

# THE CLASS STRUGGLE CHRONICLE

Vol. III, No. 5		Thursday May 1, 2025
PUBLISHED MONTHLY	A Publication of	<a href="http://www.louworkersbrigade.org">www.louworkersbrigade.org</a>
	<b>THE LOUISVILLE</b>	
	<b>WORKERS</b>	
	<b>BRIGADE</b>	CONTACT US AT: contact@ louworkersbrigade.org



**SOLIDARITY FOREVER!**



**The Louisville Workers Brigade** is an association of working people dedicated to educating, supporting, and uniting working class forces in the Louisville community.

We organize with union and non-union workers alike.

The Brigade **educates** workers by organizing regular Educational Presentations which focus on Labor and Working Class history and issues and by producing easy-to-read literature for working people.

The Brigade **supports** workers through aid during strikes, by platforming workplace grievances, by providing counsel to workers exploring options to organize their workplaces, and through organizing solidarity actions for workers.

Lastly, the Brigade **unites** workers by breaking down the divisions which the owning class has used to divide workers against each other and by organizing regular Community Socials where working people can meet other workers in the community and can begin to build ties of solidarity with one another.

The Brigade proudly continues the legacy of Class Struggle Unionism which understands that our present economic system is design for the minority owning class to become unbelievably wealth off the labor of the majority Working Class. We reject the false notion of “peaceful coexistence” between these two rival classes whose interests are diametrically opposed to one another. Instead, we seek to heighten this class conflict by empowering workers to secure economic, political, social, and cultural power for themselves through struggle.

Though we organize in the greater Louisville community, the Brigade stands in solidarity with the diverse International Working Class and we oppose all social chauvinisms and bigotries which divide workers against each other, including sexism, misogyny, queerphobia, racism, and nativism. We believe that Working Class Liberation must always be synonymous with Women’s Liberation, Black Liberation, and Queer Liberation and support the struggles of exploited and oppressed peoples everywhere.

[www.louworkersbrigade.org](http://www.louworkersbrigade.org)

# The Working Class Struggle - In a Year

By The Louisville Workers Brigade

April 1, 2025

The working class's struggle for its empowerment and liberation is a never-ending struggle. Since May Day of 2024, the class struggle has escalated further and further, with longstanding and recent issues inflaming the conflict, spurring working and oppressed people to organize in opposition to the inherent qualities of exploitation and oppression in our current economic system. The result has been inspiring scenes of defiance and resounding victories for the working and oppressed people; in other instances, however, brutal defeats; but most often a series of inconclusive battles. Regardless of the outcome, each struggle, each encounter between the forces of radical and revolutionary change and the forces of stagnation and exploitation, solidifies the bonds of solidarity between each of working and oppressed people and invigorates the latent class consciousness within us. It is for this reason it would do us well to look over the year since the last May Day, to recount some of these struggles, and to see where things now stand.

## Internationally

The world remained gripped by the Palestinian Liberation Movement, with the ongoing genocide being committed by Israel sustaining the zeal of pro-Palestinian forces abroad. Ever since October 2024, millions of regular working and oppressed people still stand in unwavering solidarity with the plight of the Palestinian people as they face the relentless colonial, apartheid state of Israel. In the US, students have taken up the fire of struggle, organizing mass demonstrations, hosting vigils for the lives lost in the genocide, coordinating

dies-ins, establishing pro-Palestine encampments on dozens of universities, and more. The Palestinian Liberation Movement in America carries the spirit of the anti-Vietnam War Movement. Most impressively, in a single day, on March 2, millions of people around the world took to the streets and shouted in unison, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free", "End the Occupation", and "Ceasefire Now".

Aided by the BDS Movement against Israel, the Palestinian Liberation Movement has had a major impact on the situation. We see universities, such as San Francisco State University, divest from Israel, Puma ending its contract with the Israel Football (soccer) Association, South Africa submitting a case to the International Court of Justice rightfully accusing Israel of committing genocide, and the International Criminal Court issuing arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and former Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Though these actions have not ended the genocide and it's likely that the perpetrators of this slaughter will go unpunished, the sheer displays of solidarity and material support to the Palestinian cause are inspiring and demonstrate that a great sense of international solidarity is being built, which will be vital as the situation continues to develop, with Israel now having broken the ceasefire by launching a widespread aerial bombardment on the Gaza Strip, killing at least 591 people, including children, ending the ceasefire agreement reached back in January.

