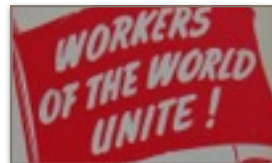


Volume 002
Issue No. 11



SPARTACUS LEAGUE
REVOLUTIONARY
CONTINUITY



PROGRAM
POLICY & WORKERS
GOVERNMENT



LETTERS
STRATEGIC
QUESTIONS

THE RED VINE



Journal of the Red Party

**Suggested
Donation:
\$2.00 - \$3.00**

What Does the Spartacus League Want?

We republish here "What Does the Spartacus League Want?", originally published in the midst of the German revolution and transcribed for The Red Vine by Cassidy Good and Miah Simone. This program, written by Rosa Luxemburg in Die Rote Fahne (The Red Flag) No. 29 (December 14, 1918) and shortly thereafter adopted by the German Communist Party at its founding congress, demonstrates the early Communist movement's radical continuity with the minimum-maximum program it inherited from international social democracy.

(1)

On the ninth of November nineteen-eighteen, the workers and soldiers of Germany overthrew the old regime. The bloody dream of subjecting the world to the domination of militarism, vanished like smoke on the battlefields of France. The band of criminals who kindled the world conflagration and drove Germany into the sea of blood reached on that day the end of their career. The people who were deceived for four years, and in the service of Moloch forgot their duties as cultured people, lost all sense of honor and humanity and allowed themselves to be used in commotion with a base act,

finding themselves on the brink of abyss awakened from the stupor in which they were for more than four years.

On the 9th of November the Germans workers arose to throw off the disgraceful yoke. The Hohenzollerns were driven out; soviets of workers' and soldiers deputies elected.

But the Hohenzollerns were never more than the agents of imperialist capitalists and junkers. The class rule of the capitalists that was the real cause of World War in Germany and France in Russia in England in Europe and in America. The capitalist of all countries - these are the real initiators of the slaughter of peoples. International capitalism is the insatiate Moloch enter whose bloody jaws are thrown million upon millions of fresh human sacrifices.

The World War confronted society with a choice of two alternatives: either the continued existence of capitalism, with its consequent new wars and inevitable and speedy destruction due to chaos and anarchy, or the abolition of capitalist exploitation. With the end of the World War the class rule of the capitalist lost its right to existence. It is no longer capable of leading society out of

Table of Contents:

General Content

- ▶ **What Does the Spartacus League Want?**
Pg. 02
- ▶ **Neither Color nor Class-Blind**
Pg. 09
- ▶ **Independent Workers' Government & Program**
Pg. 12
- ▶ **Their Violence and Ours**
Pg. 13
- ▶ **Party Update**
Pg. 16

Editorial

- ▶ **Trump and 2017**
Pg. 08

Letters

- ▶ **Welp**
Pg. 15
- ▶ **Relax. Unite.**
Pg. 15
- ▶ **Different Issues**
Pg. 16

The Red Vine is the official organ of the RP. Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the RP; editorials reflect the views of the RP Central Committee. We encourage readers to contribute letters and articles to the paper.

Submissions and Contact:
party@red-party.com

the terrible economic chaos which the imperialist orgy has left has left in its wake.

The means of production were destroyed to a frightful extent. Millions of workers, the best and the soundest element of the working class, were slaughtered. Those left alive, upon returning home, will receive the mock welcome of poverty and unemployment. Starvation and disease threaten to sap the remaining strength of the people. Financial bankruptcy, as the consequence of the crushing burden of war debts, is inevitable.

Only socialism can save the people from this bloody chaos, this gaping abyss there is no other way. Only the world wide proletarian revolution can establish order in place of this anarchy, put into the mutual extermination of the people's, provide work and bread for all, and bring peace, freedom, and true culture to torture humanity. "Down with wage labor!" Such is the battle cry of the day. Wage labor and class rule must give way to work on a cooperative basis the means of production must cease to be the monopoly of a class: They must become the common property of all. The present system of production, which is nothing but exploitation and robbery, must be abolished. No more exploiters or exploited. Production and the distribution of products must be regulated in

the interest of the nation as a whole.

Instead of masters and wage slaves there will be free fellow workers! Labor will cease to be a burden for anybody when it becomes the duty of all. An existence worthy of men will be assured to all who fulfill their duty towards society. Hunger will cease to be the curse of workers; it will be the punishment for idlers.

Only in such a society can slavery and mutual hatred among nations be destroyed. Only when such a society is established will the Earth cease to be outraged by fratricidal conflicts. Only then shall we be able to say: "We have seen the end of war."

(2)

The establishment of the Socialist order of society is the greatest task that ever fell to the lot of a class and of a revolution in the course of human history. This task involves the complete reconstruction of the state and an entire change in the social and economic foundation of society.

This change and this reconstruction cannot be accomplished by a decree issued by some officials, committee, or parliament. They can only be accomplished by the mass of the people themselves.

In all preceding revolutions it was a small

minority of people who conducted the revolutionary struggle. This minority determined the goal, gave direction to the fight, and used the masses only as tools to secure victory for their own interests, the interests of the minorities. The socialist revolution is the first revolution which can secure victory for and through the great majority of the workers themselves.

