

Save humanity & the planet. Defeat fascism. Visioning & struggling for the future. A continuing conversation among revolutionaries

1. "Taking the Offensive to Defeat Fascism" Secretariat. *Rally, Comrades!* May/June 2021

[Taking the Offensive to Defeat Fascism Secretariat, League of Revolutionaries for a New America, May 2021 - Rally, Comrades! Rally, Comrades! \(rallycomrades.org\)](https://www.rallycomrades.org/)

Working Class Unity

Today's multiracial working class has to break from both ruling class parties. And we have to move toward forming a working class third party that is politically independent from the capitalist class. To accomplish this, we need to continue our participation in the electoral process and in the ongoing policy struggles around solutions to our problems. The demands and solutions we put forward have to fight capitalism and take our struggle on the offensive. Our survival depends on the protection of the earth, and the distribution of the vast abundance of goods and services based on human need, and not ability to pay. A few specific examples of political tactics to fight capitalism that various fronts of struggle are demanding include unified action as a political tool of working class power, abolition of the police and prison industrial complex including ICE, implementation of a green plan for a 100 percent renewable carbon free energy system by 2030, and honoring all Indigenous treaties and lands. We have to end our crises, not just lessen our pain.

We need a critical mass of working class forces with a shared vision of the world we are fighting for. This working class unity and class consciousness requires serious study along with political demands and electoral work and struggle in the street. Political education is an essential weapon in the battle for ideas, vision, and the future. We have to break with ruling class ideology and lies of white supremacy. We have to break with ruling class history and its practices of class exploitation, genocide, and gender oppression. To do this means to study society and the world as they really are and have been. It means to understand the revolutionary process and the qualitative change in the economy we are living through. It means to grasp our political task and political challenge of going on the offensive, fighting capitalism, defeating fascism, and winning and holding the future for humanity and our planet. RC (*Rally, Comrades!*)

2. V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works, 4th English Ed.* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964. Vol. 21, pp. 205-59.

<http://www.marx2mao.com/Lenin/CSI15.html> written May/first half of June 1915

On what makes a revolutionary situation? (p. 213-14)

To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the symptoms of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major symptoms: (1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the "upper classes", a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way; it is also necessary that "the upper classes should be unable" to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time", but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the "upper classes" themselves into independent historical action.

Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution, as a general rule, is impossible. The totality of all these objective

changes is called a revolutionary situation. Such a situation existed in 1905 in Russia, and in all revolutionary periods in the West; it also existed in Germany in the sixties of the last century (19th), and in Russia in 1859-61 and 1879-80, although no revolution occurred in these instances. Why was that? **It was because it is not every revolutionary situation that gives rise to a revolution; revolution arises only out of a situation in which the above-mentioned objective changes are accompanied by a subjective change, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break (or dislocate) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crisis, "falls", if it is not toppled over.**

3. Karl Marx, Karl Marx. *The German Ideology*. 1845

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm>

Development of the Productive Forces as a Material Premise of Communism

Alienation ... can, of course, only be abolished given two practical premises. For it to become an "intolerable" power, i.e., a power against which humans make a revolution, it must necessarily have rendered the great mass of humanity "propertyless," and produced, at the same time, the contradiction of an existing world of wealth and culture, both of which conditions presuppose a great increase in productive power, a high degree of its development. And, on the other hand, this development of productive forces (which itself implies the actual empirical existence of humans in their world-historical, instead of local, being) is an absolutely necessary practical premise because without it want is merely made general, and with destitution the struggle for necessities and all the old filthy business would necessarily be reproduced; and furthermore, because only with this universal development of productive forces is a universal intercourse between people established, which produces in all nations simultaneously the phenomenon of the "propertyless" mass (universal competition), makes each nation dependent on the revolutions of the others, and finally has put world-historical, empirically universal individuals in place of local ones.

Without this, (1) communism could only exist as a local event; (2) the forces of intercourse themselves could not have developed as universal, hence intolerable powers: they would have remained home-bred conditions surrounded by superstition; and (3) each extension of intercourse would abolish local communism. Empirically, communism is only possible as the act of the dominant peoples "all at once" and simultaneously, which presupposes the universal development of productive forces and the world intercourse bound up with communism. Moreover, **the mass of propertyless workers - the utterly precarious position of labour - power on a mass scale cut off from capital or from even a limited satisfaction and, therefore, no longer merely temporarily deprived of work itself as a secure source of life - presupposes the world market through competition. The proletariat can thus only exist world-historically, just as communism, its activity, can only have a "world-historical" existence. World-historical existence of individuals means existence of individuals which is directly linked up with world history.**

Communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence.

4. From <http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2012/05/consciousness-of-societys-ills-fuels-u-s-upsurges/>

Stages of Consciousness

As the struggle develops, new history-making ideas can be gripped by the masses. Vladimir Lenin, in his path-breaking work *What Is To Be Done?* describes the level of consciousness of the Russian working class at the time. Despite the widespread nature of the spontaneous movement, and despite the "flashes of consciousness" and the formation of definite demands, the revolts then under way were simply the resistance of the oppressed; simply trade union struggles. They marked the awakening of the workers, but consciousness of the contradiction between their interests and the whole of the political and social system was not yet there. Lenin concluded that

class consciousness had to be brought from the outside to the workers. This lesson holds true despite the epochal differences and the limitations of that moment.

