

RALLY COMRADES!

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The League of Revolutionaries for a New America: Answering the Call of History

Epochal historical change demands that organizations with a vision of the reconstruction of society in the interests of humanity rise to the challenge of the times, and change with changing conditions. The League of Revolutionaries for a New America is taking up that challenge by reorganizing itself to disperse among the masses, to connect up with the revolutionaries who are being created by this moment in history, and to unite them around the resolution to the problems they face. That resolution is an economic system of common ownership and the end of exploitation.

THE DEMAND FOR CHANGE

Everywhere we look we see the reality and danger that comes from the epochal economic revolution. Labor-replacing methods of production are lowering the rate of profit and expelling millions of workers from industrial production into permanent unemployment. Capital no longer needs the working class in the old ways, and is destroying the basis of everything in society that rests on the old social relations. With the fall in profits the capitalists have to find new ways to maximize profits, and to sell the massive amount of goods created through electronic production.

The capitalists are transforming the role of the state to serve as a means of expanding the market, especially through privatization of every aspect of life, and the expansion of war production. The capitalists invest their idle money to buy a school system, for example. Then the people have to purchase education that was previously public and provided free, thereby expanding the market. The military industrial complex is at the heart of America's economy. Capitalism and war go hand in hand. An economy built around expanding war production fuels the drive toward war. At home, the capitalists turn to fascism to contain the response of the people to their increasingly untenable situation.

There is another reality to this epochal economic revolution: the demand of the new impoverished class for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society. This demand can be summed up as the demand for a cooperative communist society. The more efficient means of electronic production lowers the cost of production of all the necessities of life and makes possible a world wide economic paradise. But as long as the means of production and distribution are held privately, the resolution of the economic, social and political problems will be anything but paradise for the peoples of the earth. The new impoverished class must have political power to achieve its goal of a cooperative society.

This moment in history calls for a different kind of organization of revolutionaries than in

the past. The League is organizing itself to meet the needs of this stage of the revolutionary process.

UNITING THE REVOLUTIONARIES

The American people are becoming politicized and drawn into a fight over how to reorganize around the new means of production. This is the League's battleground. Today there are tens of thousands of socially conscious people in opposition to the degenerating economic and social conditions who declare themselves revolutionaries.

All change, including social change, takes place with the introduction of a new element into the process. The direction of the mass movement can only be influenced through the introduction of new ideas (i.e. propaganda). Without the introduction of new ideas, the mass movement cannot break out of the confines of the thinking and political strategies of the past.

The League's mission is to unite these scattered revolutionaries on the basis of the demands of the new class, and to educate and win them over to the cooperative communist resolution of the problem. 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.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIRECTION

Nothing can be done without class identification. This is the reason the League is an organization of propagandists. The challenge before us is to answer the questions of those tens of thousands of revolutionaries who can develop the intellectual capacity of the masses and influence the political direction of the movement.

Certainly the League has the opportunity to show how the government – which is completely entwined with the corporations – is opposed to the needs of the poor of this country. This is our opening to pose the solution to society's problems. The new economy and the polarization of wealth and poverty are shaking people's belief in the idea of American "exceptionalism." Today monopolies are becoming the government, and fueling the drive for war in their struggle for global domination. The socially necessary corporations – those that control the production of the necessities of life – have to be taken over and turned into public property. We can pose it

as the class question it is: will the corporations rule America or will the American people rule the corporations?

The League is organizing itself to reach the revolutionaries by dispersing among the masses and developing their understanding of the situation they are in and how they can win.

THE BASIS OF UNITY

As the movement of the new class becomes more self-conscious of its social struggle as an objective process, the League must develop with it to become the theoretical, ideological, and political expression of that class. The League, being composed of individuals from various backgrounds and outlooks, must consciously struggle for its unity. That unity is based on a common understanding of the quality and motion of the real world. Only then can we come to the necessary objective collective conclusions. This requires individual and collective study of the science of society and the individual and collective discipline needed to carry out our tasks. Only an organization that is theoretically, politically and ideologically cohesive can become a force to galvanize the revolutionaries.

Forms of organization need to change with every change in the objective situation. The League of Revolutionaries for a New America is taking steps to align itself with that changing situation. The purpose of reorganizing is to better carry out our mission of uniting the revolutionaries around the practical demands of the new class. We open the League to all revolutionaries who seek to do the same.

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Revolutionary History and Our Tasks

It has often been stated that a revolutionary political organization is the subjective expression of the objective process. From this point of view a serious revolutionary organization must not only politically express actual current social motion, it must be firmly linked into and part of the evolution of the nation's revolutionary movement. The history of the American Left is replete with the bones of organizations that sprang up around issues, declared themselves "revolutionary," but lacking any historical continuity, died away as these issues were resolved.