It is the task of the proletarian mass not only clearly and consciously to determine the aim and direction of the revolution. It must also establish socialism step by step through its own activity.

The main feature of the socialist society is to be found in the fact that the great mass of workers will cease to be a governed mass, but, on the contrary, will itself live the full political and economic life and direct that life in conscious and free self-determination.

Therefore the proletarian mass must substitute its own class organs - the workers' and soldiers' councils - for the inherited organs of capitalist class rule - the federal councils, municipal councils, parliaments - apply to this principle from the highest authority in the state to the smallest community. The proletarian mass must fill all governmental positions, must control all functions, must test all requirements of the state on the

touchstone of socialist aims and interests of its own class.

Only by means of a constant, mutual action upon each other on the part of the masses and their organs - the soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies - can their activity fill the state with a socialist spirit.

Likewise, economic reconstruction can go only as a process carried on by the mass action of the working class.

Mere decrees on socialization issued by revolution authorities are of no more value than empty sounds. Only the working class, by its own efforts, can change these sounds as to actuality. Only in a stubborn fight with capital, face to face in every enterprise by their own direct pressure by means of strikes and by creating their permanent representative organs, can the workers secure control and, finally, the actual administration of production.

The workers of must learn to transform themselves from mere machines, which the capitalist employs in the process of production, into free active thinking leaders of this process. They must acquire the sense of responsibility of active members of the commonwealth, which alone is the owner of all social wealth. They must develop zeal at work, without the whip of the employer, the highest productivity without the spur of

capitalist drivers, discipline without yoke and order without domination highest idealism in the people's interest, strictest self-discipline, true civics spirit of the masses - these constitute the moral basis of a socialist society just as stupidity, egotism, and corruption are the moral basis of capitalism.

These socialist civic virtues, as also knowledge and the ability to conduct socialist industries, can be acquired by the workers only by personal activity and personal experience.

The socialization of society can be accomplished to the fullest extent only by the persistent and uninterrupted struggle of the workers at all points where labor and capital, the people and the class rule of the bourgeois, meet face to face.

The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the workers themselves.

(3)

In bourgeois revolutions bloodshed, terror, and political murder were the indefensible weapons of the ruling classes.

The proletarian revolution acquires no terror for the realization of its aims; it looks upon man slaughter with hatred and aversion. It has no need for such means because the struggle it conducts is not against individuals but against institutions. It enters the arena

with no naive illusions, the dispersal of which would prompt it to have recourse to revenge. The proletarian revolution is not the desperate attempt of a minority forcibly to transform the world in accordance with its own ideal. On the contrary, it is the action of great masses, of millions of people, called upon to carry out their historic mission and to make a reality of what has become an historic necessity.

But the proletarian revolution is at the same time also the death knell of all slavery and oppression. This is the reason why the capitalist, Junkers, petty bourgeoisie and officers, and the beneficiaries and parasites of exploitation in class rule, are rising like one man to fight too the death against the proletarian revolution.

It is madness to suppose that the capitalist will submit voluntarily to the socialists verdict of a parliament or a national assembly, that they will calmly surrender their property, their profits, their privileges of exploitation. All ruling classes have fought obstinately to the end for their privileges. The Roman patricians, as well as the futile bearings of the Middle Ages, the English nobles and the American slave owners, the boyars (*large estate owners*) of Walachia and the silk manufacturers of Lyons - all shed rivers of blood. They trampled upon corpses, they committed murder arson, and state treason,

they precipitated civil war for the purpose of defending their privileges and power.

The imperialist capitalist class, as the last offspring of the caste of exploiters, surpasses all its predecessors as far as brutality, open cynicism and rascality are concerned.

It will defend its "Holy of Holies" - its profits and privileges of exploitations - tooth and nail. It will defend them with the cold - blooded viciousness which manifested during the history of its colonial policy and during the last World War. It will move heaven and hell against the workers. It will mobilize the peasantry against the industrial workers. It will set the backward elements of the proletariat against the vanguard of socialism. It will get its officers to commit massacres. It will attempt to nullify socialist measure by a hundred and one methods of passive resistance. It will put in the way of the revolution twenty uprisings *a la* Van dee. To save itself it will invoke the assistance of the foreign enemy. The murderous armed force of a Clemenceau, a Lloyd George or a Wilson. It will sooner turn the country into a smoking heap of ruins than voluntarily relinquish its power to exploit the working class.

This resistance must be put down within iron hand, with the utmost energy. The power of the bourgeois counter revolution

must be met by the revolutionary power of the working class.

The plots, schemes, and intrigues of the capitalist class must be countered by the ceaseless vigilance clearness of vision and readiness of the proletarian mass for action at any moment. The threatening dangers the counter revolution must be met by the army of the people and the disarming of the ruling classes. The obstructionist maneuvers in Parliament on behalf of the capitalist class must be met by the active organization of the workers and soldiers. The presence of the bourgeoisie everywhere and the thousands of means at its command must be overcome by the concentrated compact power of the working class developed to the highest possible degree. Only the united front of the entire German proletariat - the South German with the North German, the city workers with the agricultural workers, the working men with the soldiers- and the living spiritual bond of the German revolution with the International, the elevation of the German revolution to the height of the world revolution of the proletariat, can create the granite foundation upon which the structure of the future must be based.

