

# RALLY, COMRADES!

THE VOICE OF THE LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARIES FOR A NEW AMERICA

VOLUME 30, EDITION 3

MAY-JUNE 2020

RALLYCOMRADES.LRNA.ORG

\$1 DONATION

## The Coronavirus and the Necessity of a Communist Vision

### From the Editors

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (or COVID-19) has made vivid the need for a society that puts people above private property. Never has the necessity of a cooperative society been more apparent than it is in the light of this pandemic and the fascist response that is accompanying it. With a communist vision, we can not only ensure that a ruling class can never again exploit working people's pain for its own gain. We can also effectively manage such dangers to our health before they spread out of control.

### INADEQUATE RESPONSE

We now know COVID-19 began spreading in the United States in mid-January, about the same time the World Health Organization made available a diagnostic test to track the disease. Instead of using it, the U.S. government cobbled together privatized partnerships and rolled out a flawed test in early February, only declaring a national emergency a month later. Meanwhile, those on the frontlines of the struggle — healthcare workers, civil servants, truck drivers, and grocery store employees — worked with inadequate supplies to protect their health. Americans died by the thousands due to the refusal of the federal government to mass-test, track and contain the virus and to provide simple but vital things like masks and gowns. In the face of this disaster, governors began to call for nationalization of some industries so that healthcare workers could have the equipment they needed, and patients would have the nearly million ventilators projected to be necessary before this crisis is over.

The minimal use of the Defense Production Act to nationalize industries during this crisis finally led to mass production of N95 masks by 3M, which the company has been selling to the highest bidders, profiting at the expense of American taxpayers. By March 27, pressure on the Federal government led to GM and an array of other manufacturers producing ventilators, but there was still confusion over plans. The situation ensures that these companies will also profit off of taxpayer dollars. Meanwhile, numerous governors have complained that they are competing with one another for protective gear on top of competing with international markets.

While our ruling class pushes for billions of dollars of the workers' taxes to fund such profiteering and to protect a stock market in freefall, millions more Americans are find-



Boulder, Colorado / USA - March 23 2020: Facing government inaction, homeless people set up a makeshift hand-washing station in Boulder's Central Park. Photo: Elliott DK

ing themselves forced out of work, isolated and scared. Some will be permanently thrown out of the system. When people in high places were told what was coming, they moved to protect their financial interests instead of the people. Some, knowing what was coming, even dumped stock before the crisis fully bloomed.

Various versions of the rescue bill kept being exposed and tweaked for their obvious self-serving interests. Still, the outcome is guaranteed to be that billions of each inevitable trillion-dollar package will go to the rich. At the same time, we only see inadequate funds and supplies to everyday people. Meanwhile, the ruling class lays the groundwork for a new fascist ideology, with radio pundits and politicians suggesting that the elderly would rather sacrifice their own lives than harm the capitalist economy.

### IMPULSES TO HELP ONE ANOTHER

Despite such horrors, the pandemic has accelerated the human impulse toward cooperation for the sake of one another's survival. All over the country, with uneven state and local measures to contain the virus, people are not only following general health protocols but taking action. They are organizing food distributions, fundraising for those in need, calling for eviction moratoriums and rent strikes,

finding ways to provide clean water to those who have no access, and helping the homeless take over abandoned housing. Just as humanity did for hundreds of thousands of years before the accumulation of private property, today's working-class people are searching for ways to offer what we have to provide for others' needs.

Using our resources to provide for each other's needs is the fundamental concept of communism. When the many ways we produce the things that allow us to survive become public instead of private property, all community, and individual needs can be met.

In communism's early forms, people banded together to survive a world of scarce resources. Today, we live in a world where digital technologies can produce virtually anything we need, with less and less human activity. This new reality has created a decades-long and deepening worldwide crisis for capitalism because that system depends on workers earning money to buy its goods.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerates the crisis and the class struggle. Those who were fighting poverty, surviving without adequate healthcare or housing before the pandemic are clearly on the front lines of this struggle. They are being joined by more and more Americans every day. Over the last two weeks of March, 3.3 million Americans filing for unemployment doubled to a record 6.6 million.

### NATIONALIZATION FOR PROFIT

The U.S. ruling class is calling for the nationalization of industries to protect profitability. The world scientific community is aware of the inevitability of increasing pandemics and a growing climate catastrophe. No reasonable person who is not merely looking to maintain power can help but recognize the inadequacy of the world economic system.

While all Americans are beginning to see the need for the nationalization of production and distribution to resolve our current crisis, revolutionaries must keep in mind that the horrific response to this crisis is simply the latest symptom of the deepening crises of a system that can no longer provide for its people. In 2008 banks were bailed out, healthcare reform propped up insurance companies, and alliances like the one with the Nestlé corporation (among others) sold off Great Lakes waters for pennies to private interests, while allowing the Flint River to remain poisoned. We have seen time and time again the inhumanity of government when it works for

*Continued on page 3*

## CONTENTS

Inside: Crisis Reveals Solution	2	Next Steps in the Battle of the Ballot	5
Juneteenth 2020 — Seeds of Class Unity	3	Elections 2020: As the South goes, so Goes the Nation	5
Electoral Battles Reflect Growing Polarization	4	Flint is Still Broken, Six Years Later	6

# Economic and Social Crisis Reveals Solution

## Inside Rally, Comrades!

As the world responds to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the majority of people need the intervention of the government to survive. We need safe housing to “shelter in place” and healthcare to get tests and treatment for COVID-19, regardless of our ability to pay. Children need their public schools to provide meals even though they aren’t attending school physically. Nurses and doctors

need protective equipment to stay alive while working. The many people who have lost their jobs or are unable to work need economic intervention on their behalf to keep their homes and get food, clean water, and other basic necessities to survive.

