the constitutional crisis is deeper than just the president, or any partisan divide. The Trump presidency serves the ruling class by working to consolidate a fascist social base and speed up its transformation of the State into a corporate dictatorship. But the merging of the State and corporations will continue down this road with or without Trump. The people need a plan to stop fascism regardless of which spokesperson of the ruling class puts forward fascist solutions to the crisis.

UNDERLYING ECONOMIC CRISIS

The crisis is one of democracy itself. It arises from underlying economic and political causes. The ruling class may be divided over some of its tactics, but it is united on its mission: to protect private property at all costs against any inroads by the democratic will of the people.

Technological advances (microchips, computers, smart phones, software, 3D printing, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and social media) are, step by step, eliminating the role of human labor in production.

This is creating a new class of workers who essentially exist outside the formal productive process. They are increasingly plunged into poverty and forced to confront the private property system in the political arena just to survive.

At the same time, corporations that no longer have need for employees can no longer tolerate political interference by working class constituencies. They are forced to launch a fascist offensive aimed at ultimately rewriting the Constitution to protect private property and eliminate democracy and majority rule.

While the crisis is undoubtedly dangerous, it is also an opportunity. The ruling class is united in its defense of private property but are fighting among themselves over how best to move forward. This provides an opening for the workers to organize and get educated. The workers being forced out of the economy have to fight politically to survive.

The ruling class is united in its defense of private property but are fighting among themselves over how best to move forward. This provides an opening for the workers to organize and get educated.

SOCIAL POLARIZATION

The clash between the social struggle and the ruling class is polarizing all the old social and political organizations that have historically tied the workers to the corporate domination system. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Democratic Party. One section of Democrats is aggressively fighting for single payer health care, housing, and the abolition of ICE, while the other is equally aggressively opposing them. Two opposites like this, one attacking public property and the other advancing it, cannot remain the same party.

Analysis of the details of the Green New Deal and Sanders Economic Bill of Rights shows that together they constitute the broadest and most articulate expression of this motion. They are political vehicles. The fight for basic human needs expressed in these programs is objectively striking at the connection between the Democratic Party base and the corporate ruling class. In fact, major Wall Street donors to the Democrats have threatened to support Trump if either Warren or Sanders wins the Democratic nomination.

The Green New Deal calls on the Federal Government to embark on a ten-year national mobilization to “achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions through a fair and just transition.” It would “create millions of good high-wage jobs” and ensure “high-quality health care; affordable, safe, and adequate housing; economic security; and clean water, clean air, healthy and affordable food, and access to nature.”

It would also end and repair historic oppression of what it calls “frontline and vulner-

able communities,” identified as “indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth.”

The demands of the new class that is being displaced from the economy finds expression in Sanders’ Economic Bill of Rights, which calls for a Federal jobs guarantee, a right to health care, housing, education, retirement, and a clean environment. Sanders’ Housing for All platform calls for spending \$2.5 trillion to build ten million units of affordable housing, end homelessness, fund community land trusts, and impose national rent control.

At the same time, Sanders addresses some of America’s most urgent social issues. His anti-mass incarceration program calls for stopping excessive sentencing “with a goal of

cutting the incarcerated population in half.” He has called for a moratorium on deportations, breaking up ICE and the Border Patrol, dismantling border concentration camps, reuniting families, demilitarization of the border, and a swift and fair pathway to citizenship.

The power of these programs depends entirely on their connection with, and ability to impact, the actual struggles of the dispossessed. Workers across the country are locked into militant but defensive struggles for their economic survival. Renters are rising for rent control, and workers are striking to fight take-aways and protect services for their communities. They are resisting heroically. Programs like the Green New Deal, the Sanders’ platform, and to a lesser extent Warren’s, offer an important opportunity to unite, embrace, and rally around a positive vision of the better life that America’s wealth can provide for all, if it were distributed according to need.

Sanders and Warren are able to promote these programs because for the first time in history, their campaigns have mastered the ability to fund themselves essentially from the working class.

ROLE OF REVOLUTIONARIES

The opportunity exists to work with these programs to inspire people with the hope they need to strike a blow against the corporate rulers. The government is increasingly intervening in the economy to ensure circulation of commodities. The only question is whether this will be done in the interests of the people, or in the interests of the corporations. The Sanders, Warren, and Green New Deal programs offer an arena to organize and fight politically for public ownership for public benefit.

Workers cannot win their economic demands, until they break free from corporate politicians and confront the corporate power structure of the Democratic Party. The formation of Lincoln’s Republican Party offers important lessons on how this can happen. The emerging anti-slavery majority first built a large following inside the establishment Whig Party. After exposing the party’s inability to reform, it took the party’s base and started a new party that replaced the old one.