The struggle for socialism is the greatest civil war in history, and the proletarian revolution must prepare for the civil war the necessary weapons;

it must learn to use them - to fight and to conquer by arming the compact mass of working people with full political power for the purposes of the revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat is established and therefore the true democracy. True democracy, democracy that does not defraud the people, does not exist where the wage slave sits in - would be equality with the capitalist, where the farm hand with the landowners in order to debate in parliamentary manner over questions most vital to them - true democracy is to be found only where the mass of the workers take the entire power of government into their toil-hardened hands in order to wield it over the heads of the ruling classes as the God Thor wielded his hammer.

To enable the proletariat to solve this problem to Spartacus Union demands:

I. As Immediate Means for Making the Revolution Secure

- 1) The disarming of the entire police force, of all officers, as well as the non-proletarian soldiers.
- 2) The seizure of all supplies of arms and ammunition, as well as of all war industry, by the workers' and soldiers' councils.
- 3) The arming of the entire adult male population as the workers' militia. The formation of a red guard of the worker's, as the

active part of the militia. For the effective protection of the revolution against counter revolutionary plots and risings.

4) Abolition of the commanding power of the officers and non-commissioned officers the substitution of the voluntary discipline of the soldiers of the old brutal barrack discipline.

Election of all superiors by the rank and file, with the right to recall these superiors at any time. Abolition of courts-martial.

5) The removal of all officers and ex officers from the soldiers' councils.

6) Substitution of authorized representative of the workers' and soldiers' councils for all political organs and authorities of the old regime.

7) Creation of a revolutionary tribunal to try them in chiefly responsible for the war and its prolongation, namely, the two Hohenzollerns, Ludendorff Hindenburg Tirpitz, and their fellow - criminals, as well as all conspirators of the counter revolution.

8) Immediate seizure of all means of subsistence to secure provisions for the people

II. On the Political and Social Field

1) Abolition of all separate states; a united German socialist republic .

2) Removal of all parliaments and municipal councils, their functions to be taken over by the Workers' and Soldiers' councils and by the committees and organs of the latter bodies.

3) Election of workers' council all over Germany by the entire adult population of working people of both sexes in cities and rural districts' along the lines of industries, and election of soldiers' councils by the soldiers' excluding the officers and ex-officers the right of workers and soldiers to recall their representatives at any time.

4) Election all over Germany of delegates from the workers' and soldiers' councils to the Central Council of the W. and S. councils; the Central Council to elect the Executive Council as the highest organ of legislative and executive power. For the present the Central Council is to be convened at least every three months- the delegates to be re elected each time. For the constant control of the activity of the Executive Council and for the establishment of a living contact of the bulk of worker's and soldier's council in the country with their highest organ of government. The right of local W. S. councils at any time to recall their representatives on the Central Council and send new ones in their stead in case the former do not act in accordance with the will of their constituents the right of the Executive

Council to appoint or remove the people's representatives as well as the central authorities of the land.

5) Abolition of all class distinctions, titles, and orders; complete legal and social equality of the sexes.

6) Radical social legislation, reduction of working hours to avoid unemployment and to conform to the physical exhaustion of the working class and occasioned by the World War; limitation of the working day to six hours.

7) Immediate, through change of the policy with regard to food, housing, health, and education in the spirit of the proletarian revolution.

III. Further Economic Demands

1) Confiscation of all crown estates and revenues for the benefit of the people.

2) Annulment of the state debts and other public debts, as well as all war loans, except those subscribed within a certain limited amount this limit to be fixed by the Central Council. Of the W. and S. councils.

3) Expropriation of the land held by all large and medium-sized agricultural concerns; establishment of socialist agricultural cooperatives under a uniform central administration

all over the country. Small peasant holdings to remain in possession of their present owners, until they voluntarily decide to join the socialist agricultural cooperatives.

4) Nationalization by the Republic of Councils of all banks, or mines, coal mines, as well as all large industrial and commercial establishments

5) Confiscation of all property exceeding a certain limit, the limit to be fixed by the Central Council

6) The Republic of Councils to take over all public means of transport and communication.

7) Election of administrative councils in all enterprises, such councils to regulate the internal affairs of the enterprises in agreement with the Workers' Councils, regulate the conditions of labor, control production, and finally, take over the administration enterprise.

8) Establishment of the Central Strike Committee which, in constant cooperation with the industrial councils shall secure for the strike movement throughout the country uniform administration, socialist direction, and most effective support by the political power of the W. S. councils.

IV. International Demands

Immediate establishment of connections with the sister

parties abroad in order to place the socialist revolution upon an international basis and to secure and maintain peace through international and brotherhood and the revolutionary rising of the international working class.

(4)

This is what the Spartacus Union stands for!