Even before the COVID-19 crisis, many Americans were on the edge of economic survival. For example, in Flint, Michigan, electronic production began eliminating good paying auto factory jobs in the 1980s. It continued over the years, leaving more than one third of its population in poverty today. Six

years after the lead poisoning crisis caused by a state-appointed emergency manager implementing austerity, the article “Six Years Later, Flint is Still Broken,” shows that Flint residents are still dying from a lack of affordable clean, safe water.

Just as COVID-19 exacerbates the economic and social crisis, it also illuminates the solution. When people do not have sufficient income or jobs to provide for their needs, their needs must be provided for by the government. Automated production within the wage labor value system is polarizing society with unheard-of wealth on one side and unheard-of poverty on the other, as pointed out in “Electoral Battles Reflect Growing Polarization.” The struggle to contain the coronavirus has exacerbated vast historical processes underway.

The coronavirus has revealed the necessity for a new communist economic system, as noted in “From the Editors: The Coronavirus and the Necessity of a Communist Vision.” A communist society operates on the principle, from each according to their ability, to each according to their need. Today’s advanced technology makes this possible. Standing in the way of this vision is a tiny ruling class with the political power to force the government to act in its economic interests.

The only way to protect our families and communities is by coming together politically as a working class, all those who need systemic change to survive and thrive. As noted in “Next Steps in the Battle of the Ballot,” the political battle over the bailout has just begun, whether to use public money to save corporate profits or to save human lives. There is a social force powerful enough to pull a huge segment of workers forward to fight, a force that can solve the social crisis. It is the new

class of millions of unemployed and underemployed workers created by advances in robotics, artificial intelligence, and other labor-replacing technology. Without sufficient income from work, this new section of the working class cannot survive private property relations.

The unity of the new class is needed to obtain the political power to construct a cooperative economic system. The ruling class does not want us to unite on a class basis. Fascist efforts at dividing our class are obvious in the virulent anti-Mexican, anti-African and recently, anti-Chinese statements of Donald Trump. Revolutionaries play a role in showing the need and basis for class unity. The growing hitherto unknown breadth of equality of poverty is creating the basis for real class unity.

The article, “Juneteenth 2020 – Seeds of Revolutionary Unity,” explains that during the struggle to end slavery, Black and white revolutionaries were teaching that the enslavement of Blacks didn’t help Southern whites, but instead helped capitalists force them to accept their own poverty. Today, a new type of economic communism is no longer just a wish but is the only solution to the social crisis developing out of the death of capitalism.

Either the tiny fascist ruling class will violently maintain itself in power, or the emerging new class will unite to create a society that ensures economic survival and equality. Our survival as a class depends on the consciousness of our class catching up with the objective reality of what we are facing together and the possibilities it offers. Developing this consciousness is the role of revolutionaries. Today’s crisis calls for the practical solution of a cooperative society where the needs of all people will be met. **RC**

## A Vision for a New America

Subscribe to *Rally, Comrades!*  
\$20 for one full year

Arm the American people with truth and a vision of a new world.  
Subscribe to *Rally, Comrades!*. Get it out to everyone you know!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribe at <http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/subscribe>

Or send a check or money order to:

LRNA attn. Rally, Comrades!, P.O. Box 477113, Chicago, IL 60647

## 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:** Danny Alexander, Brooke Heagerty, Kimberly King, John Slaughter

**Photo Editor:** Daymon Hartley

**Design:** Brett Jelínek

Reach us at: [RALLY@LRNA.ORG](mailto: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, healthcare 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](mailto:info@lrna.org) | 1(773)486-0028 | [lrna.org](http://lrna.org)

Visit the *Rally, Comrades!* website!  
[rallycomrades.lrna.org](http://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.

# Juneteenth 2020 — Seeds of Class Unity

Every year, communities hold “Juneteenth” commemorations, honoring the U.S. military order that freed 250,000 Texas slaves on June 19, 1865.

With the arrival of the Union Army, the rumors that the slave-owning ruling class was losing the Civil War became a reality. And seeing African American soldiers, slaves’ quiet prayers for liberation were turned into cheers of triumph. Harriet Tubman had prophesied that President Lincoln could not defeat the South “till he does the right thing” by making war on slavery. She was right, and once the struggle to preserve the Union was forced into becoming a fight to free four million humans held as property, the Civil War had objectively become a revolution.

Juneteenth also represents a victory for the Mexican and Indigenous peoples. The 1846 U.S. invasion of Mexico resulted from a 10-year battle to extend slavery into México’s Texas region, after that country had abolished it. By the war’s end in 1848, the U.S. had stolen one-third of México, the area now called the Southwest, and began making war on native peoples to steal their lands, too.