Economic, political, military, social and moral forces in the country are beginning to coalesce in such a manner as to make another upsurge of social struggle inevitable. At such times, in order to prepare the organization for the battles that lie ahead, it is worthwhile to evaluate our process of development in order to prepare for the next step forward.

RISE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

We begin with the understanding that the spontaneous, objective development of the means of production creates the social context for people to consciously choose how to create their history. Therefore, revolutionary history is the record of the quantitative development of the means of production and the subjective or political response in the form of the rising and dying away of various forms of revolutionary organization.

The modern, scientific communist movement began as manufacturing with its small, scattered workshops was replaced by industry with its concentration of thousands of workers in giant factories. This development was expressed by the founding of the Communist League and the 1st or Workingmen's International. In 1848, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were called upon to write a manifesto for the League, which was called The Communist Manifesto. The Communist League then became The Communist Party.

The productive capacity of the industrial countries developed very rapidly. So long as national production was restricted to the national market, the struggle between the capitalists and the workers intensified year by year. The communist movement grew with strikes and uprisings by the workers. The means of production rapidly went through several quantitative stages and the struggle between the classes subsided as the capitalists expanded their markets by conquering the economically backward areas of the world and bribing the working class into political and military support.

Under these changed conditions the 1st International and its Communist Party collapsed. In its place arose a new movement — socialism — that essentially was a patriotic, petty bourgeois movement for reform. As this movement swept across Europe and America, a new International, the 2nd International was formed. Socialist Parties were formed in the United States on the basis of the populist movement and the sharpening struggle between the new industrial working class and the monopolies. In Western Europe, socialist parties gained premierships

as well as large representations in parliaments. In Eastern Europe and Russia the more overtly political struggle broke out into revolutionary upsurges. By 1912, the economically undeveloped world was conquered and any further market expansion would have to be done by one imperialist power at the expense of another. World War I became inevitable.

REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY IN AMERICA

Unlike Europe, America was capitalist from its inception; the total destruction of the Native American communal life left no feudal or communal hangovers. There was a large and widespread class of small producers. Most importantly, from time to time, as much as one-quarter of the toilers were slaves. During this period, until the end of the Civil War in 1865, the communist groupings were primarily immigrants who struggled very hard to impose their sectarian ideals on the actual American social struggle. However, the roots of the American communist movement lie in the broad populist struggle between the small producers and the emerging monopolies led by the robber barons of post-Civil War America.

As the industrial working class expanded and the contradictions of monopoly capitalism intensified, a number of working-class organizations throughout Europe and America came into being and the two dialectically opposed trends became clear. On the one hand there was the spontaneously developed trend called syndicalism, or the idea that the mass organizations, especially the unions, can reconstruct society by simply intensifying the economic struggle. On the other hand, groupings of Marxists, who based their activity along the lines of a political struggle, evolved alongside of and within the syndicalists. The conscious, intellectual movement of communism cannot unite with its antithesis, the spontaneous syndicalist movement of the working class, until capitalism has completed its development. This completion is marked by the wiping out of the small producers — the economic middle — and the two poles stand face to face. Since the system had not completed its development there could be no synthesis, one side remained syndicalist and the other sectarian.

World War I and the Russian revolution had a profound impact on the revolutionary movements. Groups that had been fighting one another for hegemony of the American movement suddenly wanted to unite with the Russian revolution. The Soviet revolutionaries, hoping to expand the revolution, or at least protect it, formed the 3rd Communist International.

This required that the American rev-

olutionaries come together as one organization. In 1921, the various factions of the movement were cobbled together to form the Communist Party USA. It is important to remember that these factions in the CPUSA never gave up their programs and in times of internal crisis constantly reverted back to them. From 1921 through 1946 the CPUSA played a very important role. The syndicalists found full expression in building the CIO. The Populists carried on their historic anti-monopoly struggle as part of the Roosevelt coalition. Ultimately, however, both sides found themselves tied to consolidating the financial, internationalist wing of American imperialism.

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

In Europe and America the communist and socialist movement was the subjective expression of the struggle of the industrial working class during the quantitative stages of industrial capitalism's development. It is important to note that once bourgeois industrial hegemony was established, the working class could only fight for a bigger slice of the economic pie. They were part of the system and could only carry out struggles for social reform to reflect the quantitative development of the productive process. This reality shaped the communist parties of that period. They defended and expanded the science of society and propagandized their goals. They led the workers in militant economic and social struggles. Their fatal weakness was that they had to constantly strive to win the workers over to their program. The workers had their own program that arose out of their concrete economic needs within the context of the existing economic system. Therefore the communist parties were revolutionary in program and propaganda, but reformist in its practical work. This contradiction handicapped the movement in America and Europe.