The recently dispossessed make up the center of gravity in the social struggle. Many of them are inside the Democratic Party, attempting to use it as a vehicle for advancing their immediate demands in the political arena. Revolutionaries have to position themselves where politicization of the social struggle is pushing workers toward political independence. The task of revolutionaries is to propagandize and teach, as the workers find their way forward toward an independent political party, and ultimately toward formation of a workers’ party.

The revolutionaries today fight to win the immediate aims of the workers, but in the movement of the present they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. The role of revolutionaries is to organize and educate the new class to make it happen. The demands expressed in the Green New Deal and Economic Bill of Rights cannot be realized without a political revolution that actually wrestles state power away from the corporations and reorganizes the economy along cooperative lines. **RC**

Join the League of Revolutionaries for a New America!

Society can now create the abundance the new technology promises, and so create a new world: a cooperative society, with this abundance distributed according to need. In spite of worsening economic conditions, 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.

Join us! For more information or a free information packet, email LRNA@lrna.org, or call 773-486-0028, or write LRNA, P.O. Box 477113, Chicago, IL 60647. Sign up and stay informed at rallycomrades.lrna.org/contact-us

New Class, New Awareness for Puerto Rico

The “Ricky, Renuncia” (“Ricky, Resign”) movement was the umbrella that gave voice to over a third of Puerto Rico’s population, who took to the streets this past summer and forced governor Ricardo “Ricky” Roselló Nevares to resign. They rose up against his corrupt and insulting behavior toward the island’s most vulnerable groups, the first time in U.S. history that such a huge mass movement forced a state or colonial governor to resign.

This huge struggle followed almost a decade of austerity measures, resulting in the wrecking of the public schools, deteriorating health services (especially for the elderly), and the impoverishment of a growing mass of people. Profits remain high for industrial and commercial corporations, and above all for speculative financial capital. In fact, when Puerto Rico’s government bonds bubble burst and generated a financial collapse, the U.S. federal government imposed a dictatorial fiscal control board upon it. Meanwhile, the federal government’s neglectful response to Hurricane María’s disastrous impact on poor people and natural ecology continues to this date.

U.S. Census Bureau data clearly expresses the colony’s political importance, with Puerto Ricans accounting for 1.7 percent of the 2016 U.S. population and 9.5 percent of the nation’s Latinos, with a growth rate more than three times that of the U.S. population as a whole (17.9 percent compared to 4.7). These trends have been accelerating ever since the imposition of the Financial Control Board in the summer of 2016 and Hurricanes Irma and María in 2017. Puerto Rico’s population is larger than that of 21 U.S. states, and its poverty rate is worse than the most impoverished state, Mississippi.

A NEW MOVEMENT ARISING

The movement was an opportunity to see the various ways in which Puerto Rican political culture organizes itself nowadays, outside the weakened but still hegemonic traditional political realm of mass domesticated colonial party politics. It was a collective scream of outrage and a celebration of mass power displaying a stunning diversity, with youth-led groups in dialogue and celebration with people of all ages and social walks of life. Popular stars from the music and entertainment industry played visible roles, attracting mass media coverage.

However, the leading poles were students (the majority facing endless loans, and precarious low paying jobs); young people excluded from the formal and legal job market and forced to hustle in the underground economy; older workers facing pension downgrading; and middle age workers, whose stagnating and declining wages and benefits have forced many to migrate to the U.S. mainland. To all these people in motion, the 2019 summer struggle showed that fighting and uniting against the few can lead to victories for the many.

Whether the flashes of consciousness expressed in mushrooming People’s Assemblies, fronts against corporate capitalist abuses, and cooperative and mutual aid community projects can result in transforming society to meet the people’s needs will require developing

a larger vision, based on understanding the economic system in which these struggles are embedded.

A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

The current climate of outrage and frustration with traditional colonial party politics and the elites that control it is not new in Puerto Rico. It has been heating up at different temperatures for the past ten years. The May 1st demonstration in 2017, the most widely attended and militant in more than two decades, and the “Renuncia, Ricky” uproar this past July are examples of both highly organized and more spontaneous boiling outbursts of protest. Along with such massive expression of discontent and mass action, the Puerto Rican social and political landscape has been dotted with protests from below in every social sector.