## DEFEAT OF SLAVERY

The Confederacy’s defeat in the Civil War wouldn’t result in freedom for these two peoples. Still, it did prevent the legal enslavement which the Southern-dominated U.S. government would soon have forced upon them.

European revolutionaries of the time understood that the defeat of slavery in 1865 was also a victory for the world’s working class. In 1866, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels summed it up by writing, “Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin when in the black it is branded.” This idea had al-

ready been put into practice by their comrade Adolph Douai, who fled Germany after the failed revolution of 1848, and started up a newspaper in Texas. Douai called for the abolition of slavery, teaching that the enslavement of Blacks didn’t help Southern whites, but instead helped capitalists force them to accept their own poverty.

## FREED SLAVES LED POLITICAL WAR

The Civil War was a struggle for political power between two antagonistic wings of the ruling class, the Southern slave power and the financial and industrial capitalists of the North. The former wanted to transform the entire country, and eventually, the hemisphere into a slave empire; the latter wanted to reduce the South to the reserve of industry. After the military victory over slave capital, a political war to reconstruct the South began.

In Reconstruction, freed slaves played the key role in developing revolutionary unity between freed slaves and the poorest section of whites. Together they got 1,500 African Americans elected throughout the South, passing laws to redistribute some of the Confederates’ land and creating the South’s first free public schools. By the early 1870s, 15 percent of Southern office-holders were Black, a larger percentage than in 1990!

Northern financial and industrial capitalists were willing to accept this until their banks and railroads had gained control of the Southern economy. Once the South’s ruling class had been remade into finance capital’s subordinates, they were returned to power in Southern state and local governments through a violent, counter-revolutionary offensive against the pockets of developing working

---

The defeat of slavery in 1865 was also a victory for the world’s working class.

---

class unity.

Louisiana provides an example of what occurred throughout the South. William Ward had gone from slave to Union soldier to a state representative, elected by the growing unity between Blacks and some whites. On Easter Sunday in 1873, their enemies took advantage of his absence to openly murder 150 black men in what became known as the Colfax Massacre. The next year, Louisiana’s White League assassinated six white office-holders and as many as twenty Black witnesses in Coushatta. In such ways, fascism was imposed on the South.

In 1876, newly elected President Hayes ended federal military protection of Reconstruction efforts. That action encouraged the violence that the Ku Klux Klan and other gangs focused against Blacks and those whites who persisted in uniting with them, killing the Reconstruction movement. To prevent its arising anew, an enormous layer of segregation laws, Confederate worship, and extreme racist ideology was then packed over the grave of Reconstruction.

However, the South continued to have the nation’s highest rates of poverty for both whites and Blacks. That led to many struggles of white workers and small farmers, some of whom inevitably united with Blacks who were fighting the same problems. An example arose during the Great Depression of

the 1930s when Black and white sharecroppers built the Alabama Sharecroppers Union (ASU), led by an African American, Tommy Gray. Despite its heroic struggles, the ASU was crushed by the same old combination of KKK violence against Blacks, segregation, and government inaction.

## A NEW BASIS FOR CLASS UNITY

Today we face a new situation. The high-tech world economy is step-by-step ending our ruling class’s ability to provide social bribery to mass sections of workers. They are being thrown into a new class that is forced to fight for whatever housing, healthcare, or education it needs. Now the motion towards class unity is unstoppable because it arises from this new material basis and is not just a good idea.

Automation of the means of producing goods is step-by-step, eliminating the jobs economy. Fascism is the only way the ruling class can maintain an economy of private ownership when the system of jobs, bribery, and capitalism itself is no longer sustainable.

Today, a new type of economic communism based on distribution according to need is no longer just a wish but is the only solution to the social crisis developing out of the death of capitalism. The new technology demands a new economic communist system that can ensure that it serves humanity’s needs.

The old is never abruptly replaced by the new, and class and color are intertwined. So the ruling class has not given up its use of color divisions and is escalating the attacks on “new class” African Americans by cops and pro-fascist gangs. But as in the war over Reconstruction, the attacks against Blacks have grown into violence against the entire class of all colors and nationalities.

Forms of discrimination are developing, which at first appear to only be about color differences but end up justifying violence against the “behavior” and “culture” of the whole new class. Our rulers bill it as defending families from homeless criminals, or an invasion of immigrants, or drug addicts. What’s really underway is a process of imposing a new form of racism on society as a whole.

But no matter how the ruling class attempts to divide the new class of workers being created by high-tech globalization, the reality is that this class can take no steps forward without resolving the problems that confront them as a whole.

We are dealing with a political question. Either the tiny fascist ruling class will violently maintain itself in power, or the emerging new class will unite to create a society that ensures economic survival and equality. Nurturing the seeds of class unity planted by our country’s past revolutionaries is the best way to celebrate Juneteenth. **RC**

---

## The Coronavirus and the Necessity of a Communist Vision

*Continued from page 1*

corporations. Under capitalism, nationalization is a tool to provide stability for the ruling classes.