In Czarist Russia, a different kind of revolutionary movement got underway. An economic revolution from agriculture to industry, a social revolution from the countryside to the cities and a political revolution against the absolutism of the Czar tore the country apart. This great revolutionary upsurge, within the context of the slaughter of WWI, was crowned by a class struggle to determine which class would reconstruct an industrial Russia in its own image. At a particularly intense moment of the revolution the communists of Russia seized state power.

One lesson that we can learn from this period of history is that during the periods of class peace between social revolutions, the communist parties must not attempt to persuade the workers to drop their concrete demands in favor of the abstract demand of revolution. The inevitable result is isolation as a sect, instead of a party.

The essential lesson, however, is that

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

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 to the conscious revolutionaries, examines and analyzes the real problems of the revolutionary movement, and draws political conclusions for the tasks of revolutionaries at each stage of development in order to prepare for future stages.

It is a vehicle to reach out and communicate with revolutionaries both within the League and outside of the League to engage them in debate and discussion and to provide a forum for these discussions. Articles represent the position and policies of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America.

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a political revolution can only take place within a social revolution. A political revolution takes place when the development of the means of production creates economic classes outside the existing political structure. The class or classes external to the system cannot implement their economic program without state power. It is such a situation we see developing today.

WAY OPENS FOR NEW ORGANIZATIONS

World War II was a turning point in history. At the end of the war the fascist alliance was smashed. Both the Soviet Union and the United States emerged stronger than before the war. The victorious European imperialist countries were weakened and dependent on American imperialism for food. The European regimes and Japan which owned direct colonies were considerably weakened by the war. France in Indo-China, England in India, and Holland in Indonesia did not have the military forces to maintain colonialism. This was exasperated by American imperialisms drive to open up the closed colonial markets. The colonial world, taking advantage of weakened colonialism, went into revolution.

Suddenly there were two revolutionary fronts. One was the struggle of the workers in the advanced countries to stop resurgent fascism, prevent NATO from attacking the Soviet Union and contain aggressive American imperialism. They attempted to avoid war in order to consolidate their post-war position.

The other front was the expanding militancy of the anti-colonial struggle. This side needed to prevent imperialism from concentrating its military might against the anti-colonial revolutions. They urged revolutionary activity in Europe even at the risk of nuclear war. Thus the split in the international communist movement was much more strategic than ideological. The revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries split between those wanting to seize power and those advocating a broad cross-class front in the fight for peace.

The colonial revolution split between the national bourgeoisie and the popular forces. The result was a fundamental split within the international communist movement reflected by splits within each national communist party. This split within the world communist movement allowed for the resurgence of a revisionist Marxism, and the demise of the 3rd International.

The 1968 Watts uprising was a specific expression of the international anti-colonial revolution. As such it galvanized all the other nationalities and oppressed minorities into activity. A number of so-called communist groupings arose on this basis. It appeared that they were galvanized by the Chinese revolution. That was external. The actual foundation was the Watts uprising and its results.

In the USA the split in the communist movement was formalized in 1958 at the CPUSA's 16th convention. During the pre-convention discussions the fragile peace between the party factions broke down with at least four major factions emerging. During the Convention, one of the major factions walked out of

the Party and organized itself as The Provisional Organizing Committee to Reconstitute a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party in the United States (POC). Other internal splits took place within the CPUSA, leaving the right wing firmly in control. The POC soon also underwent splits, leaving the Black and Puerto Rican nationalists in control. The Los Angeles organization of the POC attempted to maintain an internationalist outlook and shortly after the Watts uprising was expelled. They regrouped as the California Communist League in 1968, and as it became national, the Communist League in 1970.

By the mid-1970s, a series of developments were at play. One, a new economy was arising based on electronic production. Secondly, the colonial revolutions shifted the center of gravity away from the traditional base of the organized industrial worker. Thirdly, the decline of the parties of the 3rd International opened the way for new organizations.

The Detroit League of Revolutionary Black Workers and The Motor City Labor League as well as a number of local and regional Black, Chicano, and Puerto Rican revolutionary groups joined the Communist League. A conference was called to found a new Communist party, and in 1974, the Communist Labor Party was formed.