While the support for Palestinian Liberation grows, an equal and very dangerous phenomenon follows closely behind it in the hopes of snuffing out the foundations of a radical and revolutionary trend: the resurgent far-right. Like in Europe and many parts of the world during the 1920s and 30s, as the contradictions inherent in capitalism grow more acute by the day and working and oppressed people begin to demand alternatives to the status quo, the owning class shakes in their ivory towers. In response, the owning class acts in its own class interests by bankrolling anyone who will serve them and maintain their exploitative and oppressive rule. The result is the election of “anarcho-capitalist” Javier Milei as president in Argentina, an attempted coup d'etat by then-president Yoon Suk Yeol in South Korea, and the electoral rise of the fascist AfD in Germany just this past February. All over the world, the far-right grows more powerful, while the liberal and centrist parties pave the way for their ascension by playing cover for them and allowing these parties to become “respectable.” This only continues, especially as the left remains divided and weak in many countries, such as in the US.

### **Nationally**

In the US, there were many issues and struggles that were happening, though for a good chunk of the year, eyes were on the election. This election was viewed, unsurprisingly, by liberals as the “most important election in our lifetime,” pitting the defenders of democracy against the forces of authoritarianism. Yet, to anyone actually paying attention, this wasn't the case. The then-president, Biden, was no defender of democracy, with him and the rest of his administration eagerly providing Israel with the arsenal and support it needs to wage its genocide against the Palestinian people. Combined with his previous crushing of the near-Railroad Strike back in 2022, the incarceration of undocumented immigrants in cages, and

much more, it's evident that Biden wasn't a champion of the people, which is why he was forced to withdraw from the race and endorse Kamala Harris. However, she was no better and would have continued much of the same policies that Biden supported, particularly a full-throated support for Israel. And, frankly, there is so much wrong with Trump that I don't need to get into specifics.

However, though many working and oppressed people recognized that neither political party represented their class interests, they had fallen into a repeated trend in American politics: doomerism. Due to a myriad of factors, most importantly a disconnect between the masses and revolutionary theory and organizing, most folks see no way out of their current predicament, leading to doomerism that allows for ghouls like Trump to walk in without serious opposition. Yes, folks opposed Trump before his first term in office, and people are opposing him now, but there was no concerted effort by working and oppressed people to challenge Biden, whose administration opened the door for Trump. Despite presenting itself as a “friend of the people,” the Democratic party has a long history of opposing working class initiatives that would actually substantially alter the way the country operates. Instead of action, the Democratic party provides hollow words and empty symbolic gestures, never truly serving as a vanguard for our class interest. Remember how the Democrats never enshrined Roe v. Wade despite their supermajority or how Biden-era immigration policies were escalations of what Trump did, allowing Trump to “continue where he left off”? To build toward our collective liberation, we must firmly disconnect ourselves from both political parties and create a working class party.

Following the election, the country was gripped by a new obsession. On December 4, the then-CEO of UnitedHealthcare, Brian Thompson, was

killed, sparking a massive conversation on the state of healthcare in the US. Few, if any, cared about Thompson's death, with many rightly pointing out that insurance agencies, including UnitedHealthcare, are exploitative parasites that drain a person for all they are worth and never fork over the money that is desperately needed to fund any medical expenditure. Though the conversation didn't go anywhere politically, it served as a powerful educational resource in showing people the clear contradictions in American society and why we must organize against our present economic system.

Recently, the struggles that have gripped working and oppressed people have been related to the string of actions taken by Trump over the last few weeks. Though having been in office less than 3 months, Trump is leaving no stone unturned, no people unscathed. Under his watch, Trump is determined to bring untold suffering to all working and oppressed people, with him launching a particular crusade against immigrants. Through ICE, seemingly every facet of the government, including the IRS, is being used to identify, round up, and deport immigrants under the xenophobic and malicious lie that they are "criminals" and "threats to our way of life." Elsewhere, Trump is keen to dismantle our education system, gut government agencies of their staff à la the EPA, and hound marginalized communities. It is apparent that this Trump presidency is more vile than the last, which is why it's imperative that working and oppressed people form strong bonds of solidarity and organize to combat not only this administration but the very systems and groups that created and will continue to create this suffering.