As revolutionaries, we need to understand nationalization as an important battleground, a national dialogue over whose interests our government will serve. The human cost of COVID-19 vividly illustrates the necessity for a new communist economic system. The objective truth is that we could, right now, harness all of our resources to tackle the pandemic. We could ensure that no one has to go without sufficient food, shelter, clothing, and whatever other tools individuals might need to get through such a crisis. Imagine being out of work without fear for our own safety or the safety of our families! That is the communist vision.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, over forty million Americans were food insecure, and half a million were homeless on any given night. Despite dedicated efforts by small groups throughout the country, this situation will only grow worse, because the people have no control over systems of mass production that could resolve these problems. In fact, as part of a move toward indoctrinating us with fascist ideology, we have seen people arrested for feeding the hungry, to help the mass incarcerated in prison, and trying to keep immigrant families from being torn apart. These are the same groups the ruling class has tried to stop from defending those who are most at risk in the COVID-19 pandemic. With every new crisis, the ruling class crusade for an ideology that puts the economy above human life only intensifies as American (and worldwide) corporate owners fight to maintain their wealth and control over the system.

This fascist ideology is an objective need of a ruling class which can only maintain its control of the people by convincing us that we should entrust human life to the interests of private property. From the moment the COVID-19 crisis broke, the federal government put private interests in charge of testing, production, and distribution of needed supplies, and calling the shots for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. military. Former small government conservatives now call for a strengthened federal government to preserve private interests against social unrest, and these plans line up with a whole series of military contingency plans. The advertising industry assists the U.S. government and other world powers in global surveillance of cellphone users.

COVID-19 accelerates this movement for fascism at the same time as it accelerates growing social consciousness about our class interests. If the corporations win, millions will not only die with this pandemic but as a result of continued environmental degradation and a series of projected pandemics that will accelerate as the competition between capitalists for control of the world intensifies.

The communist vision says this does not have to be. By removing the profit motive from the driver’s seat of the system, we can effectively take care of each other every day. We can minimize this pandemic and marshal our resources to deal with looming crises like superbugs and the profit-driven threat of climate change. At this point in our history, the practical solution of “to each according to their need” is much more than a good idea; it is absolutely necessary to our hopes and dreams for all we love. **RC**

# Electoral Battles Reflect Growing Polarization

Almost overnight, the whole world has been upended. The world economy stands on a knife's edge, and millions face an uncertain future. The coronavirus has exacerbated vast historical processes underway and accelerated the pace of that change around the globe. All of our struggles, whether to get our needs met through the election fights, or housing takeovers, or speaking out for a vision of a new society, have taken on greater urgency. The more we understand what we are up against, the better we can craft our way forward. Now, more than ever, those of us who have dedicated ourselves to the cause of humanity must stay focused on the fundamental roots of these dire conditions and the vision that will, with our efforts, one day save humanity.

## ROOTS OF TURMOIL

We see that all the turmoil in the world has the same root. Global transformation is shattering and transforming all existing social and political relationships. This is happening because automated production within the wage labor value system is polarizing society with unheard-of wealth on one side and unheard-of poverty on the other. This antagonism cannot be resolved within the capitalist system. It is destroying the basis of modern society, and it lies at the heart of the economic and political crisis that is engulfing the globe. It is giving the struggles around the world a revolutionary character.

Any U.S. Presidential Administration, Democrat or Republican, has to grapple with this historical reality and its results. The economic revolution is driving the shift from West to East, undermining the old U.S. dominated world order. The U.S. is still economically and militarily powerful, but, in a historical sense, it is in a trajectory of decline. The U.S. ruling class today, and their political mouthpieces, are not in disagreement about the defense of the private property system and U.S. global hegemony. They are in dangerous disagreement over how that should be accomplished.

The ruling class needs a political movement to achieve its goals. This is why they fight so hard to get our class behind one or another of their competing proposals and political parties within the electoral and every

---

We have to see our fight today as no less than one battle in a larger war for the future of humanity.

---

other arena.

Our class also needs its own political movement to clear the way for a new society. But our fight is for a society organized to benefit all humanity. Throughout the world and across this country, a movement is arising against poverty, fascism, and war, and for democracy, peace, and economic well-being. The obscenely inadequate response to the needs of our class, both in our daily lives and in response to the coronavirus crisis, clearly shows the immorality of a ruling class that is unfit to rule.

The goals of the ruling class and working class cannot be reconciled. It is this struggle that accounts for the intensity of the battles raging around the 2020 elections and is thrown into stark relief by the coronavirus pandemic.

## WORLD OF CONTRADICTIONS

There is no doubt that the Trump Administration, like every other Presidential Administration, has enriched the ruling class both economically and politically. At the same time, Trump's policies threaten the long-term economic interests of a rising global ruling class, of which the U.S. ruling class is a leading part. This is resulting in a struggle over how these long-term interests will be advanced.

Gone are the days when any economy, including the U.S., can produce what is needed and sell what it produces within its own borders. The high productivity of the technologies of today requires a global division of labor and a global market to absorb its goods. Today, the world economy is tied together through multinational and transnational corporations, and intricate supply and distribution chains stretching across hundreds of national borders. It is dependent on international alliances and trade agreements. The Trump Administration's economic policy of tariffs and unilateral sanctions has hurt al-

most every sector of the U.S. economy and disrupted the global trading system. It has frayed old relations and alliances and put the already fragile globally integrated world economy in jeopardy.

