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MASSIVE PROTEST VOTE PROPELS LÓPEZ OBRADOR TO VICTORY IN MEXICO

Rights for all only possible with fundamental change

by **Tim Shenk**

Everybody's got a right to live.

It seems like a simple statement, one everyone could get behind. Children have a right to eat and learn and develop, in homes and neighborhoods free of violence. Everyone has a right not to be homeless in a country where there are 11 empty housing units for each person who needs a place to stay.

Yet our economic system has been based historically on freedoms, not rights. The freedom to choose whether to work under the conditions set by the employer. The freedom of the employer to hire, or not, based on his or her own criteria. And, if you won't or can't work, the freedom to starve.

In an expanding economy, this arrangement can work relatively well, at least for some. The post-World War II era was an opportunity for many, mostly white people, to secure good jobs and join a growing middle class.

Now, however, the job market is shrinking. Business leaders and researchers have acknowledged that nearly half of U.S. jobs are vulnerable to automation in the next 10 to 20 years.

Automation is already a necessity in a competitive business environment, and this trend will only accelerate. Yet replacing humans with machines creates a crisis in sales. People who aren't working can't buy what's being produced. Lagging sales trigger slowdowns in production, which trigger more cost-cutting measures like layoffs and union busting.

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival lays bare these unsettling realities by bringing to the national consciousness the stories of those who the system has locked up, locked out and left behind. This issue of the CUSLAR

Newsletter is an attempt to present a few of these stories for collective reflection and study.

Longtime CUSLAR members and readers of this publication will attest that this has been CUSLAR's task for over 50 years. Our brothers and sisters in Latin America have long insisted on the horrific consequences of this economic model backed by the deadly force of dictatorial states. Now with 140 million poor and low-income people in the U.S. fighting to make ends meet, it's more clear that the crisis is global and not just a problem for "underdeveloped" countries.

The economic system as it exists now, with its obligation to pursue profit above all else, follows a set of laws stronger than the goodwill of any progressive business leader or politician. Piecemeal solutions cannot solve this crisis. That's why the Poor People's Campaign's interlocking demands to address systemic racism, poverty, militarism and ecological devastation -- together -- are so powerful: they point to the need to question the very roots of the poverty-producing, violence-inducing system we live in.

The current economic model of social production for private profit can never meet needs of the majority. Any system that doesn't serve humanity has outlasted its usefulness and must be transformed.

How will it be done? The Poor People's Campaign has given us a model of nonviolent moral fusion direct action to mobilize across

geography and across historic lines of division.

In addition, Campaign co-chair Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II has called for "citizenship schools for the 21st Century." These will be spaces for learning the strategy and tactics of movement building and will draw on the rich experiences of the U.S. civil rights movement's citizenship schools.

Marching together, raising demands and risking arrest together, are important, as are taking care of each other. And whether we win or lose today, an engaged study of history and social theory will ensure we're more prepared for the social justice work of tomorrow.

Tim Shenk is the editor of the CUSLAR Newsletter and a member of the New York State Coordinating Committee of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival.

On the cover: Thousands from every region of the United States converged in Washington, D.C. on June 23 to culminate 40 initial Days of Action of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival.

Photo: Steve Pavey, stevepavey.com.
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The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival makes intersectional demands Thousands rally simultaneously in 40 state capitals, 5,000 risk arrest in nonviolent direct action over 6 weeks



VOICES of the Poor People's Campaign

Pages 3 to 11 are dedicated to magnifying the voices of participants in the Poor People's Campaign's initial 40 Days of Action in May and June. What follows are mostly transcripts of speeches at rallies and events. We have preserved as much as possible the emotion the speakers transmitted, while editing for length and clarity in print. -Ed.



Photo: Mabel León.

"A lot of children are going to their bed hungry. For a country this rich to have so many people homeless and poor, it's immoral and it's wrong!"

GG Morgan of New York City, at left, spoke to 500 gathered in Albany, NY for the first rally of the NYS Poor People's Campaign on May 14. Buses converged on the state capital from New York City, Buffalo and Ithaca.



Tanya Grant

1199 SEIU

Excerpts from a June 4 speech in Albany, NY

I represent healthcare workers across New York State. In my travels, those who take care of others often can't afford health coverage themselves. They work 2 and 3 jobs because they can't afford the health insurance offered by their employer. They have to work and take care of the vulnerable while in a vulnerable position themselves.

That's because the healthcare industry is about the dollar. Not one of the institutions' owners ever worry about going to see a doctor, or taking off work for an injury, or being able to provide healthcare for their children. I am here in support of the Poor People's Campaign because that's everybody

in our community who's not part of the 1 percent. Whether you want to admit it or not, that's who you are. If you have to make a decision whether to stay home and take care of a sick kid, or go to work so you can pay your rent, guess what? You're poor!

No working person is out there working just for the art of work. We work because we can't afford to live day to day.

If you're making barely above minimum wage, how can you afford to pay a health premium that's \$152 a week to cover your family? You can't! That's your whole paycheck and then some.

I'm here to say that this is not just your problem or your neighbor's problem. It's all of our problem.

A message from Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis National Co-Chair

Poor People's Campaign:

A National Call for Moral Revival



CUSLAR has been a key partner in building toward the Poor People's Campaign for years. You have been a consistent voice in our movement in reminding U.S.-based activists that we have a lot to learn from our sisters and brothers in Latin America.

You have connected us with leaders with experience in struggles for justice from around the hemisphere, from Mexico to the Dominican Republic to Brazil. The networks of organizations of the poor and dispossessed in the U.S. that have come together to form the Poor People's Campaign have benefited by CUSLAR's facilitation of strategic dialogue around militarism, migration, land rights and spirituality rooted in social struggle. Thank you.

VIDEOS

Skylight Pictures

made several short videos of the Poor People's Campaign's actions in Albany, NY. Watch at facebook.com/NYSPPC.



Peter Carroll Productions made a five-minute video on the May 14 rally in Albany.

Watch it at vimeo.com/276259897.



CUSLAR is a Cornell University-based organization, founded in 1965, which seeks to promote a greater understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean. CUSLAR members are a diverse group of people united in our concern about the role of the United States in the social, political and economic affairs of the region. CUSLAR supports the right of the people of Latin America to self-determination and control over decisions that affect their lives and communities.

CUSLAR is a project of the Center for Transformative Action.

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'No liberation without addressing militarism'



The following is a speech Brittany Ramos DeBarros gave in June 23 in Washington, DC in front of thousands at the national rally organized by the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival.



Photo: Skylight Pictures

Brittany Ramos DeBarros

I'm a woman, I'm white, I'm Latina, I'm Black, I'm queer, and I'm a combat veteran. As a person existing at the intersection of these identities, I carry a grave conviction in my core that there can be no economic, racial or gender liberation without addressing the militarism that is strangling the empathy and morality out of our society. For decades we have been lulled into complacency and inattention as our drones have obliterated weddings, funerals, religious ceremonies, ordinary homes and ordinary people.