### **Locally**

Locally, there has been an undercurrent of struggle. In fact, on May Day of 2024, TARC workers with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1447 organized a practice picket to bring community awareness to the \$14 million

cuts that the Metro government was proposing with TARC, which would negatively impact the ability of TARC to provide adequate public transportation to the thousands of Louisvillian's who desperately rely on that service, especially during the time that JCPS was suffering from a major bus driver shortage. Unfortunately, these cuts went through, but, in response, there is a growing community effort to rectify this and to give TARC the funding it needs and deserves! Along with the TARC workers, workers elsewhere were taking a stand against their exploitation. Workers with CWA Local 3310 at AT&T, workers with IBEW 369 and UA 502 at Monument Chemical, and others went on strike against their bosses over contract negotiations and unfair labor practices, with these struggles being resolved shortly after.

Around the time of the presidential election, Kentucky had two constitutional amendments up for referendum, neither good. Amendment 1 would merely reinforce the already existing law that a non-citizen cannot hold elected office, and Amendment 2, the worse of both, would finally have Kentucky join other states in diverting public funds into private schools. In an inspirational display of working class unity, Kentucky voters voted down this measure, a victory for public education. Though other public services are still under threat and this won't be the last time public education is directly targeted, the defeat of Amendment 2 is a victory for working people and demonstrates that working people, regardless of their affiliation to either political party, can come together to recognize their class interests.

### **The Path Forward**

As can be seen, much has happened since May Day of 2024, which doesn't even begin to cover the things that I haven't mentioned. What this all demonstrates is that the class struggle, as always, is actively being waged by both sides on a daily basis all across this country, inside every state, every city and

town, every workplace, and every community. With every struggle, working and oppressed people are waking up to the realities of living under capitalism and are taking a stand against it, even if they don't realize it yet. Yet, for our achievements, the struggle is far from over. Climate change is fast approaching, threatening to destroy the lives of millions and do irreparable harm to our environment. Moreover, the threat of imperialist wars still looms, especially as the American empire continues to dissolve before our very eyes. Worse still, the rise of the far-right across the world is a worrying sign of the exploitation, oppression, and brutalization to come, with eerie parallels to the rise of reactionary and fascist movements in the 1900s, with the biggest difference being that we lack a cohesive

revolutionary movement to combat them. It is for all these reasons that we all must intensify our efforts—we must have more strikes, we must continue to expand our understanding of theory, we must organize the unorganized, we must build steeled bonds of solidarity between all sections of the working class, and we must continue to build the foundations of a revolutionary movement that overthrows capitalism, dismantles exploitation and oppression, and sets us on the path to a world for all working and oppressed people!

Power, peace, and liberation  
to all working and oppressed  
people!

# **Hollow Promises: Disillusionment with Mainstream Politics**

By Dalton Nolan

April 13, 2025

For many, the current state of US politics is shocking. What appeared to be a well-functioning democratic system of checks and balances has now come under serious threat from the ascension of Donald Trump and Elon Musk into the halls of power. If one was to listen to the mainstream discourse, the current state of democracy in America is unsettling, with everything from public services being dismantled at alarming rates, marginalized communities once more facing the violence of the state, the economy continuing to spiral in chaos for everyday working people, and our rights and freedoms unravelling as we speak. All of these are indeed serious issues warranting our concern; however, this narrative, concocted by liberal institutions, wholly ignores the reality of the situation: all of this was bound to

happen. Our current predicament is the result of our electoral system, including both political parties, and its intimate relationship with our present economic system. Over the last decade and a half, the problems of our society have only gotten worse, regardless of whether a Democratic or Republican president has taken the helm, leading many to accurately conclude that neither political party represents the interests of the vast majority of working and oppressed people. This realization has only mounted over the last few months since the election of Trump as president, with the support bases of both Democrats and Republicans lighting a fire under their political teams in ways we haven't seen in a long time. It is clear: People are tired of the status quo.

Are we surprised by this conclusion? The supposed “well-functioning democratic system of checks and balances” of America was never made by or designed for the working class or marginalized communities—the existence of the electoral college, the unyielding presence of money in politics, and the regular disregard both political parties have for any policy initiative that would actually benefit working and oppressed people. Both political parties are two sides of the same coin. Both parties serve the interests of the owning class and support the same policies—both support imperialist wars abroad, support the continued genocide against the Palestinian people, fight to maintain the American empire, cut regulations and offer bailouts to corporations, allow the encroachment of climate change to continue unabated, respond to political and social struggles (regardless if they’re peaceful) with severe state repression and violence. The only difference between the parties is the tactics they use to market themselves to the working class.