And because it wants this, because it calls for this, struggles for, because it is the socialist conscience of the revolution - it is hated, persecuted, and slandered by all open and secret enemies of the revolution and of the working class.

"Crucify him!" Call the capitalist, trembling for the fear of losing their money bags. "Crucify him!" Call the petty bourgeoisie, the officers, the anti-semites, the press lackeys of the capitalist class, trembling for the fleshpots of capitalist class rule.

"Crucify him!" Call men like Scheidemann who, like Judas Iscariot, have sold the workers to the capitalist class and are trembling for the shekels of their political power.

"Crucify him!" Repeat, like an echo, the duped, the deceived the misled elements of workers and soldiers, who do not know they are attacking their own flesh and blood when they attack the Spartacus Union.

In hatred and slander are united against the Spartacus Union all who are counter revolutionists, enemies of the people, anti-socialists, all who are ambiguous, confused, afraid of

light, this only proves that the heart of the revolution is beating in the Spartacus union, that the future belongs to us.

The Spartacus Union is no party wanting to climb into power on the shoulders of the mass of workers. Spartacus Union is only the concise party of the proletariat. At every turn it calls the attention of the general body of workers to their historic duties. At every stage of the revolution it fights for the final goal of socialism, and in all national questions it represents the interests of the international revolutionary working class.

The Spartacus Union refuses to share governmental power with the lackeys of the Capitalist Class, the Scheidemann-Ebert element, because it sees in such cooperation an act of treason against the basic principles of socialism, an act calculated to paralyze the revolution and strengthen its enemies.

The Spartacus Union will also refuse to take over the power of government merely because the Scheidemann-Ebert element have completely discredited themselves and the

Independent Socialist Party, to cooperation with them, has reached a blind alley. The Spartacus Union will never take over the power of government otherwise than by clear manifestation of the unquestionable will of the great majority of the proletarianization mass of Germany. It will only take over the power of government by the conscious approval by the mass of the workers of the principles, aims,

and tactics of the Spartacus Union.

The proletarian revolution can reach full clearness and ripeness only by struggling gradually, step by step, along the Golgotha path of the workers' owned bitter experiences through defeats and victories.

The victory of the Spartacus Union is not in the

beginning but at the end of revolution: it is identical with the victory of the great mass of the socialist working class. Arise, proletarians! To the battle! We have to struggle against a world, to conquer a world.

In this last class struggle of history for the highest aims of humanity our motto towards the enemy: "Hand on throat and knee on the beast!"

Trump and 2017

Red Party Central Committee



Donald Trump's electoral victory demonstrates, with stark consequences, that the Democratic Party's strategy of triangulation has hit a dead end. Hillary Clinton, a personification of the 'political establishment' which has so transparently acted against the interests of the working class and oppressed since 2008, was unable to defeat a

candidate who *did* - in his own reactionary way - appear to present an alternative. Is it any surprise that a warmonger and former Walmart board member should fail to inspire enthusiasm?

It hardly bears repeating that Donald Trump passed the finish line as the most disliked

presidential candidate in history, with Clinton coming in second. Nor do we need to repeat the laundry list of reasons why Trump represents a danger to labor, oppressed peoples, the freedom of the press *et cetera*. As we go forward into 2017 and beyond, socialists should be aware of the political realities:

As of the time of publication, Hillary Clinton is expected to win the popular vote despite losing the race. Liberal commentators are calling the Electoral College into question, as they did in 2000 when George Bush defeated Al Gore without a popular vote plurality. The Electoral College is an undemocratic institution, designed to blunt the power of what James Madison called an “overbearing majority” – in other words, to subvert democracy. However, the Electoral College is not the only or even most egregious example of undemocratic structures in the U.S. We should champion far-reaching and consistent democracy as the best arena for working class struggle and the only possible means of workers’ rule.

Liberal contempt has no place in any movement for human liberation. We acknowledge that Trump’s victory will embolden white nationalists, the ‘alt-right’ and other far-right forces to lash out against women, LGBT people, immigrants and racial minorities. However, blanket dismissal of the so-called “white working class” as dyed-in-the-wool xenophobes is both false and

counterproductive. Many Trump voters can be won over to the politics of working-class emancipation, particularly as he fails to solve the economic grievances he raised during the campaign.

The lion’s share of the ruling class opposed Donald Trump, preferring Clinton or another Republican as a safe pair of hands for capital. The limits imposed on national governments by capital do not cut only against left governments: just as French capital pressured Francois Hollande to abandon his program of mild reform, or international capital imposed a humiliating surrender on Syriza in Greece, Trump could find himself disciplined by the needs of ‘the market.’

