

## **Tasks of Revolutionaries After the Elections**

In every season another election looms on the horizon. Yet election days do come and go, and for revolutionaries that one day itself may give indications of what revolutionary work means. The LRNA summed up the situation after the 2018 elections, and we can learn from that. In addition, there are many projections of what might happen after the 2020 elections. Given the dire nature of some of those projections, revolutionaries need to understand where we are and where we need to go. This educational is intended to explore that path.

Main Readings: Excerpt from: "Where We Stand After The Elections," *Rally Comrades!* Jan/Feb 2019 (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2019/01/where-we-stand-after-the-elections/>)

See also Sept. League Organizer attached below.

**DEMOCRACY AND PRIVATE PROPERTY** (*Rally Comrades!* Jan/Feb. 2019)

The pre-Civil War political struggle was fought between the slave labor agricultural capitalists on the one hand, and free labor industrial capitalists on the other. Today, America's social polarization is driven by the antagonism between a ruling class of private property owners, and a new, propertyless class that is becoming increasingly separated from the formal capitalist economy altogether. This new class cannot physically survive without material means of support, and cannot obtain them without demanding their distribution based on need. This compels it to confront the private property system and the government. The conflict is every bit as irrepressible as the one in the pre-Civil War period.

Despite vastly different economic and political conditions, the major ideological debate today is in one respect remarkably similar to that of the pre-Civil War era. As early as the 1840s, the pro-slavery apologist John Calhoun began to develop the "substantive due process" doctrine, in order to outflank the growing political power of the Northern industrialists. The essential argument was that since slaves were property, the constitution protected the slave system, with no political, legal, or territorial limitations whatsoever. This was the doctrine that was ultimately declared to be the law of the land in the 1857 Dred Scott decision - and then overthrown at Appomattox in 1865.

Just as Calhoun argued then, that the constitutional right to own slaves trumped democracy, today's rulers argue that the right to private property supersedes other democratic rights. Today's revolutionaries need to show that we cannot win our economic and political demands without democracy, we cannot secure democracy without breaking the power of the corporations, and we cannot win real freedom and real democracy until we abolish private property. Revolutionaries play their true role when they explain the nature of the class antagonism and the class interests underlying

our increasing poverty and violence. This is the path to the cooperative society we are striving for.

Excerpt from the League Organizer, September, 2020, **“Elections 2020 and the Tasks of Revolutionaries.”**

Politicizing the resistance also means that at every step of the way we conduct propaganda that allows us to identify and rally the revolutionaries coming together . . . It means explaining that their “demands for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a cooperative society,” and that 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....”

We cannot fight for our basic necessities without democracy, and we cannot preserve democracy without defeating Trump. We will resist and expose every Democratic attempt to make this election about anything else than the survival of our people and the future of the earth. The election is about voting for Biden and Harris, but otherwise essentially ignoring them, and using the campaign to disseminate the new class program and new class ideas.

Finally, politicizing the resistance means no retreat, no surrender. It means preparing now to take to the streets and shut the country down before submitting to fascism. These are the battles where, if revolutionaries do their job, the workers will break free from the Democrats and every other grouping attempting to tie them to the corporate class.

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### **Elections 2020 And Tasks Of Revolutionaries** From the September League Organizer

Below are excerpts from an article from the Jan. 2008 *Rally Comrades!* that outlines League strategy to throw the blow at the middle. In 2020 we are still throwing the blow at the middle (the Democratic Party), the question is how. Do we throw rocks at it from the outside, or do we unite with the masses inside it, politicize their struggle for basic needs, and propagandize and educate them? The answer is clear.

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#### **The Revolutionary Concept of Strategy, *Rally Comrades!*, January 2008**

<http://www.lrna.org/2-pt/articles/v18ed1art1.html>

“... the strategy of the League is to politicize the masses, and to supply the emerging revolutionaries who are fighting around the practical demands of the class with the political propaganda and education that will round out their fight. The League conveys

an understanding of the roots of the problem, brings ever to the fore the class interests at stake, and disseminates a vision of what is possible and its strategy to achieve that vision.

“But we still need to determine the main blow.

Transformation proceeds through polarization and destruction. As the connections that have held society together start to unravel, the opportunity for real change presents itself. Once polarization begins, revolutionaries do not attempt to hold it back, but work in such a way as to throw their blow at the middle. In this way, they assist in breaking the process free of its confines, making transformation possible.

“... It is becoming clear to a growing number of revolutionaries that they will not be able to free themselves from their political enemy by “fighting the right,” but instead have to throw their blow at the middle, the Democratic Party. It is this middle that ties the workers to their enemy and makes them politically impotent, and ties them by a thousand threads to the “right” making them incapable of fighting for their interests.”

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How do we throw our blow at the middle in the midst of a full-blown fascist offensive by the Trump administration? The first thing to understand is that revolutionaries can't throw a blow against anything by themselves. Revolutionaries become effective when they are inseparably connected to the spontaneous movement. Today the spontaneous movement expresses itself politically primarily (not exclusively) inside the Democratic Party. If we want to throw a blow against the Democratic Party, we have to throw it from inside this spontaneous movement, including from inside its resistance to Trump. The second thing is that there is no surer way to throw a blow against the middle - the Democratic Party - than to carry on a relentless struggle demanding from the inside that the Democrats resist fascism and defend the basic needs of the new class.