It is no mistake that we are waging war in at least seven countries and all of them are mostly impoverished, Black, brown and Muslim countries. The same systems that shame and dehumanize us based on our skin

color or documentation status or bank account here, want us to believe that those injustices have nothing to do with us. They want us to believe that the precious lives of our soldiers are being spent for the protection of our freedoms.

I spent a year witnessing the bravery and the beauty of the Afghan people, men and women, fathers and mothers, risking their lives to overcome oppressive organizations that we funded and enabled. I cannot forget their faces. This is a racial justice issue. This is a gender justice issue. This is an economic justice issue.

We begrudge the poor the pennies we give them to eat and survive,

but cheer for the nearly \$600 billion annually we spend on defense. The military industrial complex is literally corporate greed weaponized. The United States government is the largest weapons dealer on the planet and the largest user of those weapons.

From the militarized equipment in which our police forces and federal agencies are clad to the large percentage of current and former soldiers conditioned for war and then hired to occupy our streets to keep peace, is it any wonder that our neighborhoods are treated like combat zones and our neighbors like enemy combatants?

From the toxic masculinity that objectifies our bodies as nothing more than weapons or toys, to the nationalism that tears us away from the true patriotism that is demanding that America live up to the dream that it has always been.

These wars are immoral. Profiting off of killing is immoral. It is time to stand up, and we won't be silent anymore!

DeBarros's social media protest of U.S. military draws wide support

Brittany Ramos DeBarros, a national organizer in the Poor People's Campaign and active in the New York State campaign, is a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve assigned to the Psychological Operations Command.

She has drawn on her own experience in the military to highlight state terrorism inflicted by the Armed Forces around the world as well as the high poverty and suicide rates of soldiers and veterans.

When DeBarros went on active duty in July, she scheduled a post on Twitter each day in protest, with the hashtag #DropTheMIC. MIC refers to the military industrial complex, and the hashtag is used by About Face: Veterans Against the War, an organization DeBarros is part of.

Army Times caught wind of DeBarros's posts and ran a story alleging an

investigation into her conduct. Then *Business Insider* followed up on July 23 with the headline, "An Army officer is publicly protesting the US government's 'war machine' -- and it's gotten the Army's attention."

DeBarros has received hundreds of comments of support on social media from fellow combat veterans and others who follow Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's assessment that the U.S. government has become "the largest purveyor of violence on the planet."

CUSLAR adds our voice in thanking Capt. DeBarros for the courage to speak up according to Army Values such as honor, integrity and selfless service. -Ed.

The DOD has transferred \$5.4 billion in military equipment to state/local police agencies.

Studies show as police gain more military equipment they tend to kill more civilians, sometimes up to 129% more

#DropTheMIC



Sources: bit.ly/DTMSources

Approx. 45% of kids on military bases are eligible for free or reduce cost lunch.

About the same % of the DOD budget went to corporations.

#DropTheMIC



Sources: bit.ly/DTMSources

The cancer rate in Iraq is at least 40 times higher now than before the first US invasion.

Logs show birth defect rates 14x higher than Hiroshima & Nagasaki experienced.

#DropTheMIC



Sources: bit.ly/DTMSources

Above are three of Capt. Brittany Ramos DeBarros's social media posts revealing facts that made the U.S. Army uncomfortable.

'I am only well if you are well'



Aly Wane

Despite the fact that we are living in the age of Trump, I am still undocumented and unafraid. I was born in Senegal, originally brought here legally when I was 9, am now 41 years old and am still trying to become a citizen, which should give you a sense of how broken our immigration system is. But I'm not simply here to share my story with you.

What I want to share with you instead is what I have learned in my organizing journey, namely the power of intersectional solidarity and intersectional struggle. This is what I have learned in a nutshell. This is a proverb from the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya, and I want you to repeat after me: "I am only well if you are well."

You see, when I first started organizing for undocumented immigrants like myself, folks facing the cruel deportation machinery that is the result of bipartisan efforts that go back to at least the 1996 laws passed by none other than liberal icon Bill Clinton, I thought that I was only fighting for my rights and the rights of other immigrants.

But then I realized that though I didn't have health care, many of my US citizen friends didn't have access to health care either. And then I realized that though I could scarcely

find legal work, the working class in this country had been abandoned by both parties, and that we are in the midst of dealing with the results of 30 to 40 years of neoliberal politics which only benefit the 1 percent. And then I realized that though I was heartbroken by the number of my immigrant friends wallowing in detention centers due to a so-called "War on Terror" which has turned migrants into "potential terrorists," many of my mostly Black and brown U.S. citizen friends were the victims of a prison industrial complex that has been thriving thanks to the so-called "War on Drugs" which has de facto criminalized a whole section of the population.

What I realized was the wisdom of that old proverb: "I am only well if you are well." I am only whole and healthy if you are healthy. I am only uncaged if you are uncaged. I will have access to the rights I'm owed, the rights to work and love in a country I've lived in for 25 years, when

you have full access to your rights because you are my neighbor and I am my brother's and sister's keeper. This is how we win.

Not by division and demonization, but by solidarity, empathy, and a deep commitment to dismantling systems of oppression. There are no easy solutions ahead. No magic solution to dig us out of this moment of history. My hope today rests in you. And me. And our capacity to remain human, loving and connected in this era of demonization and oppression. We shall overcome.



Photo: Mabel Leon.

Undocumented activist and Syracuse, NY resident Aly Wane addresses the Poor People's Campaign rally in Albany, NY on May 21.



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Confronting the four evils

Systemic racism, poverty, militarism and ecological devastation cannot be defeated separately

Manolo de los Santos, pictured below, visited Elmira and Ithaca, NY on March 22-23 as part of the launch of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival in the region.



Below is an edited transcript of his Ithaca presentation, where more than 100 gathered to share stories and build relationships to confront the "four evils" of systemic racism, poverty, militarism and ecological devastation.

In addition to de los Santos, participants from the Multicultural Resource Center, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier and Warrior Writers / Combat Paper shared lived experiences and art that represented their struggles against systemic injustices. The event was supported by a Cornell Engaged Opportunity Grant.



Photos: Mabel Leon

Manolo de los Santos

Edited transcript of his presentation at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca, NY on March 23.

I'm not terribly surprised to see so many people here today, but it really does feel good to know that we're not alone.

Coming here today makes you part of a bigger movement, bigger than what we've been able to imagine in our lifetimes.

One thing we were talking about earlier today is the fact that we've been robbed. Not only of our land and labor, but of our shared sense of human dignity. These folks think they're very smart because they have spent the last 500 years trying to keep us apart. They decided first that some of us were subhuman because of the color of our skin. And because of that, they decided we could work for nothing. And some people felt that was an infallible system that could never be broken down. They continued to divide us over our gender, or over, on what boat did you get here? And the lines of division continue.



Manolo de los Santos

Every other day they come up with a new way of keeping us apart.

So to change society, we've got to stand together. Of course we've got to stand together! Didn't we learn that in kindergarten?

