

# League of Revolutionaries for a New America

## Basic Education for New Members

### Class I Understanding the Process of Change

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# Understanding the Process of Change

“Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change”  
William Shakespeare  
~1610

When people sum up this moment, the moment we are living in, they will say the entire world is talking about change. Whether from politicians or multi-media spokespersons or an 18-year-old demonstrator, “a sea-change,” a Shakespearean term over 400 years old, has resurfaced.

The world has entered an entirely new process. World society is leaving the industrial era and is leaping into the epoch of electronics. Over ten thousand years in the making, we live in a time of a great break in continuity. The end of the necessary participation of labor in the mass of world social activity we call the economy. A period of 10 to 15 thousand years of human labor, exploitation, classes and the state – over.

Of course, we mean over in the sense of transition and transformation. This is why we need to talk about change. Nothing commands the attention of large groups of people like revolution. Over millennia revolutions have crystalized and brought radical change to existing societies. Sometimes revolutions spread, cross borders, cross continents and jump oceans.

The League is an organization of revolutionaries. To get united on what we face, and to be clear on our tasks, we educate ourselves.

### **Study**

One of the hidden or unseen things about a revolution is study. In world history, when revolutionaries are faced with a set of problems that are new, they grasp methods and master concepts and principles. In short, they study the laws of revolution.

Scientists have theorized that climate changes drove the creation of the Agricultural Revolution. Many scientists have also shown that intellectual advances in the human brain played a role. Practically speaking, from what may have been the first known revolution in history, over 5,000 years ago in Egypt, to today’s revolution, study and education by the revolutionaries has played a decisive role.

From the revolutionaries of the American Revolution, to Gracchus Babeuf the first great communist of the French Revolution, to the revolutionaries of the Haitian Revolution, to the militant black pamphleteer David Walker of the American Civil War, to Betsy Mix Cowles who supported antislavery political parties and runaway slaves, to Sojourner Truth the ex-slave turned abolitionist orator, John Brown, Harriet Tubman, William

Lloyd Garrison, the Soviet revolution, the Chinese revolution, the Angolan Revolution, Fred Hampton, Nelson Peery and so many more — they all studied, they all educated.

As revolutionaries, speakers, editors, writers, organizers and activists they pushed the new ideas of revolution into homes, churches, neighborhoods, newspapers, and schools. They fought, they contributed, they led, they died, and they studied and educated throughout. They transferred the new revolutionary ideas demanded by the reality.

## **Revolutionary Change in America**

There has never ever been a situation like the one we face in the United States today; it is qualitatively new. Studying change — its process, its science — is always on our agenda.

When you “ask” Google what philosophy is, the single sentence answer is:

*noun: philosophy*

the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline

One of our principle tasks is to embed an understanding of how things change into the revolutionary movement. We use philosophy. We use an understanding of knowledge, reality and existence. We don't treat it as an “academic” discipline but as a revolutionary weapon.

## **The Elements of Change**

Andrew Carnegie, steel magnate and one of the 19th century's richest men, made an offhand remark while bragging about his wealth to a newspaper reporter in early 1892: “It isn't the man who does the work that makes the money. It's the man who gets other men to do it.” This really captures the essence of a system of exploitation.

A big stage of industrial development happened immediately after the Civil War. Slavery, which made the 13 colonies valuable, by the mid-1800s had become a fetter on the further development of the productive forces. When it was overthrown, industrial development exploded in the United States. As quickly as 1895, the United States leaped ahead of Britain in greatest manufacturing output. Steel production, the railroads, development of machinery, the production of machinery, banks, utilities, timber, oil, mining, steel, minerals, cash crops all developed at a dizzying rate. There was explosion of new discoveries and inventions. New processes for making steel, chemicals and explosives were invented. And all of this before 1900! The wealth accumulation, exploitation and expansion were so obscene it was called the Gilded Age.

Leading into and coming out of World War II, the story was more of the same. Suffice it to say the combination of the destruction in huge parts of the world from the war, nuclear weapons, dominant armed forces, and super profits from neo-colonies all combined to make the United States the wealthiest country on earth.

The United States had an advanced factory system (typically known to most people as the system of mass production), based on the last stage of the development of the electro-mechanical industrial means of production.

The nuclear bomb wasn't the only "world changing" invention whose roots were found in WWII. A combination of inventions and devices including the computer (1943), the transistor (1947), the robot (1954), the silicon chip (1961) and the first single-chip microprocessor (1971) formed the basis of the electronic revolution which would ultimately prove to be more important than the nuclear device, the steam engine and agriculture combined.

The real digital electronics revolution came in the late 1960s with the integration of transistors and other semiconductor devices into monolithic circuits. Now integrated circuits (chips) can be found in everything. Advances include the integration of digital communication networks with the computer - the global Internet, fully automated mass production, AI and so on. Mass production of goods and services with no human labor. The beginning of new forms of automation with no human labor.

