

Voter Suppression Class

Voter suppression plays a distinct role in each electoral cycle. In the 2020 elections, it looks like voter suppression will play an enormous role. This educational approaches the question of voter suppression and voting rights not as some abstract principle, but in the context of the contending forces today.

Main reading: *League Organizer*, Sept. 2020, "Protect the Right to Vote - Defeat Trump" (see below)

Supplementary: "Voter Suppression and the Battle for Democracy," *Rally Comrades!*, July-August 2018

<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2019/07/voter-suppression-and-the-battle-for-democracy/>

"Purges Will Screw 16.7 Million Out Of Their Right To Vote," June 8, 2020, interview with Greg Palast, author of *How Trump Stole 2020*

Real News interview with Greg Palast:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teR8n--vI2Q>

"Ongoing Fight to Overcome Voter Suppression":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJ5uRPr-y6A>

1. What is the importance of the right to vote in 2020?
2. How are voter suppression and the advance of fascism connected?
3. What is the furor over mail ballots?
4. Do you have examples or experience with voter suppression or fraud in your work or area?

Protect the Right to Vote - Defeat Trump!

League Organizer, September 2020

We are in dangerous and exciting times, with millions of people marching to say NO! We cannot go back to the bad old days of denying people their human rights! And NO! We cannot return to an economy that increasingly feeds the rich and starves working families! The coming election is the key to sustaining the demands of the rebellion 2020 for a better society for all.

Some suggest that since both our major political parties represent corporate dictators and white supremacists we should simply sit out this election or possibly only vote down ticket where new class leaders are running for local

offices. If government is going to be transformed to serve we the people, yes, of course we must support new class fighters down ticket on the ballot. But that is not enough. We've got to defeat Trump so we can continue to build the movement to dismantle the wealth and power of the corporations and billionaires. This is where becoming political and voting comes in. One point we revolutionaries must elevate is that solutions must include public ownership of the resources the people need to live.

From the beginning in America, elections have been a battleground in both the struggle for defining the aims and aspirations of the people, and the struggle for power, to determine how the dominant class maintains its rule. From the beginning the vote has been manipulated, suppressed and controlled by the powerful to ensure the outcomes favor the interests of the ruling class. But now the new class is using the elections to fight for its basic needs of housing, healthcare, education, and even for the most basic levels of democracy. As the rulers more and more turn a deaf ear to their demands, the new class seeks every avenue it can to redress its grievances.

In 2020 resisting voter suppression is at the core of our battle for democracy. The right to vote is in grave danger. Trump has said making voting easier means "you'd never have a Republican elected in this country again." The movement inspired by George Floyd, is really a movement demanding that government work on behalf of the people, making demands such as defund/abolish the police, cancel rents and mortgages, and government reinvest in the needs of workers as funds for police are redirected. Voting power is one step toward winning such political demands. We cannot fight for the new world we need without democracy, without the right to vote. Our Constitution was written by slave owners and other capitalists who denied the vote to women, to slaves, indigenous people, even to white men who did not own property. Every generation of Americans has had to fight to protect and extend the right to vote.

With so many struggling to survive today, who is responsible for the people's well-being? Is government's main job to smooth the way for more corporate profits, or see to it that all of the people thrive? We have entered a vast economic and social revolution that could end with the reconstruction of society on the basis of cooperation rather than exploitation.

Trump and his gang of billionaires are leading the social mobilization of a new group of fascists for the robot era. Trump's accusations of mail-in ballot fraud, his threats to send armed guards to voting places, and refusal to agree to respect the election result must be stopped. Trump and his gang are pandering in racial oppression, immigrant bashing, and religious persecution. Appealing to the most historically backward and hateful beliefs in our culture, beliefs that divide people and prevent unity on a class basis. Their attack on the democratic electoral process and political rights in the face of our growing economic crisis is showing us one face of the consolidation of corporate rule. Today we are seeing that the treacherous actions established first and worst on the backs of Blacks are now being applied to the entire working class, regardless of color. Voting Trump out of office is one step in a long-term plan for the American people to defeat fascism.

Further discussion points:

1. In the United States in 1789, states had the power to set voting requirements. Generally, states limited this right to property-owning or tax-paying white males, Only 6% of the population voted. Please discuss the evolution of the battle for ballot in the US.
2. How was systemized terror and fascism used to stop the battle for democracy in U.S. history? Why? How will objective new conditions that are developing set the stage for how we point the way forward?
3. Please research or give recent and current examples:
“...the vote has been manipulated, suppressed and controlled to ensure the outcome is in the interests of the ruling class.”
4. Discuss the relationship between the program of the new class and the fight for democracy.