Yet in the history of this nation, that has not worked very well. Look at what happened to Martin Luther King, Jr. when he tried to bring people together.

I'm talking about when Dr. King said we have to shift from being a civil rights movement to a human rights movement. He said, it cost this government nothing to integrate lunch counters. But it costs a whole lot to give, not just

Black people, but all poor people in this country some human dignity. That cannot be resolved with the stroke of a pen. Dr. King projected that it would cost billions of dollars.

When he was trying to get people together, they killed him. He got killed for supporting striking workers in Memphis, Tennessee, who were striking for decent wages.

The lesson there is, if you come together, there's trouble. But I say, I like some trouble! It seems like a lot of

people in this room like trouble because you all came here today.

And some of this trouble builds on a legacy of many people. When I talk to young people about why we're building the Poor People's Campaign today, I tell them, back in the South, there was this group of people called the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Anyone ever heard of these crazy people?

They were crazy. These sharecroppers were fighting for the right to land, to farm, to feed their families, to not live on starvation wages. They decided something unimaginable in the 1930s. They decided to organize Black and white farmers together. They were so crazy that people accused them of being Communist.

But this is not a question of who might be Communist or who is a Democrat or who is a Republican. It's a question of, which side of history are you on? Are you for life, and for the right of everyone to live?

In the 1960s, in Chicago, there was another crazy group of people: the Black Panthers. They realized they could organize Black people day and night, but it wasn't going to change systemic racism. So they actually started organizing with Appalachian immigrants, white folks from the mountains of West Virginia, who had come looking for work. The Panthers were organizing poor white folk, poor Latino folk, poor Asian folk, poor Black folk. This original Rainbow Coalition scared the hell out of the U.S. power structure. And before you know it, our brother

Manolo de los Santos is part of the Popular Education Project (PEP) and is the executive director of The People's Forum, a new social movement incubator space in New York City.

Fred Hampton was assassinated by the FBI.

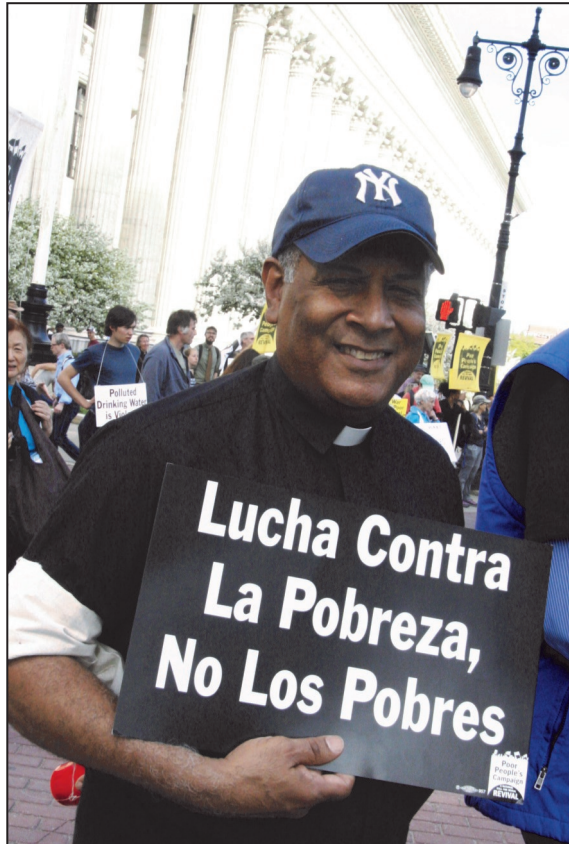
They've tried to kill this dream so many times before. I say this not to scare you or to depress you, but to remind you of the real potential of the unity of the poor, that is, building the unity of the people at the bottom. Our opponents are very creative. The way they oppress Black men is not the same way they oppress white women, or the same they oppress young queer people or poor whites. We all get oppressed in different ways. But that means that we live in a system in which we are all getting oppressed.

It was through the Poor People's Campaign that I discovered poverty has a lot of faces. Sometimes it is very convenient for the power structure to say that poverty is only a Black and Latino problem. It's convenient for them to talk to one group and point the finger at another group and say, those people are the problem. Yet when you go around this country and study the statistics, the majority of poor people in this country are white. I grew up thinking that all white people were rich, and then I came up to Elmira and Ithaca and I learned something.

If you think you can fight by yourself, I admire you. If you think you're going to topple oppression by yourself, amen! That's amazing. I don't have that kind of energy. I'd rather believe that we're living in a moment in which the unity of the people in this room has the capacity and the power to transform the world. And I'm not talking about, let's all get together and vote and elect a new government. If that happens, great. But I'm more interested in building a movement.

I do not expect us to walk out of this room holding hands. This is not a Kumbaya moment, my brothers and sisters. We cannot expect to forget what divides us. I do not recommend that you ever forget that. Because we're forced to forget, and people are made invisible. But when you are in a burning house, are you going to question who's going to be the person to take you out of the fire? I don't have the luxury of that. I'm counting on each and every one of you to get us out of this burning house, which is America.

This country is an a deep moral crisis. It didn't start with Trump in the White House -- this crisis has its roots a long time even before the United States was a nation. From the time of colonial establishment, something is going on wrong in this place.



Images from May 14, the first day of the Poor People's Campaign's initial 40 Days of Action in Albany, NY. Above, Fr. Luis Barrios of New York City calls for a "fight against poverty, not the poor."

We have the opportunity to change it. The only way we're going to do it is through the unity of the bottom. I am proud to be part of the bottom along with you. How are we going to unite? Only by coming together and fighting. Struggle is the only place where we will actually come together. Struggle is the only place where we began to see that despite the differences, there is one big thing that brings us together.

It's the story of pain that we all know, the pain that our children don't have the right to quality education, the pain that some of our children go hungry sometimes, the fear that our brothers and sisters will get deported, the pain of knowing that there are 4 million households in this country who do not have clean water at home. We have the pain of still hearing stories about people who are basically condemned to die because they went to public school built on a contaminated Superfund site. The pain of men and women who are

kicked out of their homes and made homeless because circumstances beyond their control. Raise your hand if you have felt this pain. This is the pain that unites us.

I am not going to lie to you and say that as a young Afro-Latino man living in New York City that I am not afraid every day of my life, even up here in Ithaca, which some people think is a racial paradise.

I wake up every day thinking it might be my last. But I have also learned that the violence that is produced by these police departments is the same violence that keeps me hungry and that denies my access to healthcare.

There are many ways to kill people, and the system is good at it. We can never forget the different ways this violence affects us. Where we are trying to go requires us to do this together, and I need to know if y'all are with me. Are people with me?

Our right to humanity and dignity is not just a lofty ideal. It is real. It is as real as all of our own personal stories. I want to live in a world where kids who live in the South Bronx like me, don't have to go to bed thinking about whether the police is going to come to the building and kill people, or wake up thinking, what are we going to eat today? Or not see their parents because they are working two or three jobs.