The Trump Administration accelerates the polarization fueling the reordering of world relations when it tears up agreements, slaps enemies and allies alike with tariffs and unilateral sanctions and disrespects world leaders. It is standard U.S. policy to prevent China's rise to a dominant position in the world, but the Administration's policies have realigned relations with its traditional allies as well. These allies cannot allow the U.S. to dictate their national interests and their economic well-being. They need oil from Iran, Germany needs gas from Russia. The E.U. and the U.K. are in open rebellion against the U.S. government over efforts to prevent the Chinese tech corporations ZTE and Huawei into their markets. They are creating alternative international payment systems, establishing new mechanisms for trade negotiations the U.S. tried to derail, and upholding agreements the U.S. has abandoned. The Trump Administration's use of U.S. economic power to steal desperately needed medical supplies from its allies has only exacerbated this polarization.

The extent of the ruling class's concern about these policies can be read in their opposition to them. In the last two years, hundreds of CEOs, lobbyists, U.S. business groups representing multinational and transnational corporations of all types have protested the tariffs. Some Senate Republicans have attempted to curb Trump's tariff powers. Even his own supporters urged him to back off the most restrictive policies before the world economy crashed all together. The capitalist class has made billions off the coronavirus bailout. But the Trump Administration's chaotic handling of the pandemic has created more problems for them by exacerbating the long-term economic problems and creating more instability as workers begin to fight back against the failure of the government to protect their welfare.

Finally, let's look at the contradictions the ruling class faces with the race and nationality-based policies of the Trump Administration. These kinds of ideas and policies have always served the ruling class and today assists them in creating an environment for fascism. When Pompeo declared at the Munich Security Conference in February 2020, "The West is winning!" it was little reported in the U.S. and largely accepted even by the liberal Democratic establishment. It was, however, widely commented on in the international press. This "America First" vision is clear: a white, Christian nationalist power, subjugating all other peoples, religions, and colors (even their allies), armed and ready for apoca-

lyptic conflict with enemies, especially in the "East" (read inferior peoples).

But cultivating a "white backlash" at home and a chauvinist American Exceptionalism in the world can cut both ways. The U.S. ruling class operates in a world economy and is part of a global multinational, multi-colored ruling class. To present itself as the leader of a "white man's America" undermines its standing in the world and, more importantly, interferes with its ability to conduct trade relations on behalf of the corporations it represents.

Trump and the "America First" forces that have coalesced around him are challenging the political establishment to clear away any impediments to their vision of a new world order. After the fall of the Soviet Union, a struggle emerged among the U.S. ruling class over the Democratic Party's policies to shape globalization under U.S. leadership. Clinton faced impeachment for it, but the forces of global speculative capital he represented ultimately triumphed and were carried on by the Bush and Obama Administrations. The entire State apparatus was grounded in and oriented around maintaining this new world order and is now fighting and resisting any change to it. These forces, including the majority of the Democratic establishment, are fighting back with every weapon they have. Their difficulty, of course, is that they are in agreement with what Trump is attempting to achieve. In fact, their leadership attacks anyone who puts forward a program that seeks to address the real problems of the American people, including within their own party.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR CLASS?

Our class has no choice but to fight, but what does it need to win? The elections are an arena to put forward our demands and to possibly achieve some measure of redress. Our class unites with all proposals that take us any step in that direction.

At the same time, we have to see our fight today as no less than one battle in a larger war for the future of humanity. Our class needs to be freed from the ideas and false promises of the ruling class. We need to make decisions from the perspective of our class interests, fight for what benefits our class, and discard what does not. Our class needs unity. The strongest threads are where we are all experiencing a common economic plight. We need a vision that inspires us to fight for something: A world where no one goes without, where misery and fear for survival are forever banished, and true happiness defines our lives.

The League of Revolutionaries for a New America is on the front lines of the fight for food, homes, education, and healthcare. We fight shoulder to shoulder with all political organizations and sections of society that fight against the growing poverty, social and ecological destruction, fascism, and war. 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 this vision with them is the overriding task of revolutionaries and the foundation of our organization. **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 at [info@lrna.org](mailto:info@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](http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/contact-us).

# Next Steps in the Battle of the Ballot

In March, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly eclipsed the 2020 presidential election campaign in the consciousness of the American people. Most of the major remaining primaries were postponed until May or even June. Although the Sanders campaign conceded the nomination, the political situation today is so historically unstable that no outcome can be considered certain. We are experiencing a spiraling death toll, tens of millions of families with no paychecks, and perhaps most importantly, the early stirrings of the backlash against the \$4.5 trillion corporate bailout. Given the rapid consolidation of corporate dictatorship, we cannot, at this time, even know for sure that the Democratic or Republican Conventions or even the November elections will be allowed to proceed.