This is the reality of our “democracy,” yet working people were able to ignore these glaring contradictions if it appeared that their elected officials were at least able to provide them with some measure of stability and comfort. This, however, is no longer possible, and frankly, never was. All over the country, the scraps both political parties offer are not enough anymore. The contradictions in society are worsening by the day, and working people are suffering more and more for it, experiencing the worst the American Nightmare has to offer. In the last few years, we have seen a shift in the way working people view their political parties, and it is becoming more apparent by the day.

### **The Democratic Party**

Being disconnected from issues that impact the working class is integral to the behavior of the Democratic Party. Though they are not the “Left,” the

Democrats for a while *really* wanted everyone to believe they were and that they were fighting for the “little guy.” For decades, the Democrats have made a literal killing on presenting themselves as being the progressive option by saying they liked Gay people and that they believed in Civil Rights for all. This progressive-sounding rhetoric didn’t carry into economic language, with Democrats essentially just parroting the same talking points as Republicans with only minor modifications here and there to make it sound like they were thinking about marginalized communities. In this, the Democrats are the masters of slogans, phrases, and wordplay, with them more concerned with a photo op than actually addressing the issues affecting working and oppressed people. In short, all words, no actions when it matters. Instead, Democrats say one thing and do another.

This makes the Democrats the “wolves in sheep’s clothing,” with them hiding behind their rosy language when they decide to act like Republican-lite. Contrary to the narrative they have crafted for themselves, the Democrats are no friends of anyone but the owning class, as can be seen from their recent history—not enshrining *Roe v. Wade*, intensifying immigration and deportation efforts, defanging and controlling the Labor Movement, and allowing Trump (their boogeyman) into office all in the name of protecting “democracy.” The clearest example of the Democratic Party as a servant of the owning class has been its full-throated support for Israel and its genocide against the Palestinian people, with the supposed “arsenal of democracy” used against Palestine.



The genocide of the Palestinian people was the first major event to shake trust and support in the Democratic Party. The wanton campaign of eradication being waged by Israel with full support from even the “left” within the Democrats led to many choosing to vote uncommitted in the primary election, i.e., they would vote for the Party but none of the candidates. Though insignificant in the grand scheme of things and immaterial, it is one of the earliest displays of people breaking with the Party. This would only escalate, as the previous actions and inactions of the Party, especially after the election, placed them in the crosshairs of working people. Despite months of campaigning, millions upon millions of dollars spent on political advertisements, and thousands of proclamations that this is the “most important election of our lifetime,” the Democrats have effectively returned to “business as usual.”

While the Trump administration continues to threaten the wellbeing of all working and oppressed people, the Democrats are doing nothing. Sure, they’re condemning and criticizing this administration’s actions, sending strongly worded letters, with Cory Booker even having a 24+ hour filibuster to raise awareness about the state of the country, but that’s it. For months, Democrats warned of the encroachment of the far-right, but when it has arrived, the Democrats welcomed it into the halls of power and did nothing to substantially fight against it. As expected, folks are enraged by the lack of action by the Democrats and have cried out in unison for them to do something. This has caused some division in the Democratic Party, with the “left” being more vocal, but whether this is controlled opposition to calm their voters is irrelevant, as the Party will never allow its “left” to come to power as we saw back in 2016. Even if the “left” came into power, the Democrats would still seek to operate “business as usual” (i.e., pro-corporate agenda, imperialist warmongering, etc.), just with more lip service to social

programs. What the last few months have shown us and what we will continue to see moving forward is a widening chasm between the Democratic Party and its slice of the working class. As the Democrats expectedly continue to be partners to the Republicans and dutiful servants of the owning class, their flimsy progressive mask will give way to more and more people who will choose to abandon the Party.

### **The Republican Party**

Republicans are very similar to Democrats in that they are masters of slogans, phrases, and wordplay, but unlike Democrats who choose to appeal to marginalized peoples and pay lip service to systemic issues, Republicans choose a different tract. For a long time, the Republicans have generally appealed to sections of the working class who carry explicit chauvinist attitudes, reactionary ideals, and who long for the “American Dream.” By drenching themselves in this language, the Republicans present themselves as the “reclaimers” of a “lost way of life,” a way of life they promise they can return to the people, and many are keen to accept it. The crippling effects of capitalism hit everyone, some more than others, leaving folks confused and suffering, so when the Republicans arrive promising the return to an imagined paradise, it’s hard to not buy into it. This is especially true when the Democrats are keen to dismiss this section of the working class as backwards hillbillies and provide nothing of substance to address their issues.