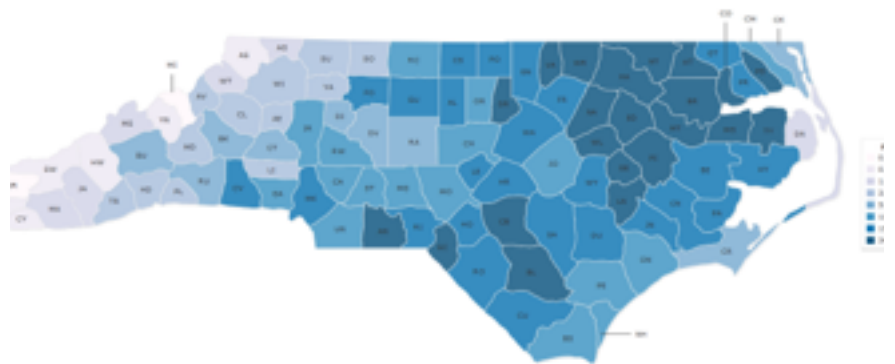
This will also manifest in how personnel for the new administration; while Trump ran an anti-establishment campaign, he has no governmental experience and no machine of his own with which to staff the executive. We can expect him to draw from the already-existing GOP.

We are already seeing the beginning of what promises to be mass opposition to the incoming Trump administration, with protests and organizing meetings coming together on an ad hoc basis. But ‘getting out on to the streets’ alone is not enough. The key strategic need of our time – rebuilding the institutions of our class, and above all fighting for principled revolutionary unity in a Communist Party – remains the same.

Neither Color nor Class-Blind

by Josh Hollandsworth

At the 2016 National Convention of the Red Party, we elected to expand an existing policy of self-determination to



Carolina (Percent): 22.0%

1st African American alone, percent, 2013

Map of the Census, Population Estimates Program (PEP), updated annually. <http://www.census.gov/cen/data/tables.html>

include all of America's Pacific holdings and clarify the status of Native American reservations as nations in their own right. Most controversially, we included my proposition to also extend these rights to majority-black communities, to be democratically decided on a community-by-community basis. The other members present at the National Convention that voted in favor of it to secure what I considered an unexpected majority (Gabriel Pierre and David Arthur Smithers) did so with a certain amount of reservations as to the specific details of what such self-determination would be worthy of our party's support.

It has also come under a great deal of criticism from other members, prospective members, and outside observers. Not all of these criticisms come from a wrong place but rather a misunderstanding of where our party decided to stand on the issue during the convention. I've neglected to spell out my understanding nor release the audio of the convention in a timely matter, so the blame for this falls on me alone. It is therefore necessary to clearly explain the line for ethnically based self-determination rights in the United States in my eyes and how the Red Party can use it to support the long-term struggle for communism. This debate will help clarify where the whole of the party stands and I welcome input from anybody on it.

Critics have referred to my position as supporting bourgeois forms of nationalism, much as the form of separatism advocated by groups like Hamas, the Workers World Party or the New Black Panther Party. If this were my position it would indeed be worthy of such criticism but that is not the case. The NBPP favors full separatism for all of Black America regardless of the overall material conditions. One small part of their campaign for this is an insistence to "only buy from black-owned business". This is the type of society that their vision of self-determination would create, and it is not the one for which I campaign; a state with exploiters who just happen to belong to a historically oppressed minority. It and similar positions held by the other groups I mentioned are not the solution to centuries of oppression. Neither, however, is mandated national integration in a new society for communities that may desire their own governance.

One of the biggest things that has been denied to black people, as well as all Native American nations and island territories is a collective voice which has any serious level of authority over their own material conditions. It goes without saying that a socialist society would empower them in ways they never had been in the history of the United States. But what if they want assurances of their own representation and leadership? It has already been

existing policy in the Red Party to support the independence of Hawaii and Native American tribes (which we now identify in our party language as "nations"). And yet only about 10 percent of the population of Hawaii is of Native Hawaiian descent. What do we carry this policy for, if not specifically to empower Native peoples and guarantee their representation in the maintenance of their own historical lands in each of these cases? Their reduced size is a direct result of colonialism and genocide carried out for hundreds of years. In a new socialist republic, they should be guaranteed an opportunity at rebuilding their societies as direct owners of its territory.

All of these conditions exist for Black America, with only the exclusion of a direct nativity to the land they currently inhabit. In discussion on the matter comrade Gabriel Pierre mentioned that Black Americans "have some features of a nation but not others". I would agree with this analysis as a statement of all American residents who happen to be black. But there are some individual communities, and indeed in some cases entire counties and portions of states that have majority black populations whose issues go unaddressed by the larger governments that theoretically represent them. A handful of their people may be granted privileged positions, for example through gerrymandered voting districts that ease fears of *de jure*

misrepresentation but who have no significant impact on their larger government. The goal of enacting my ideas is not to create a micro-state out of every black community; I imagine that stark contrasts in social conditions within small areas will be greatly reduced if not eliminated entirely. So no, I don't foresee a "People's Republic of Harlem". Rather, I see it creating a couple notable states out of major existing concentrations of black people that we don't even hear a thing about and whose existence has a greater historical significance than immediate material conditions alone.

My home state of North Carolina has an excellent example of this. The largest metropolitan areas are in the center and center-west of the state. To the east in the coastal plains lie a number of majority-black counties all banded together. These counties, making up 10-15% of the area of the state in one blob, face harsh poverty, crumbling infrastructure, and no hope of meaningful expansion opportunities even as new projects are erected in the big cities. What connection do these people have with the policy-makers in Raleigh? None. What does Raleigh grant them? Nothing. A single socialist republic will help but not eliminate these contradictions. Who is to say that these people have no connection to their land? Should they be expected to have

more of a connection to the big city governments? Most importantly, what if we create socialism and then these empowered and democratically-owned communities start to demand their own increased level of control?