The coronavirus crisis brought to light and sharply aggravated the underlying antagonism that has already been steadily destroying the economy and American society itself for decades. Modern advances in robotics and artificial intelligence have created an unsustainable gulf between wealth and poverty, begetting whole tent cities of houseless people in the richest cities in America. A whole new class of millions of unemployed and underemployed workers was created when they were left behind by labor-replacing technology. They are being driven out of any employment except the most menial, temporary, and part-time service jobs, work that does not pay well enough for them to be able to survive. Clearly, our existing private property system is no longer capable of distributing the means of subsistence to people in the high tech economy.

The devastating impact of COVID-19 is a direct result of the broken, profit-driven healthcare and housing industries. The healthcare system is failing completely to provide testing equipment, adequate treatment for patients, and protective gear for healthcare workers. The housing crisis turned public health orders to “shelter in place” into a cruel joke, because so many people have no place to shelter in.

## THE POLITICS OF A NEW CLASS

After 2008, the new class of workers displaced by technology increasingly found itself with no healthcare, no steady work, no affordable housing, insufferable debt, and facing climate disaster. In 2016 and 2018, they began to turn to electoral politics to fight for their future, especially the youth, who were disproportionately facing housing and food insecurity, burdened with debt, and preyed upon by police violence. Refusing to accept lives of misery, they sought out political movements open to a vision of a new and better world. In 2020, the Sanders presidential campaign became a vehicle for many of them, as well as for millions of Americans concerned with democracy, peace, and the survival of the planet. As Sanders has pointed out, and exit polls confirm, regardless of the delegate count, his campaign won the policy debate and the generational debate.

From the beginning, the movement of the new class charted a collision course with not only Trump but also the Democratic Party establishment and the entire capitalist sys-

---

The coronavirus crisis brought to light and sharply aggravated the underlying antagonism that has been steadily destroying the economy and American society itself for decades.

---

tem. When members of the new marginalized class flooded into the Sanders campaign, they brought out and intensified class divisions that had been contained and controlled within the Democratic Party for decades. Sanders’ early victories caused the ruling class to move immediately to secure its interests by trying to block the campaign in the South Carolina primary, on Super Tuesday, and on March 10.

Sanders refused to concede the nomination until April 8, when the delegate count and the pandemic crisis made it difficult for him to continue. The fight for the Sanders program had already shifted and begun plunging into the battle to protect human lives. COVID-19 has proved that human beings are expendable to the system, and it cannot meet their basic needs. The movement is not over — it is just beginning, and no corporate politicians will ever be able to politically control it.

## PRACTICAL PROGRAM

The process of splitting and fracturing of the Democrats is already underway and will inevitably lead to a complete rupture. The only question is when. It was unmistakable in the bitter debates over the bailout bill. The fight for free treatment for COVID-19 has reignited the demand for Medicare for All.

The destruction of income has prompted calls for rent forgiveness, that will inevitably get louder as soon as the temporary eviction stays are over. These demands are impacting the national elections as well as local, regional, and national battles. They are the foundation for an independent third-party political movement breaking out, both inside and outside the Democratic Party, one that will continue to emerge and coalesce throughout the 2020 election season and on into 2022 and 2024.

The heart of the movement around Sanders is not ideological, but rather a practical program. It is a demand for Medicare for All, decent housing for all, meaningful work, a path to citizenship for all, an end to mass incarceration, a Green New Deal, and decent education without debt. Sanders did not invent this program. It is a reflection of the demands of the new class, that speaks to the needs of the American people, and is rooted in fundamental moral values of solidarity, love, and compassion.

It is a simple fact that policies necessary for economic well-being today will require public ownership of larger and larger sectors of the economy to secure an equitable distribution of social wealth. Important parts of the Sanders program consist of nationalization, or partial nationalization, of key sectors of the American economy in the interests of

the working class, not corporations. The point of the matter is that displaced workers and the planet they live in cannot survive without these policies.

The role of revolutionaries is to participate in and elucidate this motion through each of its stages as it confronts the capitalist class. Within the Democratic Party, the stage we

are in right now is the fight to throw the blow at the pro-corporate politicians controlling it and break the workers free from the capitalists’ grip. We do this when we fight uncompromisingly for the basic demands of the working class. We cannot get to a real workers’ party and a new society without making this happen first. The working class, and especially the class of workers discarded by the tech economy, make up the foundation of this movement. However, they cannot win without unity, and revolutionaries have a responsibility to elevate the battle for unity at every step of the way.

This means addressing the “Southern strategy” that was used to defeat Sanders on Super Tuesday and afterward. There is an old saying that, “The South controls the nation, and Wall Street controls the South.” Ever since the defeat of Reconstruction, the violent suppression of Southern workers, especially African

*Continued on page 6*

## Elections 2020: As the South Goes, so Goes the Nation

Both major political parties in the U.S. have had their own “Southern strategy.” It is the long-established formula for political power for the ruling class in this country. At the heart of the formula for political power is: first divide the Southern working class, employing the weapon of white supremacy, and then deliver the South to the ruling class as a reactionary political counter-balance.

By delivering a Solid South, the political party that won the South was assured of its victory. The openly white supremacist Southern Democratic party, throughout the era of Jim Crow, played exactly that role in the Roosevelt “New Deal” Democratic coalition. It ensured the Democratic party became the ruling party, while at the same time blocking progressive legislation such as universal healthcare (today called Medicare-for-All), and restricting union organizing in the South (through Right-to-Work laws).