Today’s situation has gone beyond the evolution of capitalism in Puerto Rico from the early 1900s. At that time, the colonial governor Charles Allen stated, that Puerto Rico needed men with capital. On the other hand, poor rural workers had to take the chance of going abroad to sell their labor power in other parts of the United States, such as Hawaii sugar cane fields and Arizona cotton fields. Import surplus capital and export surplus labor power: that has been the colonial formula applied to the growth of industrial enclaves in the countryside and the suburban areas of the Puerto Rican archipelago.

A good deal of the class struggle in the continental U.S. also played out with local variations within the Puerto Rican archipelago. Puerto Ricans became members of the working class exploited directly by absentee U.S. capitalists, particularly the investors in U.S. Sugar and Tobacco Trusts. In response, with a leading role by anarcho-syndicalists and social democrats, during the early 1900s the Puerto Rican Free Federation of Labor joined the Puerto Rican craft unions organized by the American Federation of Labor. It then expanded its membership to the sugar cane factories and fields, where the largest sector of the Puerto Rican rural proletariat was employed.

Later, in the 1930s during the New Deal years and following the Second World War, radical socialists, communists and nationalists working in tandem with the CIO, the American Communist Party and anti-colonialist social democrats pushed Puerto Rican politics in a more militant direction. Such progressive anti-capitalist and anti-colonial motion was short lived, due to the anti-communist Cold War offensive that bribed, smothered and repressed the leading forces of the emerging mass labor union and anti-capitalist movement in both “USAmerica” and Puerto Rico, its Caribbean colony.

That formula provided room for the development of a working class and petit bourgeoisie with enough purchasing power and credit to soften the edges of capitalist exploitation. It came with a modest welfare state, first under Roosevelt’s New Deal, and later on, thanks to bonds and revenues managed by a Puerto Rican government, that claimed to

have shed the worst features of colonial rule. There was the appearance of enough political autonomy to persuade the United Nations to remove Puerto Rico from the list of colonial territories in 1953, at the height of the spiraling Cold War and anticommunist ideological and military offensive.

Those were the years when Puerto Rico became the social democratic and economically “progressive” showcase of the Americas, a time when the U.S. corporate iron grip on Latin America was thinly concealed in the silk glove of economic progress. It was the era of the Alliance for Progress, a united front of bourgeois Latin American regimes against the potential threat of Latin American nationalism and communism, embodied by the triumph of the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

Teodoro Moscoso, Puerto Rico’s point guard for U.S. political and diplomatic imperialism, became chief officer of the vaunted Operation Bootstrap, a post-World War II industrialization strategy to exchange local labor for U.S. absentee capital, in the service of private capitalists in Puerto Rico and their counterparts in Central, South America and the rest of the Caribbean. Crucial to this economic and political maneuvering was the massive migratory labor escape valve that accompanied this process in cyclical waves throughout the 50s and 60s. Over a third of the island’s working class migrated to work in the agricultural fields and urban factories in U.S., mostly in Eastern states like Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, and New York.

NEW CLASS ERUPTIONS

Currently, the image of the so-called Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has no clothes,

and a growing mass of people are taking notice. Its legitimacy is melting very quickly and the “Ricky, Renuncia” movement was just a tip of the iceberg. Looking beyond and beneath the surface of such events reveals the source of the rising everyday resistance to the rule of capital: people are fighting for survival at every level because they face the contradictory motion of the economic system of private property. On one hand it destroys living labor and replaces it with technology, generating an abundance of leisure time and goods for some. On the other hand, as automation advances so does the impoverishment of a mass of Puerto Rico’s people.

The Puerto Rican workers have increased the ranks of the working class in the “USAmerican” mainland, and are now facing the elimination of the jobs that once fed illusions of achieving the American Dream. They are being pushed into competition with the growing mass of the permanently discarded and excluded. They come from the favelas, ghettos, alleyways, and streets of mega-cities. They are the old and the young, the fathers, mothers, children, and grandchildren, and they confront the rulers of the world’s Silicon Valleys. They are joining the ranks of a new global proletariat with no attachment to property, whose lives are in jeopardy.

The massive “Renuncia, Ricky” protests are actually part of the popular eruptions of this new objectively communist class, challenging austerity policies imposed by ruling classes from Perú to Chile, Argentina to Colombia, and resisting neofascist uprisings from Brazil to Bolivia. These events are the ink with which the revolutionary writing on the wall is being drawn. **RC**

We Celebrate the Life of Comrade Bob Brown

We celebrate the life and contribution of comrade Bob Brown, who passed away on November 8, 2019. Bob was a fighter for his class, the working class. He was a union organizer for many years, and when electronic, robotic production began to displace workers in massive numbers from the workplace, he carried on his fight for this new class, both standing on picket lines and also fighting for the poor and unorganized. Bob was a founding member and leader of the Labor Party because he understood that in this time, the only way the working class could move forward was to become conscious of itself as a class, and to build its own independent political party with its own class program.