What also must be considered is the nature of self-determination. It does not have to strictly refer to the creation of a new national identity (and that is not the spirit around which this policy was adopted). Rather, it can refer to various forms of autonomy, guaranteed representation in existing government, or community mobilization. Indeed the original Black Panther Party of Huey P. Newton, the one far more worthy of leftist support embraced these ideals as their model for black independence. What was discussed at the convention was not looking at every distribution of Black America and cutting their land away when it was more than 50% black. No, it is guaranteeing each separate community the RIGHT to ask for more autonomy, up to and including independence or annexation by another nation. Lenin has compared this right to a couples' right to peaceful and legal divorce, and it is one that ought to be guaranteed. The only condition which I would place upon meeting this legal definition is the means of production remaining in control of the working class in a separate nation. In a society predicated

upon the pre-existing overthrow of capitalism, I do not view this as a serious concern.

Those who look towards the communist world society with starry eyes are flabbergasted by my proposal. When our long-term goal is a classless, stateless society, why create more states? The objective of allowing oppressed peoples to create their own or join another proletarian republic is not to divide the international working class, but to foster unity in separation. Respecting, rather than erasing, our identities is our best hope for creating the long-term future we seek. Historically oppressed communities will have a great many unique conditions that they face as a liberated class. They have to be able to respond to this in ways different from how a single "mandatory melting pot" might. This cannot erase the horrors inflicted on them for so long - nothing will. But it will allow us to collaborate in all the ways that matter, so that a single society for us all might eventually come to pass. In a world where any of my policies on national liberation might be considered likely, the majority of the world's imperialism would have been halted. We could build a very strong foundation for the next generations born on a post-capitalist planet. These are the people who may one day erase those borders themselves.

Independent Workers' Government & Program

by Susie Mirtis

The working class needs political representation capable of forming an independent (*non-class collaborationist*) government. This government could be a one-party state, or a 'worker's government' of multiple worker's parties, but the point is *it must have a plan to reshape society*.

The first point that the worker's government must be independent is – I hope – a very simple, uncontroversial point. The working class cannot simultaneously enact policies that benefit both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, we cannot let capital flow freely, it must be controlled by labour and subject to a general plan for global production, not reckless market expansion and financial speculation.

The second point is also very simple but more 'controversial' (ignored, really). Society as a whole (not just the working class!) needs a political

program, a general set of proposals and policies, to enact as we move beyond capitalism. Communists rarely think about government policy, but society does. We have to have the clearest, most concise, and *most realistic* set of policies capable bringing the vast majority of society on board (or at least giving passive support). Getting non-proletarian elements of society on board with the proletarian political program *does not necessarily mean class collaboration*. The more elements of society that the working class brings on board to its program means less of a potential base for a reactionary rebellion to develop from.

These are the general aims of any revolutionary serious about forming an independent worker's government. Notice that I say nothing about any number of possible strategic or tactical formations, such as protests, mutual aid, electoral work, and so on. All of these are viable tactics, but the only way they will *ever* amount to

anything is with an independent political program for government. Revolutionaries cannot win society over to "theory", you need a clear set of governmental policies and proposals to get the majority on board with, otherwise you'll never achieve more than small sectional struggles that will either be crushed or eventually wither away.

There is an enormous range of questions that still need to be answered about, for example, the role a communist party would (or, rather, *could*) play in an independent worker's government, what general form the government would take (democratic republic, anyone?), if a peaceful transition to such a government is possible, what about the international situation, and so on. The hope is that, with this article, I can provoke some responses and draw out the real points of disagreement that are blocking a serious unity project for an independent communist party.

Their Violence and Ours

by J.R. Murray

The question of violence as it relates to politics has briefly entered the national conversation in the wake of the firebombing of the Orange County Republican headquarters. It's an important subject, though the media often distorts the context of the conversation. Liberal and conservative pundits alike spend an extraordinary amount of time condemning violence. It is worth analyzing what type of violence they condemn and what type of violence they condone.

Let's take a scenario that has become familiar to all of us over the past few years.

Immediately following the murder of a black man by police, state officials and community "leaders" issue statements calling for nonviolence. These pleas are always directed at the protesters - the racially oppressed and economically exploited populations living in the city. The protesters are told to keep themselves peaceful. They are told to express their outrage, at being murdered and having their neighborhoods occupied by the state, in a courteous and respectful manner. Martin Luther King Jr. - who never condemned a riot - is almost always invoked. When the protesters take to the streets they are met by a domestic army. They are tear

gassed. They are beaten. They are kidnapped and tossed into jail cells. A curfew is implemented and they are told to go back to their homes.