I grew up in the South Bronx, the poorest congressional district in the United States, and yet I never heard anyone admit to being poor. Most of the kids I grew up with in the South Bronx used to say they were middle class. People thought that when you talked about poverty, you were calling them a bad name.

Poor is not an insult, because poverty is not our fault. It's not our failing. It's a position in an unequal society that we've been put in -- we're busting our tails, but we can't make ends meet. We are the poor! There's no shame in admitting that.

It is the great shame and immorality of the system

we're living in, that it can't provide for the majority of us under its current rules. The system can't recognize our worth as human beings, so we have to realize our own worth, our own value, and the possibility of one day that value being used for the benefit of everyone. I know this is a crazy thought, but I believe in fighting for a world in which everybody's got a right to live. Thank you.

'Poor' is not an insult, because poverty is not our fault. It is the great shame and immorality of the system we're living in, that it can't provide for the majority of us under its current rules.



'Immigrant families will be a key in next

Interview with Fernando García

When the Border Network for Human Rights started as a community organization, we were afraid of deportation, but more than that, we were eager to actually be recognized as full members of society.

Immigrant families are facing systems of oppression, not only the immigration system, but healthcare, labor rights, housing, and education. In an immigrant household, all of the worst parts of the system are embedded, because they are not only undocumented, but they have the worst healthcare or no healthcare at all. They don't have money to pay to send their children to college. The jobs are for low pay and sometimes half-paid jobs. The housing and public services are the worst in some of these communities.

So for us, it was obvious that our agenda was not only for an immigration deal but actually more than that. That's how we started framing our issues around human rights.



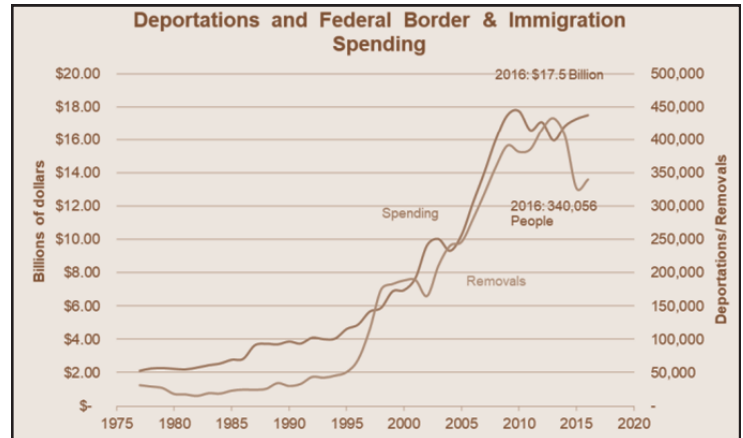
Fernando García, founder and director of the Border Network for Human Rights, a leading human rights advocacy and immigration reform organization, with 7,000 members in West Texas and Southern New Mexico.

EXCERPTS

Read the full
interview at
kairoscenter.org

We want immigrants to be legally recognized, and we want immigrants to be integrated with rights into a better society that encompasses all of these points of struggle shared by communities that are not immigrants. We need to connect with other people with the same conditions to fight together. We are not an immigrant rights organization. We are human rights organization that is fighting for changing society for everybody.

A strategy of war was being implemented



at the border from San Diego, California to Brownsville, Texas, from the border to 100 miles inside the interior of the country, along 3,000 miles of borders. After the de-escalation of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, military contractors like Boeing, Lockheed Martin and others came to the border because they saw that there was an enormous opportunity to sell weapons systems to border enforcement.

We have militarized communities that in any other scenario would not be accepted. It would not be accepted in Chicago or New York or Michigan. However, this level of militarization is accepted here in the name of national security, and also

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'We need to correct the immoral narrative that condemns the poor'

because its origin was a false narrative of danger that immigrants represent. They distorted the narrative by saying we're fighting drugs and then that we're fighting terrorism, but the consequences fall on families seeking a better life.

The great contradiction is not letting people move across borders but letting merchandise move across the border. The main engine of border economies is their relationship with Mexico. Products are made on the Mexican side or the U.S. side, with one common denominator, which is low wages. We believe this has to do with racism. The racist narrative that "we have to protect the border because this is an invasion of brown immigrants," makes possible a situation of exploitation.

I believe immigrants and immigrant families will have to be a key component of the next social movement in the United States, because what is embedded in immigrant families is the fight against all of the systems. The challenge has always been how we connect those fights. How do we effectively connect with others based on systems of oppression that affect all of us? We also need to envision new systems that we want to create for a better society.

A most important fight is for the decriminalization of immigrants and other poor communities. The second one is the demilitarization of our communities. That means that military strategies don't have a place in U.S. policies.

Now we have communities that are expendable. We want a true democracy in the United States where money doesn't play an important role in making government. The fight for immigration reform is a fight for a better life. It's a fight against poverty and racism in the United States. I think we're ready.

Fernando García contributed this interview to *The Souls of Poor Folk Audit of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival*.

Interview by Aaron Noffke of the Institute for Policy Studies. Transcript by CUSLAR's Adriana Guzmán.

Sources of graph on previous page: Office of Management and Budget; U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Suzanne Flierl Krull

I live in the western part of New York's Southern Tier, and was raised in affluence and privilege.

Throughout my adult life, however, my household has been low-income or poor most of the time. I have had to make the same difficult decisions that other poor people like me face throughout the U.S. every day. The struggle to survive against a system that keeps us poor is real, and it's hard, and it's riddled with injustice.

But the struggle is made even harder by the narrative of condemnation the poor face. This immoral narrative says we are greedy, lazy sponges that don't give anything back. But that's not true! Eight out of ten adult SNAP recipients who are neither disabled nor elderly have worked within in the last year, and more than half of us have worked in the last month. Many of the poor work multiple jobs at immorally low wages and still can't pay their bills. That's not lazy, that's not greedy, and that's not right!

Eleven million of us pay more than a third of our income on housing: housing that is frequently unstable, hard to find, and often unsafe. There is not a single county in America where a minimum-wage worker can afford a two-bedroom apartment. That's not right!

The immoral narrative also says that the poor just take and take, while the wealthy earn everything they get. That's not true! Our government spends billions of dollars giving subsidies and tax breaks to the upper middle class and to the wealthy, and they treat corporations like rich individuals. All the while, low-income workers have to beg, march, and protest to demand \$15 and a union. That's not right!

The immoral narrative tells us that single urban moms and uninvolved dead-beat dads, especially Black dads, are the cause of poverty in America. That's not true! In 2014, only 9 percent of low-income, urban moms were single during their children's first five years, and Black fathers are actually more likely to spend time with their children each day than white fathers.



Suzanne Flierl Krull, director of the Cuba Cultural Center in Cuba, NY, spoke on the State Legislature's "Million Dollar Staircase" in Albany, NY on June 18. The rally was part of the Poor People's Campaign's initial 40 Days of Action where tens of thousands from 40 states demanded justice in statehouses.