## **The Science of Change**

At this moment in America we are dealing with fundamental change in society. This starts with change in the economy which results in change in the relations between classes and people.

Our basic approach is the same as any branch of thinking or science.

- In world history radical social change is precipitated by fundamental, qualitative change to the economy.
- By "fundamental, qualitative" we mean the sum-total of basic characteristics which make a system or process what it is. Quality is the content not the form of something.
- "Fundamental, qualitative" change means to put an end to the old content of something, to make something different from what it was.
- This happens with the partial, or stage by stage, introduction of something that is new, different, and ultimately antagonistic to the old content. Then we have the ongoing and continuing stages of change, to completion.
- The new is continually arising and getting stronger, the old being discarded. The final result is something new.
- In world history a qualitative change in the economy is accompanied by the destruction of the old society and the creation of the new.

## **What is Happening Today**

The qualitatively new digital electronic technology has entered the American system of production, which is at the heart of the economy. Chips, computers and robots are the first expressions of new forms of automation that will follow. And not just in mass production. If we were holding this class 20 years ago, we'd have to work at explaining abstractly how computers, robots and software would replace us in every part of the economy. Not today. What part of the economy isn't being changed?

## **What are the Results of These Changes?**

The qualitative changes in the economy are accelerating. This creates greater polarization of wealth and poverty. On the one hand, wealth is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. On the other hand, poverty is spreading out to formerly secure sections of society and creating a new class.

In 1975 when the microprocessor made its debut in an American factory there was one billionaire in the US. In the year of Occupy Wall Street (2011), when talking about the 1% was became part of the consciousness of the mainstream, there were 413 billionaires. Today there are 540 billionaires in the US. In 5 months during 2020, the list of Forbes-certified billionaires "grew" their collective wealth by an estimated \$685 billion. The richest 0.00019 percent of the US population— including Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg, and Bill Gates—hold \$3.6 trillion in combined wealth on 08/05/20.

This is a reflection of the need to concentrate the wealth and power of the economy into fewer hands. Through direct control of the Treasury and the Federal Reserve, the ruling class is now wielding trillions of dollars in public money to protect its own interests.

For the new class no longer needed in production, marginalized and cast aside, this is a time when the lives of a growing number of the American people are considered worthless. The fate of labor, given qualitative change in the economy, is clear – it beings with job loss, permanent layoffs, part time, sub-minimum wage jobs, complete elimination of all benefits, destroying what's left of health care and pensions, less services, higher prices, and a rapidly declining standard of living.

It is expressed in the forced labor of essential workers this system treats as throwaways. It's expressed in the economic devastation of the millennials. It's expressed in the police killings of over a thousand people in the first 9 months of this year. It's expressed in the decline in health care and education, which were really nothing more than the costs of production to capitalists. The economic changes to date have created over four decades of a widening wealth gap — of economic polarization.

The accelerating development of electronics is the basis for worldwide economic and social destruction. We can see it, we can prove it, we can feel it. As human beings we are wrapped up in survival, in the immediate problems of homelessness, unemployment, the rise of a new racism. Yet we must also study, discuss and understand the historic implications of our time. The science of change explains the emergence of the new.

When we look at the situation objectively, we see our new class as the new revolutionary force. The new class created from every sector of the economy, from every walk of life, as a result of the break in continuity in the economy.

The new class is an objective communist class. It must fight for control of the economy. It is a tireless, constant force for change, a true liberating force.

## **Sum Up**

When we talk with the American people about change, we always rely on what the abolitionists said of the overwhelming odds they faced as they fought to overthrow the system of slavery: "Liberty knows nothing but victories." With the destruction of capitalism and the creation of new revolutionary forces, the fight — the war — is for the existence of humanity.

The quantitative introduction of a new quality, and the beginning of antagonism, guaranties that polarization takes place. Polarization is the confusing yet relentless way that antagonistic classes separate into poles, struggle, and resolve themselves — the old destroyed, the new preserved and emergent as a new quality. If we look, we can see this possibility in the country today.

Someone once wrote about Darwin "He provided a way of talking about change, of making plausible the emergence of novelty in experience, and of showing how the sloughing off of the old inevitably produces the new." This is our role now.

If we are to accomplish anything, we must apply this science of change to the thinking of the new class. An introduction of a new mode of thought. Provide a new way of talking about change. Make immense possibilities plausible in this moment of change.

For the first time in American history unity of the class is within our grasp, if we rely on the weapon of class consciousness and the possibility of a new world.

Understanding change is the first step.

## **Discussion**

1. Why do we put so much emphasis on studying the process of change?
2. What is the significance of the change from the industrial world to the epoch of electronics? How does this compel changes in society?
3. What position is the new class being pushed into, and why do we describe it as an objectively communist class?
4. What are the implications of an "objective communist economic class" for our role, our education and our propaganda?