In the aftermath of the Civil Rights movement, the Democratic party now included millions of Black voters in the South. Bill Clinton, in 1992, himself a Southerner from Arkansas, employed a new Southern strategy based upon a coalition of Blacks and enough whites to win the South and assure victory in the elections of that year. In the process, the liberal New Deal coalition lost its dominance and marked a shift to the right by the Party.

Now, in 2020, we have been witness in the Democratic party primaries to how the formula of “as the South goes, so goes the nation” is in play even now. In South Carolina, the Southern strategy was deployed. This time, though, a Black political elite in the South played its role in delivering the South to the ruling elements of the Democratic party. The Congressional Black Caucus co-hosted the debate held in Charleston, South Carolina, just before the primary. On the very next day, Jim Clyburn, a congressman from South Carolina and one of the most powerful leaders in the Congressional Black Caucus, endorsed Joe Biden.

With that, Biden won South Carolina, and in short order, every key Southern politician came out in endorsement of Biden. Biden swept the South and is now viewed as the presumptive nominee.

The Southern strategy is a formula for political power that no politician dare ignore. But two can play at that game. The impoverished and oppressed new class being thrown out of any place in the capitalist economy makes up a bigger share of the population in the South than in any other region. Thousands of revolutionaries, propelled by this class, have no recourse but to fight for access to the vital needs of food, shelter, clean water, education, and healthcare. Many of these revolutionaries found themselves in the Sanders campaign in what they saw as a vehicle to make the fight to obtain their demands. Many more are making that fight on fronts across the country, and that is certainly the case in the South. Whether it is understood fully or not, they are all engaged in a fight for the political power to obtain their basic needs.

The formula for political power for the ruling class has been a divided working class, first in the South and then for the entire country. The formula for political power for the working class is a class united around a common program to reconstruct society in its own interests. Only then will the formula for political power work in our favor. **RC**

# Flint is Still Broken, Six Years Later

*Dedicated to the memory of Laura Carter 57, Mary Watson 43, and Jasmine McBride 29 who succumbed to poisonous Flint MI water in 2019.*

Going on six years Flint residents are still sick. Still dying. Residents still lack affordable clean, safe, tap ready water. Criminal charges against some of the various state actors responsible for the debacle have been dropped. Some of them have not been charged at all. Lawsuits to compensate victims languish in court, while the people struggle to recover from the nightmare. Despite the fact that there has been massive service line replacement, the Genesee County Medical Society has cautioned that households with infants, those with compromised immune systems, and the elderly should continue to use bottled water. Unfortunately, the state of Michigan discontinued the water bottle service in 2018 declaring the water was “safe enough” without it. Charitable donations of bottled water to pick up the slack will discontinue in May. Of course the corona virus is especially challenging in this regard.

“...with active government backing, corporations, hedge funds, and investment firms have begun to seize what used to belong to all of us ... to appropriate every form of public property every public right and transport them into private corporate property.” (Steven Miller and Danny Alexander, “*Water Wars*,

*Coming Soon to Your Town*,” 2010.)

Long before the water disaster began, Flint, like many other rustbelt cities, experienced a sea change in the quality of life of the people. Electronic production revolutionized the factory floor, wiping out thousands of manual labor jobs. This along with outsourcing of cheap labor overseas took its toll. At its peak in the 1970s, when Flint’s population was 190,000, GM employed 80,000 people. Now the city has around 110,000 people, more than 1/3 of them live in poverty, and 18 percent have incomes of less than 50 percent of the poverty level (among the highest in the nation). General Motors employment has sunk to around 8,000. Now the city that once boasted being the among the highest paid workers in the world is now a shell of its former self. The Emergency Manager law of 2011 became the weapon of choice to implement what some regard is a corporate coup d’etat of asset rich and income poor municipalities around the State. The drive to seize public assets of cities around Michigan was on. Those communities with majority minority residents, (while the African American population in Michigan is 13 percent, over 50 percent have lived under EM dictatorship), double digit poverty, and valuable public assets were the premier targets of the EM’s wrath.\* Dismantle democracy, then steal the water, public schools, parks and more. However the asset of choice

of course, the water (a trillion dollar market worldwide), was the most coveted.

The drive to build a new pipeline to service Flint and the out-county areas was well under way before the catastrophic man-made disaster of 2014. This pipeline (KWA, a bond market dream) did not become a reality until Flint’s Emergency Manager was firmly seated, with the blessing of the then Governor Rick Snyder and his Team, the State Treasurers Office, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, along with other State players. In their zeal to get the new pipeline built, Flint water was switched to the toxic Flint river, poisoning thousands. A toxic bond deal along with toxic water was foisted on the people. Today, JP Morgan, Wells Fargo, and Steidel Securities hold the bonds.

Capitalism as we’ve known it is dying. The ability to use human labor as a source for maximum profit has been upended by electronic production, sweeping the country and the world. The capitalist class, and in particular the mega-banks and bondholder interests, are turning to the seizure of public assets to save themselves.