The immoral narrative says if we would just get an education, then we'd be all right. That's not true! Outrageous college costs keep graduates buried in debt. Fewer than half of the college graduates who have student loan debt can afford to own houses. Many graduates can't keep up with their loans. As of September 2017, millions of graduates had not made a payment on \$144 billion of federal student loan debt for at least 9 months because they lacked income.

We need to correct this immoral narrative. The truth is that it's not the poor that are responsible for poverty. It's the system that creates poverty, and it's the system that keeps people poor. The system of poverty creation keeps Black, Brown, and Indigenous people poor. And while systemic poverty disproportionately hurts people of color, it also keeps over 17 million white people poor.

In the Southern Tier, I run a nonprofit that works in the struggle to provide survival programming to poor and otherwise oppressed people. We are a group of folks who know struggle, and who are still struggling against a system that keeps us marginalized. But as we struggle, we're also providing basic needs to our communities. We're making a difference. But survival programming isn't enough. We need justice. All of us who know oppression need to unite, and we're doing that in the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. We're crossing over the things that have divided us and that have kept us separate, and we're working together. We're building a new, unsettling force to end oppression. We are here, we're not going anywhere, and we will be back!

ONLINE

Gloria Lemus-Sánchez: Invisible no more

Ithaca, NY resident Gloria Lemus-Sánchez shared her story with CUSLAR students this past spring, including her arrival from Mexico, making a life with four children in Ithaca, and the challenges of pursuing citizenship. CUSLAR's Evelyn Sánchez transcribed her talk. Read it online at:

cuslar.org/2018/08/03/lemus-sanchez



Jews and rednecks fight for liberation together

by Aaron Scott

I'm a second-generation preacher and a third-generation organizer. I grew up in rural New York State. My mother and grandmother were union reps, my grandmother was interrogated by the feds on suspicion of communist activity during the McCarthy era. This was before she really started organizing. My dad pastored poor Methodist churches in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and in small rust belt towns.

The first time I remember hearing one of my classmates call for Jews to be put to death, I was twelve and sitting in the back row of English class. I was seventeen when one of my friends handed me a copy of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," after we'd had conversations trying to understand the poverty of our region.

I was propagandized with hardcore antisemitism years before I had any real relationships with Jewish people. So when I think about the poisoned groundwater I grew up in, and the way I try to orient myself in fighting antisemitism, I don't come with many illusions about where this nation is at. I come from a place of repentance and in a spirit of atonement.

I work as an organizer now in rural Grays Harbor County, Washington, specifically in Westport and Aberdeen, with people experiencing poverty, homelessness and



Aaron Scott, right, organizer at Chaplains on the Harbor and member of the National Steering Committee of the Poor People's Campaign, participated in the Poor People's Campaign tour and vigil for housing in Aberdeen, Washington, home of Chaplains on the Harbor on June 11.

In the spring, Scott spoke at a Shabbat service at Kadima Reconstructionist Community in Seattle, at the invitation of Rabbi David Basior, also part of the Campaign. This article is the text of that message.

incarceration. Most of our time at Chaplains on the Harbor is spent on projects of survival and on community building. Our ultimate goal is the full abolition of poverty, so we also do popular education on the root causes of our community's suffering, and we put our community — which is primarily poor whites (Christian and non-religious) — in direct conversation and relationships with other struggling communities across racial, ethnic, geographic and religious differences.

work is that material support and deep relationships are our most effective tools. We don't initiate counter-recruitment by handing out pamphlets — we initiate it by feeding people, distributing Narcan, offering sanctuary inside our church to people with outstanding warrants, and visiting our incarcerated members.

That's because as real and longstanding as the violence is on the ground, if you know how to crack through, people's capacity for solidarity is greater by far.

One thing that has become clear to us in doing this counter-recruitment work is the reason why poor communities — maybe particularly poor white communities — are so heavily propagandized with antisemitism. In many ways it's the same reason we've been so heavily propagandized with racism and xenophobia: our communities are ripe for class revolt. Once the rednecks who make up our base come into contact with Black Panthers and veterans of the Civil Rights Movement, and realize their common experiences of trauma, grief, and disenfranchisement, they become deeply animated and deeply agitated. The state and the ruling class will aim to undermine and repress this at any cost. That's because as real and longstanding as the violence is on the ground, if you know how to crack through, people's capacity for solidarity is greater by far.

In our work supporting homeless encampment residents fighting the city of Aberdeen's sweeps, we have literally watched street kids with swastika tattoos fall in line under the leadership of young Black homeless women, on the basis shared struggle and interests.

Last spring, a group of our millennial members on lock-down at the Grays Harbor County Jail decided on their own to fast and



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study the scriptures during Holy Week. They did this across racialized gang lines, and reported their group's diversity to our priest over the phone with a lot of pride — as a group they were not only multiracial, but also interfaith: atheists, Christians, one Buddhist, “and one kid is even Jewish!” The passage they latched onto was Isaiah 58:12 because, they figured, as young people raised by the Harbor's streets, they were the most qualified to be “restorers of the streets to live in.”

My coworker at Chaplains on the Harbor, Mashyla Buckmaster, a former street kid and now a single mom in Section 8, spoke at the national launch of the Poor People's Campaign in December. She said,

I'm joining the Poor People's Campaign because I need a movement that's as tough as I am ... Some of you might be suspicious about a Grays Harbor County person getting up in front of this crowd, thinking 'Aren't they just a bunch of rednecks out there?' Hell yes, we're rednecks. We're radical rednecks. We're hillbillies for the liberation of all people. 'We are the living reminder that when they threw out their white trash, they didn't burn it.' We're here to stand shoulder to shoulder with anybody taking up this campaign, and trust me, we are the kind of scrappy you want on your side in a fight.

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival is a moral movement

from the bottom, for the transformation of this whole society. We are bringing together groups like mine with faith communities like yours because unity and organization are the only way we are ever going to crawl out of the hell we're in here and now.

We are bringing together groups like mine with faith communities like yours because unity and organization are the only way we are going to crawl out of the hell we're in.

build a disciplined mass movement instead. We are not taking policy positions but moral positions. We are calling for 40 days of nonviolent direct action this spring in moral protest of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, and ecological devastation.