ORGANIZATION OF A NEW TYPE

By 1985 it was clear that an entirely new form of production was coming into prominence. The globalization of both the market and production was followed by a dramatic decline of the pow-

er of the unions and the practical destruction of the communist parties as revolutionary organizations. New economic classes evolved from the new economy and it was clear that a new type of revolutionary organization was necessary. The Communist Labor Party was dissolved in 1993 and the National Organizing Committee, the beginnings of the LRNA, was formed.

The revolutionary movement is now leaping into a new quality of struggle. It cannot help but do so since it is the subjective or political expression of the leap from industry to the electronic economy. This process will go through a number of quantitative stages. At each stage, the revolutionaries will have to regroup on new foundations.

The immediate, first stage is clear - the quantitative transformation from a highly organized, well paid, politically reformist core of the industrial working class to the emergence of a new class increasingly pushed out of capitalist relations of production. This first stage will see the new class becoming aware of itself and articulating a program for its survival. Its political reflection must be a revolutionary organization that accurately reflects that stage — a League of Revolutionaries — a non-sectarian organization that having formed on the basis of the objective process has as its mission to make that class aware of itself as a class.

The 2007 Draft Program

Editors' note: Due to an error in the draft program printed in our last issue, we are printing the corrected version here.

The United States of America — indeed the entire world — is in the throes of epochal economic revolution. Transformation from electro-mechanical industry requiring human labor to operate gigantic means of industrial production to digitally controlled production requiring little or no human labor is the determining content of our time.

The qualitatively more efficient means of electronic production greatly lowers the cost of production of the basic necessities of life. This makes possible an economic paradise of abundance for all. Under capitalism, however, it leads to the falling price of labor power and fastens the chain of poverty, exploitation, and stultifying toil ever more tightly upon the worker.

Just as the steam engine created an industrial working class that replaced

the existing manufacturing class, electronic production is creating a new class of workers. This new class consists of employed and unemployed sectors. The employed sector — the part-time, contingency, below minimum wage workers — is already over a third of the work force. This employed sector of the class is constantly drawn into the growing unemployed sector that ranges from the structurally unemployed to the absolute destitute, homeless workers.

The new class cannot solve its economic problems without the public ownership of the socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the social product according to need. For the first time an objective communist economic class is forming to become the foundation for a communist political movement.

Globalization creates this new class everywhere. Global unity is the condition of its national emancipation. The League extends its hand of comradeship around the globe.

Wage-less electronic production is

antagonistic to capitalism, which is based on the buying and selling of labor power. This antagonism is economically, socially and politically polarizing society, making social and political revolution inevitable. A new fascist state form, the naked rule of corporate power, is arising to oppose this motion. Society must take over these corporations or these corporations will take over society.

Tens of thousands of socially conscious people declare themselves revolutionaries in opposition to the degenerating social and economic conditions. The League's mission is to unite these scattered revolutionaries on the basis of the demands of the new class, to educate and win them over to the cooperative, communist resolution of the problem. The demands of this new impoverished class for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a co-operative society. Such a society must be based on the public ownership of the socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the social product according to need.

The new class must have political power to achieve these goals. In the effort to achieve this political power the League supports all political organizations and sections of society that fight against the growing poverty, social and ecological destruction, fascism and war.

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.

Destruction of the ecology, the growing threat of nuclear war and looming pandemics are calling the very existence of the human race into question. The battle is class struggle. The war is for the existence of humanity. We in the League face the future with confidence. We call upon all revolutionaries to abandon sectarian differences, to unite around the practical demands of the new class and to secure that imperiled future.

Anti-Communism: In Whose Interest?

The word “communism” has power – it generates fear and hatred, inspires lifelong commitment, and arouses intense debate. Americans have strong opinions about communism and most consider themselves anti-communist.

This anti-communism is puzzling. By definition communism is an economic system that benefits the vast majority.

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines communism as an economic theory or system of the ownership of all means of production (and distribution) by the community or society, with all members of the community or society sharing in the work and the products.

Capitalism, on the other hand, is an economic system that benefits the few at the expense of the many.

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines capitalism as the economic system in which all or most of the means of production and distribution, as land, factories, railroads, etc. are privately owned and operated for profit, originally under fully competitive conditions: it has been generally characterized by a tendency toward concentration of wealth, and in its later phase, by the growth of great corporations, increased governmental control, etc.

MYTHS ABOUT COMMUNISM

American anti-communism is grounded in a misunderstanding of communism and capitalism. Like other ideologies of the ruling class, such as white supremacy, anti-communism subverts the development of class consciousness and ties the working class to the dominant class. The media, politicians, educational establishments, religious institutions and other purveyors of ideas have a full arsenal of anti-communist myths and lies, including: (1) Capitalism equals democracy, (2) Communism doesn’t work, (3) Communism is the same as Marxism. Let’s examine these misconceptions.