Where will it end? If the people don’t take or secure control of our water, we could be facing Lake Michigan LLC, Lake Superior Inc., Lake Huron Corp. and so on. This shift cannot be overstated. This motion is driving society into hedge fund schools, hedge fund housing, and most definitely hedge fund water. With water as a commodity, the market decides the price, which determines who will or will not have access to life sustaining water.

Advocates for clean, safe, affordable water are taking action to resist the corporate control of water. Baltimore, Md. and Toledo, Ohio reflect a growing consciousness. Struggles based in the notion that water is a human right reflect the understanding that the privatization of water is diametrically opposed to this

concept.

In 2018, Baltimore, Maryland declared that water was an inalienable public asset. Consequently they passed a charter amendment prohibiting the sale of its water and sewer system to private investors. This legislation was overwhelmingly passed by its residents. Furthermore, last year the city (joining Philadelphia) passed the Water Affordability and Equity Act, which provides income based rather than usage based charges for water.

Toledo, Ohio’s residents led by Toledoans for Safe Water passed a Lake Erie Bill of Rights. The Bill gives standing to the Lake (same as humans), so polluters may be sued in effort to protect residents health and well being of the Lake.

The Flint experience has opened up the eyes of the nation and the world. Michigan’s Emergency Manager was used to seize water and water rights. Flint’s disastrous poisoning is what this new corporate model looks like. Conversely, Baltimore mobilized community combatants and fought and won the right to guarantee that public water stay public. The first in the nation! This is what the public seizure of water looks like. These far reaching proposals must be taken up on a National level.

This capitalist system stands between us and safe, accessible water. We must do away with the growing commodification of water via privatization profiteers, and fight to ensure water becomes or remains a public asset, servicing the needs of all of society.

As for Flint, the fight continues to “Get the Lead Out, Get the Bacteria Out, and Get the Bondholders Out of Our Water!” **RC**

\*See “What Happens In Michigan Won’t Stay In Michigan” *Rally, Comrades!* September-October 2016, Vol 26. Ed 5).

## Battle of the Ballot

*Continued from page 5*

Americans, has served as the political base for fascism in America. Exit polls showed that Southern Democratic voters supported Biden because they thought he had the best chance to get Trump’s boot off their necks and to stop the relentless attacks on their voting rights, healthcare, living standards, human rights, and the environment. The same polls, however, also indicated that the majority of them supported the Medicare for All that was the centerpiece of the Sanders campaign. Support for Sanders was also impeded by relentless voter suppression, which targeted especially young people who overwhelmingly supported him in every demographic group.

### VISION OF A NEW WORLD

The primary election results reveal once again that no national movement can win without deeply connecting with the masses of Southern workers. At the same time, as they fight for this class unity, revolutionaries also battle for a vision of the new world made possible by modern technology. The revolution in renewable energy means that the Green New Deal is not a wild dream but a practical project to save the earth and put the fossil fuel industry out of business. The intro-

duction of robotics and artificial intelligence into agriculture and production means that abundance for all is a concrete and attainable objective.

What is needed is an economy freed from the restraints of private property, where this abundance can be freely distributed based on need, instead of being hoarded and strangled by private profiteers. The value of the Sanders campaign, and the movement going forward, is that it opens the door to these discussions, and allows revolutionaries to teach while we fight. The threat of an astronomical COVID-19 death toll has clarified that it is human life itself that is at stake.

What affects some of us affects us all. The crisis is an opportunity to step up the struggle for the distribution of social wealth based on need, since so many more millions suddenly have no money. The call for free vaccines, free healthcare during the crisis, paid leave for workers, and rent forgiveness is a start.

The political battle over the bailout has just begun, whether to use public money to save corporate profits or to save human lives in the streets. The rage of our class is rising, and with unity and vision, it will transform society. **RC**

## May Day: The Cause of the Workers is the Hope of the World

In 1891, revolutionaries from various countries voted to celebrate May 1st as International Workers’ Day. The date honored the May 1, 1886, Chicago march and general strike for an 8-hour workday, which was attacked with police brutality and murder. Revolutionaries saw this battle as part of the struggle of the worldwide working class. Today, May 1st is officially recognized as a day to honor workers by a majority of the world’s countries.

But to undermine it, in 1894, the U.S. government established Labor Day on the first Monday of September. Still, International Workers’ Day is alive and well in our country. Revolutionary organizations and trade unions never let it die, and various movements have been launched on May 1st, such as the huge 2006 “Day Without Immigrants” marches and Occupy Wall Street in 2012.

This May 1st, the coronavirus pandemic starkly reveals how a lack of housing, healthcare, and clean water can become a death sentence for masses of people. *Rally, Comrades!* contains articles from such fronts of struggle, with the common message that despite all the fightback our circumstances will continue to get worse, unless we change the system that is condemning us to death.

Even before COVID-19, the ruling class was refusing to house or provide care for people they no longer needed as electronic production eliminated jobs worldwide. However, while technology saves them from paying wages, it also undermines the economic basis of capitalism itself. The result will be an unprecedented crash of that system.

The working class, both unemployed and those barely holding on to their jobs, must unite around the idea that they can only provide for their needs by freeing productive technology from private control and directing it toward the well-being of humanity and the planet. We commemorate International Workers’ Day 2020 by spreading this revolutionary understanding far and wide. **RC**