We are holding the line as a moral mass movement because that is how we will win. The abolition of slavery in this country was not won by platforms and policy wonks. It was won by the likes of Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass,

Basically, we are trying to take Jethro's advice to Moses seriously: “The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (Exodus 18:18). Stop trying to be the Lord's sole ambassador, and

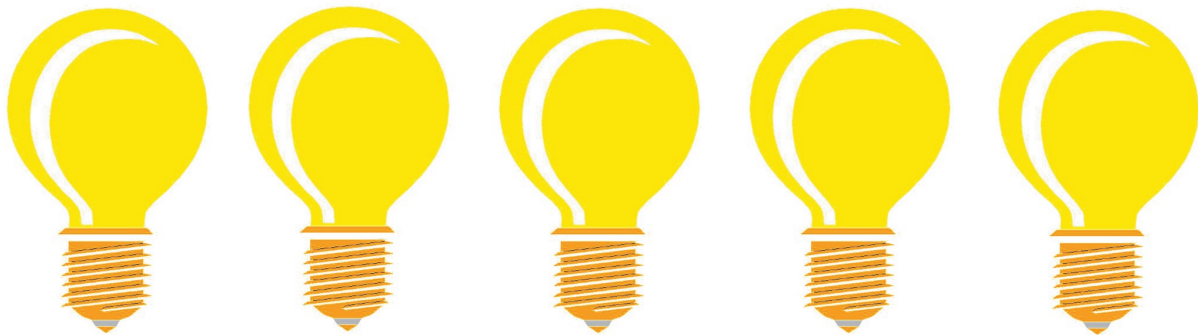
John Brown, and countless faith communities who poured their resources into and risked their necks via direct action for the Underground Railroad and the cause of emancipation.

I want to invite all of you to formally join the Campaign, which you can do by filling out the pledge.

As a matter of long-haul movement building, though, I want to make another invitation. You know that Grays Harbor County is both Trump and Skinhead territory. If you all at Kadima ever do us the honor of coming out to visit, we will do our part to protect you. Chaplains on the Harbor has a base of about 500 local people: hillbillies, street punks, Native elders, single moms, trailer park revolutionaries, sex workers, and most of the population at the county jail.

We don't control the local political scene (yet), but we know somebody who knows somebody at every back alley and underpass, and while we are cash poor we are rich in street credibility and skilled at street protection. We want you to know that we, as radical rednecks, are here for Jewish people. We are ready to ride for Jewish people. We hope you're willing to ride with us.

Aaron Scott is an organizer at Chaplains on the Harbor in rural Grays Harbor County, Washington State. He is also the Missioner for Anti-Poverty Organizing in the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia, a member of the Washington State PPC Coordinating Committee, and serves of the National Steering Committee for the Poor People's Campaign. Aaron is happily married to The Rev. Shelly Fayette and proud papa to baby Moses. This article was first published at kairoscenter.org.



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López Obrador's landslide victory in Mexico: Insurrection at the polls

Andrés Manuel López Obrador, at right, got more than 30 million votes, over twice his closest competitor, in the presidential elections in Mexico on July 1. This landslide result, the author argues, made it impossible for the incumbent party and Mexican oligarchy to commit fraud.



by Iván Martínez Zazueta

On July 1, the people of Mexico rebelled at the polls. People went out to vote en masse and defeated the fraud apparatus, the fear campaign, misinformation, media manipulation, smear tactics, the purchase and coercion of votes, alteration of ballot boxes, intimidation, violence and, above all, despair. This electoral rebellion demonstrated what the people are capable of when they mobilize.

The overwhelming mobilization, before and during election day, nullified every possibility of fraud and forced the oligarchy to come to the negotiation table.

Many polls and other manifestations of massive citizen support for the candidacy of Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) would have meant an eventual popular uprising in case of electoral fraud.

After the overwhelming electoral result, which exceeded all expectations, the business leaders, who had previously shown a strong opposition to the "left" coalition and had actively participated in a dirty war against López Obrador, called meetings for reconciliation upon the defeat of their preferred candidates.

The magnitude of the electoral avalanche forced the de facto powers to subordinate themselves to a less desirable scenario, to a terrain not suited to their interests. In this way, the people managed to snatch a victory from the powerful on their own home field. However, this triumph was only partial, and the people themselves

didn't lead it.

The massive vote for López Obrador was an expression of social discontent, of being fed up. It was a vow of hope, conviction, punishment and even resignation. It was a major way in which, within the framework of the electoral process, Mexican citizens demonstrated the repudiation of the current government and the rejection of neoliberal policies, inequality, violence and impunity. The historical

accumulation of grievances from the popular sectors turned into a massive drive to the polls and radically transformed the composition of political-electoral forces at the level of the state.

At the same time, the triumph of AMLO was a product of the struggles and social movements that preceded it.

Although a large part of the so-called popular bloc does not feel represented and

even rejects this project, the victory at the polls is the result of the action and omission of thousands of resistance and social organizations, which around Mexico have faced the onslaught of the oligarchy and have attempted to develop alternatives to the neoliberal model. We say AMLO's victory is a result of actions, on the one hand, because these movements, while trying to or not, actively contributed to the political consciousness and social terrain that opened the door to triumph. On the other hand, we say the electoral victory is a result of omissions, because was also a consequence of popular movements' inability to build a viable alternative who managed to channel discontent, hopes and social potential towards a political project that disputed the oligarchy's power. The electoral victory is a river with water from many streams.

The popular forces weren't the only protagonists in the winning coalition. In the next administration there are also elite interests, pacts with diverse sectors of the oligarchy and highly contradictory alliances. It is these forces which most recently have grabbed leadership and who stand to negotiate the political transition as



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conservatively as possible toward scenarios that benefit the interests they represent.

These are the forces that seek to suppress people's leadership in the recomposition of forces and erase the narrative of a people's victory at the polls.

This is evident in statements that point to the non-modification of the main structural reforms, such as those having to do with energy and national security, as well as respect for contracts with transnational oil companies and the continuity of megaprojects and plans such as the Special Economic Zones. And let's not forget the statements of the future chief of staff, Alfonso Romo, who promises that "Mexico must be a private investment paradise."

In addition, AMLO's insistence on fighting corruption as his main campaign platform points to two fundamental aspects of the new government's intentions: 1) not to affect, or to affect as little as possible, the economic base of the neoliberal system and of transnational companies that operate in Mexico; 2) the reduction of social policy to redistributing surpluses by fighting corruption and waste of resources at the different levels of government. Mexico generates so much wealth that redistributing even a small percentage to the people makes a considerable difference.

Even though it puts the brakes on the voracity of the neo-colonial oligarchy, it is only a drop in the bucket when considering the magnitude of the looting and exploitation of the oppressed classes by the wealthy. The danger of these measures is that the structures of domination attempt to reformulate themselves in order to remain intact.

Concrete results of the electoral victory

López Obrador's victory was overwhelming. The Juntos Harems Historia coalition, formed by the Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional (Morena), Partido del Trabajo and the evangelical Partido Encuentro Social, obtained more than 30 million votes, something never before achieved in Mexico's history, representing over 53 percent of votes cast.

This is more than twice the number of votes obtained by its closest competitor, Ricardo Anaya Cortés, from the conservative alliance, Por México al Frente, which includes Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) and Movimiento

Ciudadano, and more than three times what was obtained by the official José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, of the Todos por México coalition, composed of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM) and Partido Nueva Alianza (Panal). Jaime Rodríguez Calderón, the only independent candidate got 5.1 percent of the vote. López Obrador won in 31 states, everywhere except in the ultraconservative state of Guanajuato.