Comrade Bob was a visionary, with a deep and passionate commitment to a transformed future for humanity, a new cooperative society based on the distribution of the abundance of society based upon need, the foundation of a higher stage of human society in which the full potential of humanity is realized. Bob was a founding member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America because he understood that an organization of conscious revolutionaries was necessary at this time for our class to move along its line of march to achieve its ultimate aim. Bob was a strategic thinker: to imbue the class with a vision of a transformed future, while at the same time indicating the strategic orientation of how we get there. Comrade Bob liked to quote a line from Sun Tzu: “Strategy without tactics is the slowest road to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.”

Bob also liked to say that he was “just a guy,” but he epitomizes how all of us, even as individuals can make a difference, can make a contribution to history, and to the forward motion of our class. Bob made his contribution, and that is what we celebrate. **RC**

World Polarization, Destruction and Transformation

Editor's Note: This article is the first of two adapted from the October 2019 Political Report by the Central Committee of the LRNA.

We are witnessing the exponential advance of the electronic revolution and its impact on the economy. We see an acceleration of the efforts by the ruling class to grapple with and to maintain their hold on private property as polarization and crisis in the world deepen. Within ruling circles both nationally and internationally a struggle is underway, grappling with changes in the world economy and geopolitics. The world order that has been in place since the fall of the Soviet Union, a unipolar, hegemonic order dominated by the U.S., is being challenged by the rising of a new multipolar world order, particularly the Russian Federation and China, as they rise to contend with U.S. hegemony. The overriding quality of the process is deepening polarization and instability.

It is in this environment that conscious revolutionaries have to develop a subjective polarization, based on the program of the new objective communist class. Revolution is now an objective historic inevitability. The overwhelming political demand today is to prepare the people for this inevitability through the introduction of new ideas. New ideas are the indispensable catalyst of revolution. The revolutionary new idea is essentially this: Computerized, electronic, automated production is just beginning and is irreversible. Each stage of its development requires fewer workers and depresses the wages of those who still work. The situation is becoming more and more intolerable. Production without wages makes distribution without money according to need both understandable and inevitable. Carrying to the people, in the midst of their fights, the new idea of reorganizing the mode of distribution is the most revolutionary task of our time.

Polarization is the process of separating the opposing or contradictory elements that make up an entity. Polarization – the process of one aspect going entirely, or almost entirely in one direction, and the other aspect go-

ing in the other direction – must take place before there is motion.

POLARIZATION OF WEALTH AND POVERTY

Once polarization does take place, a struggle between the two poles begins. This is evident in a society when all the wealth goes in one direction to one class, and all the poverty goes in the opposite direction to another class. As this process takes place, the opposing classes begin to stir – begin to fight each other. Only when there is motion – movement and struggle – on the part of the opposing social forces, is it possible for the revolutionaries to play a role in history.

We are living in a period when the contradiction between the developing productive forces (robotics) and the productive relations (capitalism) has been replaced by antagonism. Antagonism is the basis of destruction and the transformation to a new quality. Antagonism today is expressed in ongoing deep economic, social and a growing political polarization within the country and around the world.

Today, with the introduction of robotics, production is increasing by leaps and bounds with less and less labor. The result is that human life is becoming cheaper and cheaper. As labor is no longer needed in production, the value of that labor-worth goes toward zero. Thus, a section of society becomes absolutely destitute. Those who are working are competing with the computer and the robot. Their wages are steadily falling because they can't compete.

On the other hand, products created by robots with little or no labor in them, are sold alongside products entirely created by labor and sold at the same price. Therefore, the more the automation of industry, the richer the owner gets. In this way, all the wealth is going in one direction, and all the poverty is going in the other. This polarization is the result of the productive forces developing very rapidly and the productive relations failing to develop along with them. The political polarization being expressed now is a result of these underlying changes in the economy.

Much of humanity has barely escaped extreme poverty, with just under half the world's population – 3.4 billion people – subsisting on less than \$5.50 a day, which is the World Bank's new poverty line for extreme poverty in upper-middle-income countries. The "World Inequality Report 2018" showed that between 1980 and 2016 the poorest 50 percent of humanity only captured 12 cents in every dollar of global income growth. By contrast, the top 1 percent captured 27 cents of every dollar.

Compare this to the life of today's ruling class. Today, the top 1 percent of households own more wealth than the bottom 90 percent combined. A 2018 Oxfam study found that eighty two percent of the wealth generated last year went to the richest one percent of the global population, while the 3.7 billion people who make up the poorest half of the world saw no increase in their wealth. According to a June 2017 report by the Boston Consulting Group, around 70 percent of the nation's wealth will be in the hands of millionaires and billionaires by 2021.