Yet, as the Democrats, the Republicans are not friends of working people, no matter how much they present themselves as down-to-earth small townfolk. The program of the Republican Party is one that is avidly pro-corporate and anti-working class. Ever since their establishment, the Republicans have been in bed with corporations and have been some of the major drivers of a pro-corporate agenda. Under Republican leadership, labor



regulations are repealed, the rights and protections for marginalized communities are put into question, and, generally, the welfare of all working and oppressed people become worse, even for the people who voted for them. And now, as the contradictions within society worsen, the Republicans are speedrunning into the far-right, with their Party platform coming closer and closer to blatant fascism, a trend that we see around the world. This has manifested in a relentless campaign against anything “progressive” or “woke,” which includes things such as DEI or consumer protections against companies trying to screw over consumers. Needless to say, the Republicans are a threat to working class interests, especially since, unlike the Democrats, the Republicans are willing and do take action to ensure their goals are met.



Despite the Party's popularity among the more rural and conservative sections of the working class, its grip is slipping. Even before the start of Trump's second term, Republican voters were suspect of him and were concerned about what it meant for the country. This has only escalated with the post-election high finally wearing off and Republican voters seeing the world the Party is building, and they don't like what they see. The renegade actions of DOGE and Elon Musk in “cutting wasteful spending,” the threats to social safety nets that many Americans (regardless of political affiliation) rely on, and the increasing anti-Democratic actions taken by Trump are causing many sections of the working class to question the Party, its actions, and its direction. Across the country, town halls are seeing Republican voters grill the Party about its actions and what those actions mean for them and their families. To be sure, there are people

who are fully behind Trump and the Party no matter what (no different for the Democrats), but what we're seeing is that the word of Republicans is no longer good enough, especially when it's contradicted by actions the Party takes that actively harm working people. None of this even begins to point out the blunders that Trump has had with his tariffs or the leaking of the Signal group messages.

Time will only tell what Trump's administration will do next, but we can be sure that as the actions of this administration continue to harm more and more sections of the working class, more Republican voters will start to question and, hopefully, abandon the Party.

### **The Path Forward**

As we can see, many Americans are tired of mainstream politics, tired of the hollow words, and tired of everything getting worse and worse. This is a hopeful sign in the struggle for our collective liberation, but it's not enough. Without a clear alternative to the status quo, people are left with just two options: continue to vote and hope the next guy is better, or admit defeat. Many working people have already accepted that they can't change anything, with them retreating into their own spaces and trying to find as much comfort as possible while the world around them falls apart. This means that as both parties lose support, more workers will join the ranks of the doomers. With all the confusion and suffering going on in the world, it is entirely understandable that people would choose doomerism. However, doomerism is not the answer. Doomism doesn't stop any of our suffering, with each of us still affected by whatever capitalism throws at us, meaning that we can't just “escape” from this reality. So, what's the alternative? The alternative is to build power for the working class! This power-building takes a variety of different forms, all of which are deeply interconnected to one another and necessary in the struggle for

our collective liberation. Such power-building efforts include building a militant Labor movement, developing the political education of all working people, creating alternative institutions that challenge capitalism, establishing fighting working class organizations, etc. All of these efforts, all a part of the class struggle, culminate in the creation of a working class party!

A working class party, defined by its adherence to a class struggle perspective and composed of revolutionaries steeped in history, theory, organizing principles, and organizational work, is the head of a militant working class movement. Through its understanding of theory and work, the disparate social, political, and economic struggles of all working and oppressed people are coalesced into a collective program, framed in a coherent and cohesive picture of exploitation and oppression under capitalism, for our collective liberation. Through it, the myriad of working class organizations and their efforts can be joined together, serving as a vehicle for the revolutionary imperative to replace our current economic system with one of, by, and for working people. Through it, we can finally secure meaningful reforms to improve the material conditions of those suffering and, ultimately, wage a revolution to establish a new society where the days of exploitation and oppression are left in the dustbin of history where they belong. In essence, the working class party is the vanguard of the working class struggle, and through it, a world for working and oppressed people is possible.

In the absence of a working class political party, it is up to all of us to create the building blocks for that party. This means reading theory, connecting with other working people, spreading class consciousness, starting a union, making your union more militant, starting or joining a working class organization, etc., etc. The work before us is plentiful, but the organizers are few. For those not currently involved in the movement, for

those who are anxious or confused on where to begin: start small. You don't need to jump in headfirst, but you do need to take the first step by reading/watching/listening to theory, talking with your fellow working people, or attending an event hosted by a local working class organization. The Louisville Workers Brigade continues to educate, support, and unite left-progressive forces in our community, and we welcome anyone and everyone to join us. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out if we can assist you in any way.