The consciousness that the working class has to go through develops in stages – social awareness, social consciousness, and class consciousness. The first two stages develop more or less objectively or spontaneously. The latter stage develops subjectively or consciously, from the introduction of new ideas by the thinkers and conscious revolutionaries.

Generally, the level of consciousness today is social awareness — the becoming aware of what society is as it really is. The next stage is social consciousness, where the workers understand that they are members of a class and that they need class solidarity. They understand their class is exploited and that they must fight that exploitation. This stage is generally expressed in the formation of some kind of political party of the workers.

It is important to note that the American mass has never achieved even the stage of social consciousness. There was a moment following the Civil War when people came close to it. A certain level of unity existed around the abolition of slavery and for integrating the Freedmen into society. With the murder of Abraham Lincoln and the assumption of power by Andrew Johnson, a counterrevolution was launched and the moment was lost.

Class consciousness is where the workers grasp the necessity of taking political power in order to expropriate the expropriators and bring the class struggle to an end. These stages should not be viewed categorically. The development of consciousness is a process, which reflects the stages of development and interaction of the economy and the social response of the masses. Ideas are constantly in formation, and the stages of development of consciousness interpenetrate one another.

5. Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed [freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf](#)

The object in presenting these considerations is to defend the eminently pedagogical character of the revolution. ...

The oppressed, who have been shaped by the death-affirming climate of oppression, must find through their struggle the way to life affirming humanization, which does not lie simply in having more to eat (although it does involve having more to eat and cannot fail to include this aspect). The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things. In order to regain their humanity they must cease to be things and fight as men and women, as humans. This is a radical requirement. They cannot enter the struggle as objects in order later to become human beings. ... The only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. In a humanizing pedagogy the method ceases to be an instrument by which the teachers (in this instance, the revolutionary leadership) can manipulate the students (in this instance, the oppressed), because it expresses the consciousness of the students themselves. The method is, in fact, the external form of consciousness manifest in acts, which takes on the fundamental property of consciousness—its intentionality. The essence of consciousness is being with the world, and this behavior is permanent and unavoidable. Accordingly, consciousness is in essence a way towards something apart from itself, outside itself, which surrounds it and which it apprehends by means of its ideational capacity. Consciousness is thus by definition a method, in the most general sense of the word.

A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice co-intentional education. Teachers and students (leadership and people), cointent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this

way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement.

6. Angela Davis. 2016. *Freedom is a constant struggle: from Ferguson to Palestine*

[angela davis book Freedom Is a Constant Struggle.pdf](#)

Of course intersectionality—or efforts to think, analyze, organize as we recognize the interconnections of race, class, gender, sexuality—has evolved a great deal over the last decades. I see my work as reflecting not an individual analysis, but rather a sense within movements and collectives that it was not possible to separate issues of race from issues of class and issues of gender. There were many pioneers of intersectionality but I do think it is important to acknowledge an organization that existed in New York in the late sixties and seventies called the Third World Women's Alliance. That organization published a newspaper entitled *Triple Jeopardy*. Triple jeopardy was racism, sexism, and imperialism. Of course, imperialism reflected an international awareness of class issues. Many formations were attempting to bring these issues together. *My own book Women, Race and Class* was one of many that were published during that era, including, to name only a few, *This Bridge Called My Back*, edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga, the work of bell hooks and Michelle Wallace, and the anthology *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*.

So behind this concept of intersectionality is a rich history of struggle. A history of conversations among activists within movement formations, and with and among academics as well. I mention this genealogy that takes seriously the epistemological productions of those whose primary work is organizing radical movements because I think **it's important to prevent the term "intersectionality" from erasing essential histories of activism**. There were those of us who by virtue of our experience, not so much by virtue of academic analyses, recognized that we had to figure out a way to bring these issues together. They weren't separate in our bodies, but also they are not separate in terms of struggles. I actually think that what is most interesting today, given that long history both of activism and all of the articles and books that have been written since then, **what I think is most interesting is the conceptualization of the intersectionality of struggles. Initially intersectionality was about bodies and experiences. But now, how do we talk about bringing various social justice struggles together, across national borders?** So we were talking about Ferguson and Palestine. How can we really create a framework that allows us to think these issues together and to organize around these issues together? (p. 24)

...

I certainly don't think existing political parties can constitute our primary arenas of struggle, but I do think that the **electoral arena can be used as a terrain on which to organize. In the US, we have needed an independent political party for a very long time—an antiracist, feminist workers party**. I also think you are absolutely right in identifying grassroots activism as being the most important ingredient of building radical movements. (p. 15)

Nina Simone

"We never talked about men or clothes. It was always Marx, Lenin and revolution – real girls' talk."

Audre Lorde

"For women, the need and desire to nurture each other is not pathological but redemptive, and it is within that knowledge that our real power is rediscovered. It is the real connection which is so feared by a patriarchal world."

Frantz Fanon

"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it."