The 2019 Oxfam report, "Public Good or Private Wealth?" gives an indication of the depth of this polarization worldwide. In the 10 years since the global financial crisis, the number of billionaires has nearly doubled. The wealth of the world's billionaires increased by \$900 billion in the last year alone, or \$2.5 billion a day. Meanwhile, the wealth of the poorest half of humanity, 3.8 billion people, fell by 11 percent. Between 2017 and 2018, a new billionaire was created every two days. Yet wealthy individuals and corporations are paying lower rates of tax than they have in decades.

THE RISE OF MASSIVE DEBT

With the polarization and instability in the global economy, and the increased number of countries integrated into that economy since 2008, along with the massive amounts of national and personal debt and the vast expansion of a global new class pushed to the margins of survival, the next inevitable financial meltdown will be one of

catastrophic proportions.

Deepening government and personal debt are expressions of the increasing inability of the capitalists to circulate commodities/products based on the declining number of people having jobs with wages who are able to buy what is produced. Laborless production means valueless production – and hence, profitless production. Speculative capital came to dominate the financial system as less and less value could be realized in production. So, capital shifted into purely speculative investment. Speculative capital does not create value or realize surplus-value, but makes money mainly from amassing vast sums based on debt.

Global debt has ballooned over the past two decades: from \$84 trillion at the turn of the century, to \$173 trillion at the time of the 2008 financial crisis, to \$250 trillion a decade after Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.'s collapse. In November, the IMF warned that almost 40 percent, or around \$19 trillion, of the corporate debt in major economies such as the U.S., China, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Spain was at risk of default in the event of another global economic downturn.

The polarization of wealth and poverty and the insurmountable debt are part and parcel of creating the accelerating growth of the new class since 2008.

POLARIZATION ACCELERATES WORLD INSTABILITY

The advance of globalization, the widespread use and effects of electronics in production, and the dominance of speculative capital are transforming the foundation of the global economy. With the creation of a world market, national corporations have become multinational, multinationals have become transnational, and transnational corporations become supranational. Supranational corporations have blended into and become part of national States. The U.S. attempts to use its domination over the world financial system and the dollar, backed up by military aggression, to control the world's economies. **RC**

New Year, New Class, New Vision (Continued from page 1)

rence in American culture because more people than ever are more aware than ever that they are caught up in a fight for their lives.

All across America and the world, industrial workers are joined by teachers, nurses, doctors and others who were once viewed as a "professional class" but now launch strikes against a system that is no longer offering them dignity or the wherewithal to survive. While the rich get richer, the rest of us are being thrown together into a new class, no longer having a stake in a system based upon the buying and selling of labor. Though the ruling class voices that manage the mainstream media offer no direct challenges to the dying capitalist system, people everywhere understand that the economy is at the heart of our problems. Building political unity among this vast variety of dispossessed is key to all of our futures. The future truly is about the 99 percent taking control of the world out of the hands of a 1 percent who try to keep us divided while hoarding, misusing and wasting half of the world's increasingly endangered resources.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A NEW VISION

To unify that great majority, we have to spread an understanding of where we are in human history. New tools once transformed a hunter-gatherer society into a world of warring civilizations, just as industry at one point liberated great masses of the population from ancient concepts of class, first creating and eventually ending American chattel slavery. We are now at a point where the digital revolution has destroyed the basis for capitalism – an exchange system based upon the labor expended in production and distribution, represented and held in place by the accumulation of private property. The maintenance of ruling class property in a world where labor has no value offers us only fascism and ongoing destruction at a time when humanity has the capacity to be free in ways unimaginable in the past.

The moment we are in is a leap from one society organized around an obsolete system for production and distribution to a new society organized around the abundance created by new tools that can easily provide for everyone. The

new class will be on every front of this struggle for economic justice and human dignity because the ruling class will do everything in its power (including electoral politics) to maintain its control over the great mass of the human population. Our job as revolutionaries is to work shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters on all of these fronts and help to show them what's possible in a world freed from the hold of the capitalist class and private property. With a clear understanding of where we stand in history, we can work together knowing it is within our power to end homelessness and hunger and war and environmental destruction forever. A cooperative society that works together to solve our problems, based upon a generous distribution of our abundance according to our needs, a communist solution, is the practical response to the problems faced by a society which has too long been driven by private property and profit. With this vision in hand, we bring hope and energy to 2020 as the beginning of a new epoch in human history. **RC**