The next four years under Trump will be difficult for many sections of the working class, and the work before us in creating a working class political party will be not easy; however, we know that nothing is getting better for any of us. The political parties will never serve the interests of working people and cannot be reformed to do so. The Democrats will continue to promote hollow phrases but provide nothing, Republicans will continue to bring misery upon the entire working class, and exploitation and oppression under capitalism will continue on and on...unless we do something about it. This is the time to break from the establishment parties and to build working class power in our unions, schools, communities, workplaces—everywhere! This is the time to read theory, build connections with all sections of the working class, and spread class consciousness! This is the time to join a working class organization to fight against our eroding material conditions and to build the bedrock for a militant working class struggle! This is the time to build a working class party and struggle for our collective liberation! A better world is possible; all we must do is take the first step.

# The Collapse of American Science

By Abigail Muccilli

April 20, 2025

The slow death of publicly-funded research in the United States represents more than just another austerity measure—it is a direct attack on the working class and a betrayal of international scholars. Since the first waves of NIH budget cuts hit in 2023, the consequences have rippled through universities and research institutions with devastating force, exposing the brutal contradictions of an academic system built on the backs of underpaid and overworked researchers while administrators and pharmaceutical executives reap the rewards.

The signs of collapse are undeniable across the United States. Labs that once pioneered breakthroughs in medicine and public health are facing budget cuts that make lab operations impossible. Graduate students who entered their programs with dreams of curing diseases find themselves trapped in financial ruin, burdened by six-figure student debts for degrees that may never lead to stable employment. Postdoctoral researchers, nearly half of whom come from abroad, face the cruel reality of revoked visas and shattered careers, their years of specialized training rendered worthless by a system that views them as disposable labor.

The statistics paint a grim picture. According to the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, nearly one-third of principal investigators, those who lead labs, have been forced to lay off staff in the past year alone, while fifteen percent of academic labs have closed entirely. These numbers only hint at the human toll, as it cannot account for the cancer

research abandoned mid-discovery, the pandemic prevention work left unfinished, nor the generations of scientists now leaving the field in despair.

As America retreats from scientific investment, other nations are seizing the opportunity. Germany's Max Planck Society reports a twenty-five percent surge in applications from U.S.-based scientists, lured by living wages, strong labor protections, and respect for their work. Canada's Global Talent Stream visa program has fast-tracked over a thousand American-trained researchers in the past year alone. Even China, long viewed as America's scientific rival, is aggressively recruiting displaced researchers through its Thousand Talents Program, offering resources and stability that the U.S. no longer provides.

Behind this brain drain lies an even uglier truth—the exploitation baked into America's academic labor system. Graduate students routinely work eighty-hour weeks for stipends below poverty level, with forty-three percent carrying over \$100,000 in student debt according to a 2023 study in eLife. Postdocs, many in their thirties with advanced degrees, earn barely \$50,000 annually while universities skim over half of every NIH grant for "overhead" costs. This is only a euphemism universities use when speaking of their bloated administrative salaries and vanity construction projects.

It is clear that the broader system remains rigged in favor of corporate interests. Pharmaceutical companies that profit from NIH-funded discoveries

spent \$130 billion on stock buybacks in 2023—triple their research investments—while lobbying against drug price reforms. Taxpayer-funded NIH research de-risks early-stage drug development. Companies then privatize these discoveries, patent them, and charge exorbitant prices, even though public dollars paid for the foundational science. The \$130 billion spent on buybacks (as compared to the \$43 billion on research and development) reveals where profits truly go: not to innovation or affordability, but to shareholders and executives. These funds could have erased the student debt of every STEM PhD in America twice over, or funded 10 years of NIH budget shortfalls. Instead, it vanished into Wall Street. This is wealth extraction, not reinvestment.