The issues in the 2020 election in the minds of the majority of people are perfectly clear:

- Black Lives Matter vs. Black lives don't matter
- Equality and equal rights vs. white power
- Freedom vs. mass incarceration
- Health care vs. mass pandemic deaths (over 190,000)
- Housing vs. mass evictions (up to 40 million)
- Safe public schools vs. pandemic death traps
- Human rights vs. corporate property rights
- Save the planet vs. ecological disaster and wildfires
- Voting rights vs. voter suppression
- Count every vote vs. seize & destroy people's ballots

- Freedom vs. children in cages
- Right to asylum vs. murder and death
- Immigrant rights vs. border wall
- Right to protest vs. unlimited repression
- Peace vs. world war
- Abundance vs. starvation
- Life vs. the Trump death cult
- Democracy vs. fascism.

The fight to defeat Trump today is identical with the fight for democracy. Our tactic is to participate in the Trump resistance and politicize it, identify the emerging revolutionaries, and inspire and engage them around the vision of a cooperative society. We politicize the new class as it acts as a social force, around the pandemic, around racial oppression and police violence, and make bold plans to grow the League out of this process. Politicization means moving beyond silos, moving from economic and social struggles to political struggles. Fighting to defeat Trump takes people in that direction.

Politicizing the resistance means impacting the narrative. It means sounding the alarm and repudiating the “fascism denialism” of Biden and Harris and the Democratic leadership. It means uniting with state and local candidates campaigning for people’s demands. It means not just voting, and getting out the vote, but getting on local election boards and becoming poll workers, poll watchers, and poll defenders.

At critical moments in American history such as today, elections have never been about gradualism or incrementalism. They have been about life and death struggles for freedom, equality, and economic survival. Elections leading up to the Civil War, during Reconstruction, during the Populist era, and the Civil Rights movement were often pitched and bloody battles. Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner were murdered for registering people to vote in 1964.

Politicizing the resistance also means that at every step of the way we conduct propaganda that allows us to identify and rally the revolutionaries coming together, so as to build study groups and grow the League. It means explaining that their “demands for food, housing, education, health care and an opportunity to contribute to society are summed up as the demand for a cooperative society,” and that 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....”

We cannot fight for our basic necessities without democracy, and we cannot preserve democracy without defeating Trump. We will resist and expose every Democratic attempt to make this election about anything else than the survival of our people and the future of the earth. The election is about voting for Biden and Harris, but otherwise essentially ignoring them, and using the campaign to disseminate the new class program and new class ideas.

Finally, politicizing the resistance means no retreat, no surrender. It means preparing now to take to the streets and shut the country down before submitting to fascism. These are the battles where, if revolutionaries do their job, the workers will break free from the Democrats and every other grouping attempting to tie them to the corporate class.

Doing our job means creating the content, distributing it widely, and following up to ensure the building of the League. The time has come for the League to decisively transition to use of social media to disseminate its propaganda. The League will not be able to influence the social narrative without a dramatic turn toward distribution by digital means. Paper is simply too inefficient, too slow, too limited and limiting, and too expensive to serve as an effective means of delivering time-sensitive content. Paper content will still have its important uses but simply can no longer be treated as the central medium for our work.

Supplementary materials:

What Happens if Trump Does Not Concede? CNN interview with Col. Lawrence Wilkerson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56DlPjCmJxI>

Democracy Now on Trump not conceding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pd9OHTiAAhc>

Supplementary Reading:

“If Trump Tries to Hijack The Election,” <https://truthout.org/articles/if-trump-tries-to-hijack-the-election-we-must-be-ready-to-resist/>

“The Election is Being Sabotaged . . .” <https://truthout.org/audio/the-election-is-being-sabotaged-before-our-eyes/>

Suggested questions for discussion:

1. What is the difference between “fight the right” and “throw the blow at the middle”?
2. Where do we see the Democrats trying to make the election about anything other than the survival of our people and the future of the earth? How do we resist this?
3. Where do you see openings for this kind of propaganda: “Just as Calhoun argued then, that the constitutional right to own slaves trumped democracy, today’s rulers argue that the right to private property supersedes other democratic rights. Today’s revolutionaries need to show that we cannot win our economic and political demands without democracy, we cannot secure democracy without breaking the power of the corporations, and we cannot win real freedom and real democracy until we abolish private property.”?
4. Describe the ways the election is being sabotaged. How do revolutionaries prepare for this and what do revolutionaries do after the election that the president has sabotaged in his favor, or refuses to leave office as constitutionally mandated?

Further Discussion Points:

1. Is this true in your area:

Elections "...have served as an arena for a massive propaganda war over the causes and solutions of America's economic and social problems." What are the most basic structural problems that intersect with or are expressed by the activity in and around the elections?

2. How will we go out connect with this, in all of it's possibilities and contradictions?

"Significantly, they found that most youth who described themselves as 'more cynical about politics,' also said that they were extremely likely to vote. Seventy-two percent of all young people said they believed that 'dramatic change could occur in this country if people banded together.' "

3. How do your plans assess and connect with this motion:

"Across the United States, more than one in four suburbanites are poor or nearly poor. In fact, the suburbs of America's largest metropolitan areas have more poor people living in them than their inner cities do."

4. The term "The Irrepressible Conflict" was coined 15 years before the Civil War. It was actually a projection about the collisions of the basic social and economic nature and institutions of the North and the South. Originally it wasn't a prediction of war. Today, America's social polarization is driven by the antagonism between a ruling class of private property owners, and a new, propertyless class that is becoming increasingly separated from the formal capitalist economy altogether. How is the irrepressible conflict of today's epoch the basis of our work?