Thus, the people of Mexico defeated the PRI-PAN-PRD mafia and its satellite parties, a de facto alliance that crystallized in the so-called Pacto Por México, the elite agreement led by outgoing president Enrique Peña Nieto, which promoted the neoliberal reforms of the last six years. The electoral defeat was a collapse of the party leadership that was in power. However, its influence has not been completely eliminated, as a considerable part of the new administration comes from the ranks of the ousted parties, because of desertions, opportunists seeking posts in the new government, and new allegiances born out of the political crisis.

Challenges, dangers on the horizon

In closing, we'll reflect on some scenarios that social movements and organizations may face in the election aftermath.

One of the main dangers for the popular sectors, organized and unorganized, is the demobilization that can come with the idea that the struggle was purely electoral, that with the triumph of López Obrador the oligarchy is beaten. Winning an election does not mean winning power. The ruling classes are still there, and their power is still operating. The correlation of forces was barely affected. Although it's still an important moment, it's not enough. And the post-election demobilization could reverse the small gains, even to the point of expecting extremely adverse scenarios.

A second danger is co-optation. The gifts and political concessions granted by the new government to social organizations may limit their range of action to what the administration dictates. Organizations may be pressured to reduce their tactics to a much more limited, pragmatic approach. The result would be oppression adopted and tweaked by popular movements. Another effect of this scenario is the possibility that political power represses, directly or indirectly, movements and organizations that don't assimilate.

A third danger is that social organizations generate an open antagonism to the new government, at least in discursive terms. This may entail,

on the one hand, turning their backs on a large part of the base that drove the electoral avalanche and which could be the basis of further struggles. This could happen with those who see the electoral result as a deception on the part of the powerful and who deny the protagonism and influence of the people, those who see everything in black and white and do not recognize the complexity and contradictions of the political recomposition. In addition and above all, this scenario can hurt those who have stayed out of the power arena and therefore who haven't built an independent political force that can win and be a viable alternative.

This third danger, critique without disputing political power, could also leave the most conservative part of the new government in charge of defining the economic-political evolution of the country. Critique without action would leave the people without political weapons and would generate indirect allies of the extreme right.

Even though the insurrection at the polls was a victory for the people, a demonstration of our potential and strength, but it didn't yet show all of our transformative capacity. The election was just a spark of something that could turn into a fire. Both the huge rallies and the mass vote are expressions of popular power, of a collective force in motion. However, these events are blips in a context of an extremely divided public, who has seen its capacity decimated in terms of organizing and together making decisions about our collective future.

The task is to reverse this condition, to build organization in every neighborhood and on every street. Our job is to help people become conscious of their power through the practice of their creative capacity. The challenge is to take the people's voices that today are dispersed and only unite in rejection -- in marches, demonstrations or at the polls -- and make it into a people's project for change, a project that transcends the electoral arena and that of individual demands.

We're talking about project that seeks the transformation of Mexico from the root -- above all, a project that manifests itself in the concrete possibility of victory, since most of the population that got out massively to vote did so because they saw a tangible possibility of changing something, even if it were minimal.

Appealing to the leadership of the people is to have confidence in ourselves and in our collective strength. That force today goes to the polls en masse, but tomorrow it may spark a radical upheaval that will bring down the foundations of power in Mexico.

On behalf of the Nueva Constituyente Ciudadana Popular, we fight for this. We say that true victory will be the day when the people are in charge.

The Haitian Revolution and political strategy

The bust of
revolutionary
Toussaint
L'Ouverture
in Bordeaux,
France.
Photo:
loophaiti.com.



"We owe incomparably more to Haiti than to all of our abolitionists. I regard her as the original pioneer emancipator of the nineteenth century. It was her one brave example that first of all started the Christian world into a sense of the Negro's manhood.... Until she spoke, no Christian nation had given to the world an organized effort to abolish slavery."

- Frederick Douglass, Chicago, 1893

by Tim Shenk

Haiti today is frequently cited as the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. Nearly 60 percent of Haiti's 11 million people live on less than two dollars a day. Yet barely more than two centuries ago, the Haitian Revolution became a rallying cry for oppressed people around the world. The 12-year slave rebellion struck fear into plantation owners and merchants from Paris to New Orleans, and its example posed a threat to the slave economies of the U.S. South and the Caribbean.

When enslaved African- and Caribbean-born people rose up in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, colonial powers did all they could to divide the blacks from the lighter-skinned Mulattoes and buy off their leaders. When this failed, with superior weapons they attempted to subdue the rebels in battle. In desperation, the French commander Charles Leclerc even proposed a war of extermination -- they would kill all of the blacks on the island and bring in new Africans to work who knew nothing of revolution. Yet Leclerc died of yellow fever, along with thousands of French soldiers, worn out by the guerrilla tactics of the ex-slaves.

Haitians won their freedom, and finally they would be able to claim the liberty and equality promised to French society back home. Under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines and others, former slaves defeated the local plantation-owning class, a Spanish invasion, and the British and French army and navy.

How did they do it? This must be a question on the minds of those who seek lasting social transformation today.

How did an oppressed class of people, who had no right even to control their own bodies, manage to overthrow those who owned the land, controlled the courts and the military, and whose profits and livelihood depended on the continuation of chattel slavery?

For one, the black rebel generals came to agree on a common objective. They wouldn't be satisfied with simple revenge against their masters, defeating the French only to be ruled by the British or the Spanish. And they weren't fighting to become the new slave masters themselves. The enslaved people they led demanded full emancipation and the right to enjoy the fruits of their labor. They even burned Saint-Domingue to the ground, from the cities of Port-au-Prince and Le Cap to the highly productive sugarcane fields of the northern plain, rather than have others continue to profit from their toil.

In this way, the rebels correctly identified their enemy. It wasn't a single policy they fought, or the right to better treatment in the fields. They saw they had to kill the slave-economy system that shackled them as property to make profit, before the system killed them.

Their commitment went beyond their own liberation to ending slavery more broadly. They liberated their enslaved

brethren in Spanish Santo Domingo and later would provide Simon Bolivar with weapons, ammunition and a printing press in the fight for independence in Venezuela, on the condition that Bolivar's forces would end slavery upon gaining independence from Spain.

All systems of oppression must be ended in the mind before they can be ended in fact. In that sense the rebels of Saint-Domingue had a certain advantage. Because sugarcane production there was so intensive and conditions were so harsh, black laborers only lasted an average of seven years in the cane fields before being literally worked to death. That meant that fully two-thirds of the enslaved workforce there in the late 1700s was African-born.

Though the psychological damage of slavery was present, it was not yet widely internalized, and this allowed for clarity among the ranks. They knew they were not to blame for their own condition. It was the oppressive hand of the *grand blancs* -- the rich whites -- that held them in bondage. Ending the relationship between owner and property became their only chance for survival as a people, requiring one of the most profound revolutions in world history.

Another key to the successful revolution was training a dedicated leadership. Toussaint saw as early as 1792 that a slave revolt could not succeed without trained leaders. In *The Black Jacobins*, historian C.L.R. James notes that the massive riots of the early years of the revolution had a spontaneous character, and untrained blacks could gain temporary victories but could not build sustained resistance. Fighters began to flock to his call for complete liberty for all.