Myth #1 That capitalism and democracy are one and the same. Democracy is a political system. Capitalism is an economic system. To equate one with the other is like equating factories and religion, one is the economic basis of society, the other is in the realm of the superstructure. By saying democracy and capitalism are the same, the U.S. is able to make it appear that defense of democracy is defense of the U.S., and that the United States has the right to impose its brand of democracy on the rest of the world. The superstructure – the ideas, political system, legal system, religion and culture – that arise on the basis of a particular economic system can vary greatly in degrees of democracy. The capitalist country of Denmark,

for example, has a high level of democracy where people of all classes live comfortably. Nazi Germany was capitalist, as was South Africa with its brutal apartheid system

The economic system with the greatest equality of wealth and income provides the strongest base for the highest level of democracy. The fullest expression of democracy can only arise on the basis of a communist economic system.

Myth #2 Communism doesn’t work. By the dictionary definition of communism no country in our lifetime has yet been able to establish a communist economic system. Countries like the Soviet Union and China where the proletariat came to power during the industrial revolution and sought to establish communist economic systems, were unable to achieve their goal. They were prevented from reaching full communism – in large part — because the level of technology available at that time could not produce the abundance necessary to provide for the material wellbeing of the whole community. The Soviet Union was overthrown; communism was not.

Myth #3 Communism is the same as Marxism. Communism is not a new phenomenon and did not come into being with Marx. For over a million years, human society was organized on the basis of communist economic relations. People lived in hunting and gathering groups where cooperation was essential to survival. Human society organized into economic classes — with a dominant class living off the labor of exploited classes — is relatively new, and the economic system of capitalism has existed for less than 600 years. Almost all of human history is the history of common ownership of the means of production and distribution.

AMERICAN CULTURE FUELS ANTI-COMMUNISM

The unique history and culture of the United States makes Americans particularly susceptible to anti-communist propaganda. The propaganda’s success rests on and is integrally tied to the objective economic realities of American life. Each supports the other in sustaining the power of the ruling class.

Unlike most countries, the United States never went through a period of feudalism. The European conquerors and colonizers slaughtered the peoples of the continent and obliterated their communal societies. The war for freedom from British control was an all-class war for national liberation. Further, American capitalism was developed on the back of African American slavery. The frontier and the freedom it held out for working people to own and farm their own land laid the material base for the ideas of “American exceptionalism” – the view that the United

States, unlike all other capitalist societies, has eliminated classes. This concept fuels American individualism, white supremacy and anti-communism.

During periods of heightened class conflict such as the 1930’s Depression, the American working class was drawn toward communism. With the dramatic success of the proletariat in the Soviet

and for the first time in history makes possible a communist economic system that can provide a paradise for all.

Under capitalism, this new technology throws workers permanently out of production, thus preventing them from earning a living wage. These workers form the core of a new impoverished class whose demands for food, clothing, housing, health care and education can only be satisfied by the reorganization of society. Only a communist economic

Americans have strong opinions about communism and most consider themselves anti-communist. But by definition, communism is an economic system that benefits the vast majority. Capitalism, on the other hand, is an economic system that benefits the few at the expense of the many.

Union under the leadership of its Communist Party, the Communist Party of the United States grew rapidly in numbers and influence.

The United States and Soviet alliance against fascist Germany won sympathy for communism among large numbers of Americans. In response to communism’s optimistic message of working class victory from oppression and exploitation, the ruling class moved swiftly in its own self interest to squelch the growing sympathy for communism.

Following World War II, the United States entered a long period of economic growth at the expense of the colonial peoples of the world. Full employment and rising wages bribed the American working class into discarding its sympathy for communism. The Soviet Union was denounced as the source of all evil, school children huddled under their desks in fear of a Soviet nuclear bomb.

The Cold War was born out of US imperialism. All Americans were persuaded to believe that their common interests as Americans outweighed their class differences. They have come to think that the only class that can represent American interests abroad is the ruling class. Anti-communism subverts the unity of the international working class, and has prevented American workers from expressing their solidarity with the struggles of workers in other countries.

ENDING ANTI-COMMUNISM

Anti-communism is prevalent today even though the material base for anti-communism has been fundamentally eroded by revolutionary changes in the economy. The introduction of electronics into production has created a revolutionary increase in productivity. This new technology can produce an abundance of goods without human labor

system that can distribute the necessities of life according to need can meet the demands of this class. Thus, for the first time in history, an objective communist class is forming to become the foundation of a communist political movement.

Take up this vision of an economic paradise for all, and champion it. Educate the emerging leaders of the objective communist movement. The future is ours to choose.