These provocations are too much. People break windows, throw rocks, and burn cop cars. In the morning the "violent protests" are roundly condemned. No pundit bothers to point out that the police were the instigators of violence. The politicians and the newspapers deplore the destruction of private property. They are horrified by the burning of police cars. But they cheer the actions of the police who callously murder, cage, and traumatize poor communities, especially communities of color. The oppressed are subjected to a smear campaign that paints them as savages.

Ever since humanity became divided into classes there has been a "ruling" class and an underclass - an oppressor and an oppressed. For example: there existed large slave owning societies ruled by a class of priests and/or headed by an emperor or king. Later, feudalism emerged and feudal lords extracted tribute from their peasants. Feudalism was then abolished by a series of revolutions that ushered in the era of capitalism, in which workers are ruled by capitalists and market mechanisms. This is, of course, a simplification - not

every culture and civilization followed this exact trajectory and there are many local variations and deviations - but it serves as a useful general outline of history.

In each case the ruling class can always be identified as those who own what people need to survive. It is not the ruling class of paranoid conspiracy theories. They are not meeting together in a shadowy room collaborating to brainwash us all. They are not spraying chemtrails. They did not plan the 9/11 attacks. They are not reptilians in human suits. The current ruling class is simply the people who own the means of production - the factories, the farms, the banks, the methods of distribution, etc. They own the tools and technology necessary to make society function. When the means of production is owned by a small class of people it becomes private property. Socialists see the existence of private property as inherently violent and despotic. We believe this property should be owned and democratically managed by society, not by a small group of individuals.

Like the empires of earlier epochs the ruling class of the United States, the leading capitalist state, commits violence on oppressed populations both at home and abroad. It does this not out of some conspiratorial agenda, but because it is the only way the system can operate.

Violence is used to extract profits and maintain the means of production as private property. Some examples will demonstrate the scale of this violence. All over the world people live in fear of U.S. drone strikes killing their loved ones. U.S. bombs kill children every day across the Middle East and Africa. Billions of dollars worth of weapons were sold by the United States last year. These weapons go to regimes like Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel, who routinely brutalize millions of people. U.S. hedge funds are systematically destroying Puerto Rico by forcing the country to close schools and hospitals and cut social programs. Puerto Rico's unemployment rate is 12% and the population is fleeing in record numbers. The U.S. government routinely tortures people at Guantanamo Bay and "black sites" all over the world. Coups are used to kill or exile democratically elected leaders, who are then replaced by puppet states. The new government almost always cooperates with Washington and offers favorable markets to U.S. corporations. In return they are given weapons and free rein to suppress dissent. Domestically the ruling class ensures

that millions of people are locked in cages, funding for public schools is cut, welfare programs for the poor are gutted, entire cities are gentrified, and hundreds of thousands of people are living on the street. This abuse and exploitation is practiced by the capitalists and their various governments across the globe. The system itself is founded on violence. It could not exist otherwise.

It is only when the masses of everyday people have had enough, when the conditions are so intolerable that they rise up against their oppressors, that violence is condemned. When oppressed peoples take a stand against the violence inflicted upon them - whether it is burning down the local headquarters campaigning for a racist billionaire, or occupying a pipeline, or destroying police cars - the men and women at the head of the most violent institutions on Earth suddenly bemoan the use of force. They beg for a non-violent expression of grievances after years of committing violence themselves. The ruling class is not moved by human suffering, their aversion for violence only surfaces when the violence directly threatens their system of

power. When the French peasants and sans-culottes overthrew King Louis XVI the feudal lords and kings of Europe were horrified by the violence of the masses and their guillotine. But their hearts were not moved by centuries of suffering caused by the French Monarchy. When Nat Turner led his rebellion through Virginia the slave owners were shocked by the killing of fellow slave owners and the burning of mansions, but they saw nothing wrong with the mass raping, maiming, and murdering of the black population.

Today capitalists and those loyal to them use violence to defend private property and corporate profits. They value the current system more than they value the millions of lives destroyed by the system.

It is violence in the defense of violence.

The violence of the oppressed is different. The oppressed use violence only at the last moment, when their protests have fallen on deaf ears. The oppressed use violence in the defense of their very existence.

It is violence in the defense of human dignity.

Letters

Welp

So, Trump won. Where does this put the emerging socialist current in the U.S? The Sanders tendency will be emboldened, but the illusion that

we can wield the Democratic Party in a way where we use it instead of vice versa needs to be predicted and fought tooth and nail. We may very well see a convergence of Bernouts and

Jacobin types. Strange days, comrades. Strange days.

- Maxx

Relax. Unite.

So now that Trump has been elected, I noticed varying degrees of shock and horror, particularly from comrades who claimed “it doesn’t matter who wins.” The current state of the American left is astounding; there’s so much potential for communists to organize, rebuild the labour movement, construct an independent communist party, and real potential to actually fight for state power! And so the attitude from the left to all this potential stuns me a bit. They throw it away. People are, more than ever, clearly and unequivocally looking for a political alternative to the standard bourgeois shit, and the Democrats have undoubtedly smashed any love the working class may have had for them. The Republicans are an absolute mess, and all these unhinged chickens are going to come home to roost sooner rather than later. So, with the situation so favorable to an independent

political alternative (*one that the Libertarians and Greens are bumbling in an ever so delightful fashion*) why aren’t the communists uniting into one party with a serious political program (*or: a plan, ‘a vision for a better society’, call it what you will*) for an independent proletarian government that can radically reshape society?