"Toussaint could have had thousands following him," writes James. "It is characteristic of him that he began with a few hundred picked men, devoted to himself, who learnt the art of war with him from the beginning." With study and discipline, this group of soldiers would become Toussaint's generals over the next decade. This united core of generals would draw many thousands more to them in time. They would be "decisive in the struggle for freedom," according to James.

Though we know few details about what sparked the consciousness of those who would follow Toussaint, once a few were willing to lay down their lives for freedom, many more gained courage. James chronicles French soldiers' journal accounts of the reckless heroics of the formerly enslaved who marched against cannons, singing, with no weapons except sticks or bent pieces of metal. The unwavering desire to be free emboldened their comrades and intimidated

Tim Shenk is CUSLAR Coordinator and editor of this issue.
This article first ran on telesurtv.net on May 11, 2018.

their adversaries. One French officer wrote with dismay, "These were the men we had to fight against."

Yet the Haitian Revolution did not succeed only out of unflinching will or charismatic leadership, though it had both. Fundamental to conquering state power was Toussaint's astute political strategy. His goal was liberty for his people, and his tactics varied according to changing material conditions and the changing tactics of his many enemies.

In France, the bourgeois revolution was bringing down the monarchy. While some French revolutionaries initially supported the Haitians, eventually both republican and monarch factions sided with the white colonists of Saint-Domingue. The poor whites in Saint-Domingue favored the French Revolution

because it promised a better future for them, and the Mulattoes were gaining economic power, which worried the colonists. In addition, France was intermittently at war with Britain. The English "set up a great howl for the abolition of the slave-trade," not out of love for enslaved blacks, according to James, but because Britain had lost its prized colony and didn't want France to have the upper hand.

In short, a crisis reigned among the ruling classes of Europe and the colonies. To this point, James writes, "The first sign of a thoroughly ill-adjusted or bankrupt form of society is that the ruling classes cannot agree how to save the situation. It is this division which opens the breach, and the ruling classes will continue to fight with each other, just so long as they do not fear the mass seizure of power."

Toussaint knew he and his ragtag army of former slaves were not the strongest force to be reckoned with. Because of this, he alternately accepted weapons from the Spaniards to fight the French, then declared himself a defender of the French crown while fighting off a British invasion. At all times, Toussaint played his stronger enemies against each other, moving more boldly when they were busy at war with each other.

According to James's account, Toussaint kept some white officers among his troops, left most private property in the hands of the white colonists and forbade his men from pillaging. As a leader he modeled a surprising amount of moderation, considering the atrocities of slavery and war inflicted on his people.

Ultimately, even though Toussaint armed the black laborers with 30,000 guns bought from the Americans, moderation would fail. Toussaint would be tricked into capture, sent to die in prison in France.

Dessalines assumed leadership of the rebel troops, and had no tolerance for reconciliation with the white planters. It was he, Toussaint's brilliant lieutenant, who rose to lead the black masses to victory. They fought the largest military expedition ever to set sail from France, whose ships were loaded down with chains to re-enslave

the rebels. When the rebels won, Dessalines was declared emperor of the hemisphere's first independent Black republic.

The next part of the story often paints Dessalines as a monster for ordering the killing of all whites in the new Republic of

Haiti. However, lesser known is the ultimatum presented to Haitian leadership by the British: His Majesty would protect the new independent nation from other colonial powers and trade with Haiti "only when the last of the whites had fallen under the axe," according to historian M. Camille Guy. This ploy had the goal of eliminating French influence in Haiti to weaken the French for in the ongoing war with Britain, which some have described as the truly first world war. Racial loyalties among Europeans, it seems, were secondary to questions of economic and political power.

***The Black Jacobins* by C.L.R. James**

The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, was written by C.L.R. James in 1938. James was a historian from Trinidad who was interested in aiding the struggles for independence in Africa at the time. He found lessons from the Haitian Revolution instructive for those dealing with questions of colonialism, racism and class society in the fight for equality.

James's book follows Toussaint, the formerly enslaved black leader who guided the revolutionary effort in the French colony from 1791 until his imprisonment in 1802. Yet James is clear from his preface onward: "Toussaint did not make the revolution. It was the revolution that made Toussaint."

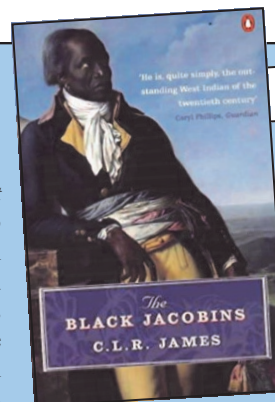
James notes that we act within the limitations of context. Historical figures

After independence, challenges for the Haitian laboring class never subsided -- ever since, the ruling class has plotted to reclaim control. James warns, "The rich are only defeated when running for their lives."

In 1825, the French threatened to reconquer the island and extorted its leaders to the tune of 150 million francs, a debt Haiti finally finished paying off in 1947. The U.S.-backed Duvalierist dictatorship impoverished and terrorized Haitians in the latter half of the twentieth century. Coups against democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2001 and 2004, then the devastating 2010 earthquake and subsequent U.S.- then U.N.-led military occupation, have further decimated the country.

Still, it is hard to overestimate the influence of the Haitian Revolution on other struggles for liberty and equality, especially in the 19th century. U.S. abolitionist Frederick Douglass said Haiti awoke the world both to the horrors of slavery and to the intelligence of formerly enslaved blacks, who could not only win a war for independence but also govern themselves.

Those who fight today's injustices would do well to study revolutionary periods in history, both victories and defeats of oppressed peoples. Malcolm X said, "Of all our studies, history is best qualified to reward our research." History comes alive when it is not simply names and dates to be memorized, but when it is read for lessons in political strategy.



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and processes cannot be understood separate from economic forces, "the sub-soil from which they came." He writes:

"Great men make history, but only such history as it is possible for them to make. Their freedom of achievement is limited by the necessities of their environment. To portray the limits of those necessities... is the true business of the historian."

Through the organization of documents, letters and journals in *The Black Jacobins*, James shows a method of studying and presenting history in such a way as to make it a tool for reflection on political strategy.

-Ed.

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Spring 2019



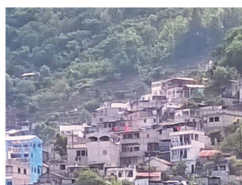
Undergraduate, Graduate and Faculty Annual Research Symposium

February 2019



Undergraduate Minor and Graduate Minor

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Undergraduate & Graduate Student Grants

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Contact: Bill Phelan, Program Manager
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9/25: Border Angels' Morones to Ithaca

Enrique Morones, founder and director of Border Angels, will speak in Ithaca, NY on September 25. Border Angels attempts to reduce fatalities on the California border by placing life-saving water stations in the desert. More information at **cuslar.org**.



Student work-study at CUSLAR

Spring 2019 application deadline: Jan. 25

CUSLAR on the web



Committee on
U.S.-Latin American
Relations

cuslar.org



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