The ripple effects of this crisis are already reshaping the pipeline of future scientists, casting a dark shadow over those considering PhD programs in the U.S. Prospective graduate students—once drawn to America's reputation as the global leader in research—now face a system in freefall, where funding cuts have turned admissions into a brutal lottery. Programs that once guaranteed full funding are slashing stipends or quietly shifting costs onto students, forcing applicants to weigh the gamble of a PhD against the certainty of crushing debt. International applicants, who once saw U.S. degrees as a golden ticket, are now reconsidering, with visa restrictions and lab closures making America a riskier bet than Europe or Canada. Even those who secure spots will enter a broken academic labor market, where the odds of landing a tenure-track position have plummeted to near-zero, and where the only guaranteed outcome is years of exploitative labor for poverty wages. The message is clear: the next generation of scientists are being set up for failure. Unless they organize to demand debt-free education, living wages, and a system that values their labor over administrative greed, the

system will continue to work as it is intended to.

Capitalism doesn't want thriving, independent scientists—it wants a precarious labor force desperate enough to accept exploitative conditions. By starving public institutions like the NIH of funding while inflating military-police budgets, Congress ensures two outcomes critical to maintaining the status quo: a cheap and disposable workforce and the privatization of knowledge. Crushing student debt forces scientists into a hyper-competitive scramble for scarce grants. This desperation funnels talent into corporate labs or military-adjacent research, where innovation serves capital, not the public. Chronic underfunding pushes research toward private-sector "partnerships," where public dollars subsidize risky early-stage science—but patents and profits are hoarded by corporations. Meanwhile, militarized budgets thrive because war and policing are reliable revenue streams. Just look at how Lockheed Martin's stock soars while NIH grant success rates plummet to 20%. NIH budgets stagnate because curing diseases doesn't generate quarterly returns, while Raytheon gets blank checks to "innovate" new ways to kill. Capitalism rewards shareholders, not solutions.

Though the direct impacts of this have been the main focus, the consequences extend far beyond academia. Seventy-five percent of FDA-approved drugs trace their origins to NIH research, from mRNA vaccines to cutting-edge cancer therapies. The biotechnology sector, built on this public science, generates nearly \$3 trillion for the U.S. economy annually. As labs close and researchers flee, America's medical and technological future is being outsourced by design. Congress's choice to gut science funding while lavishing nearly \$900 billion on militarized police and endless wars is not an oversight; it's a reflection of capitalism's core priorities. Under this system, state budgets serve

two key functions: protecting capital and suppressing dissent. Police and military spending safeguard property, enforce inequality, and secure geopolitical dominance for corporate interests, while underfunding science and social programs entrenches reliance on profit-driven "solutions" (like privatized healthcare or Big Pharma monopolies). NIH cuts don't just slow medical progress—they reinforce a paradigm where life-saving research depends on corporate goodwill or Pentagon spin-offs.

Meanwhile, militarization funnels public wealth into the hands of weapons manufacturers and surveillance firms, turning systemic crises—poverty, addiction, unrest—into problems to be policed rather than healed. The U.S. military-industrial complex is not just about national defense, it's a highly lucrative business model. Companies like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Boeing, and Northrop Grumman dominate the weapons industry, securing billions in government contracts year after year. Unlike scientific research, which requires long-term investment with uncertain financial returns, war and policing provide guaranteed, repeatable revenue streams for corporations and shareholders. Lockheed Martin's shareholders get richer from each new war, therefore, the ruling class would rather spend \$1.7 trillion on a single fighter jet program (F-35) than guarantee free college for STEM students. Capitalism rewards short-term exploitation (stock buybacks, patent monopolies) over long-term collective good (curing diseases, climate solutions).

Additionally, politicians can fearmonger about foreign threats to justify military spending, but diseases (even pandemics) don't create the same urgency for long-term funding. COVID-19 relief was temporary, while military budgets always grow. This isn't fiscal responsibility; it's capitalism weaponizing the state to prioritize control over care.

The path forward demands more than restored budgets—it requires a fundamental reimagining of scientific labor. Student debt for STEM PhDs must be canceled. University overhead on grants should be capped at twenty percent. Visa protections must shield international researchers from exploitation. Most crucially, the workers who produce scientific knowledge must seize control of their labor. Universities fight tooth and nail against unionization efforts, as seen in Colombia's illegal union-busting campaign in 2023. However, the 2025 University of California postdoc strike, which won twenty-three percent raises through militant organizing, proved that change is possible when workers fight back.

The United States is sacrificing its scientific future—not because it must, but because it values profits over knowledge. The choice for working people is stark: either fight for a science system that serves the many, or watch as America auctions off the livelihood of its working class to the highest bidder.