Any communist who’s serious about *politics*, and not merely abstract theory, will recognize the immense opportunity the left currently has. We need to be serious about uniting the existing independent communist organizations, and pulling in the disaffected militants and intellectuals burnt out – not just on the election – but on the strategic impotence of the existing ‘radical’ organizations. So many communists are calling for a protest, or trying to set up networks of solidarity, or trying to organize *something* – and

none of these are bad things – but without a communist party tying them together as a mass-scale political project, *these projects will go nowhere*. We can’t just have sectional struggles, we need to function in an organized national (at minimum!) way, with a clear national presence and message that can appeal to society as a whole.

We want to be a part of this process – we want to be at the head of this process – and any serious communist does too. I urge you to consider joining the Red Party, and if you find something in our program so objectionable you couldn’t possibly consider joining or merging with us, tell us why. We want to debate, we want to unite.

- Susie

Different Issues

National self-determination is a way for communists to engage with national questions as they exist. We want to overcome national oppression because the proletariat is a world class, but we don't want the proliferation of small states - or at least, those of us who realize tailing nationalism is a dead end don't want that.

The Red Party policy, as stated in the minimum program, is admittedly a little hazy on this, and can be read as conflating the need for radical local democracy with the larger-scale issue of self-determination. So the argument over how to apply self-determination - whether there really is a Black national question, for example (and I believe there isn't) - is a different issue than those cases where there is clearly an unresolved

national question, namely Puerto Rico as far as the U.S. is concerned. Here the best guarantor of voluntary unity, the best way to overcome the colonial relationship, is for those of us in the colonizing country to emphasize the right to separate while those in the subject nation fight for the closest unity circumstances allow.

- Gabriel Pierre

Party Update

Our numbers held steady for the most part last month, coming in at 397 website readers. Of course, since our last issue the Democratic Party has illustrated so spectacularly its failure to be an effective lesser evil - much less any kind of dented shield or, heaven forbid, a vehicle for socialism. The left needs to start taking politics seriously, to start

having real discussions (and yes, even arguments!) on what kind of strategy is needed to put independent working class politics back on the map. This month's letters column is a little more lively than normal, and we aim to make it even more so in the future: if you've been on the fence about contributing, now's the time!

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Red Party is a U.S. political organization that fights for working class unity in a single socialist party-movement. A united organization, based on a Marxist program, would turn politics as we know it upside down, injecting the labor and social movements with a renewed sense of confidence and strength.

- * A united workers' party-movement would combine political action with economic and social action, including running socialist candidates for office, protests, strikes, co-operatives and mutual aid societies.
- * Our organization has the word party in its name, but we recognize that in the world-historic sense there is no revolutionary party in the U.S. today. Instead we have a fractured array of competing sects organized on a bureaucratic basis. Their work is hampered by hyper-activism with little to no long-term strategy, lack of internal democracy and lack of deep roots in the working class. The Red Party organizes day-to-day resistance against injustices spawned by capitalism within the context of strengthening working class organization and building support for socialism.
- * Marxists operate through democratic centralism. Through ongoing debate we seek to achieve unity in action

and a common world outlook. As long as they support agreed actions, members have the right to speak openly and form factions to advance their views.

- * Marxists oppose all imperialist wars and interventions, from Iraq to Syria, but recognize that ending war permanently means ending capitalism.
- * Marxists are internationalists. We strive for the closest unity of the working class and oppressed peoples everywhere. We oppose nationalism in all its forms. We advocate a new revolutionary workers' International. Without an International (a world party), the struggle against Capital is weakened. Capital organizes across borders; so too must we.
- * Marxists support industrial unions (organizing workers by industry) rather than the more narrow trade union structure. We support the highest possible level of pan-American union coordination for workers' rights. Bureaucratic leadership and class collaboration, particularly support for the Democratic Party, in the unions must be replaced with democratic revitalization and class independence.
- * Marxists are champions of the oppressed. Women's oppression, racism, national oppression and LGBT/QI oppression are just as much working class questions as are

higher pay, union rights and struggles for quality health, housing and education. Marxists demand self-determination for American Indian nations, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and all other territories.

- * World capitalism, based on exploitation and a reckless quest for profit, is increasingly putting the future of humanity at risk through war and climate change. World capitalism must give way to world socialism - a society based on freedom, solidarity and a radical extension of democracy.
- * Marxists oppose Stalinism, a system of bureaucratic dictatorship that rules in the name of socialism the same way the capitalist class claims to rule in the name of liberty.
- * Socialism itself is the first stage of the global transition to communism - a society where war, exploitation, money, classes and states exist only as museum pieces. Communism is the negation of class society and provides the maximum individual and collective freedom.

If you agree with these principles, join the Red Party!

red-party.com | (319) 654-4621
party@red-party.com
facebook.com/redpartyusa