# Beyond Liberalism: The Return of the Left

By Dalton Nolan

April 27, 2025

There has been a shift in American political and social life—leftism is on the rise. Once reserved for online spaces or small groupings of revolutionaries, leftism is once more gaining a footing in mainstream discourse. Contrary to the narrative peddled by mainstream media, there has always been an undercurrent of radical and revolutionary thought in America. Since the founding of the US, there has always been a minority of individuals who sought to lead society toward a better future. From the abolitionists who struggled to dismantle and right the wrongs of slavery, to Eugene V. Debs and the Socialist Party gaining a million votes in a presidential election, to the Black Panther standing in solidarity with the Vietnamese, the US has a long history of a militant minority serving as the vanguard for a radical and revolutionary movement. In fact, the nearly half century since the end of the New Left has been more of an exception, not the norm, in the history of the US.

The reason the US lacked a cohesive leftist presence for the last 50+ years is multifaceted, involving inter-left infighting and incorrect praxis, infiltration and espionage by the feds, the shifts in global and national economies, the degradation of the most revolutionary elements into reformist and class collaborationists who side with the Democrats, etc. The result has been the stranglehold of the Democratic Party over the label of “left,” making them seemingly the only viable option for working people. Under the Democrats, with plenty of Republican support, the term “leftist” became synonymous with “liberal,” creating an entire generation that fervently believed the Democrats

were the vanguard of a better tomorrow or the precursors to some “cultural Marxist” revolution. The reality was far different, with the Democrats only being servants to the whims of the owning class.

Things changed with Bernie Sanders. Though not a revolutionary and firmly entrenched in the Democratic Party, Sanders self-description as a “socialist” helped. By reintroducing the concepts of radical thought into the mainstream in a positive manner, something that had not been seen since at least the mid-70s, Sanders dispelled the “boogeyman” caricature given to leftist ideas and concepts. Again, Sanders isn’t a socialist and his recent “Fighting the Oligarchy” Tour isn’t the prelude to a revolution; it is merely a ploy to help the Democrats regain the trust of working and oppressed people. Nonetheless, him uttering the word “socialist” was a big deal, and once Sanders lost the Primary and conceded to the Democratic Party Machine, those who lost faith in him and the Party continued to move left. And, with the election of Trump and the anti-Trump wave that came afterward, more and more people were galvanized to read theory and truly engage with leftist ideas in a way they never could. For the first time in many years, people were abandoning the label of “liberal” and embracing radical and revolutionary ideas. This can even be seen in the shift in the language used in political discourse. Yes, the terms “working class” and “working people” have always been a part of political discourse, but prior to 2016, they were used as synonyms to “middle class,” making it devoid of any

actual meaning. Now, though, they are regaining their original and correct meaning—as a description of the class of people who must sell their labor to the owning class in order to live.

As the years go by, leftist ideas, especially the principle of class struggle, are reaching a wider and wider audience, which is only fueled by the contradictions in society growing more acute by the day and the establishment institutions losing the trust of the working class. All over the country, working and oppressed people are saying, “No more”—no more hollow promises from both political parties; no more 50, 60, 70 hour work weeks for pennies; no more to a parasitic for-profit healthcare system; no more to the march of climate change; no more to imperialist wars and genocide.

Despite the return of leftist ideas to the mainstream, it isn't all sunshine and revolutions. The owning class is clearly fearful of the rise of a radical and revolutionary movement brewing in the US. We see this with the resurgence of the far-right in the US. As had happened previously under his first presidency, the second presidency of Trump has seen the ascendancy of reactionary actions and policies, with everything and everyone being targeted. Additionally, Trump's increasing fixation on challenging the “Marxist indoctrination” is a clear attempt to a. stem the rise of people questioning the status quo, and b. to keep working and oppressed people divided and focused on a semi-manufactured culture war. This doesn't even begin to examine the flagrant demonstrations organized by far-right groups, such as those in Cincinnati a while back.

Even if we ignore the far-right, the popularity of radical and revolutionary language hasn't escaped the Democrats and other opportunists. While the Democratic Party has avoided most radical language, this hasn't stopped some within their ranks from adopting the rhetoric. Through using this language, people like Sanders and AOC

can earn brownie points and bridge the Party with those who would normally balk at the Democrats' centrist to center-right position. At best, these people channel the anger and energy of millions of working people into reformism, with them maybe modifying the way capitalism operates in specific situations. Either way, reformists keep the working class tied to capitalism, continue their exploitation and oppression.

Finally, it's not enough that leftist ideas are popular. Though leftist ideas are gaining traction, the revolutionary movement is still infantile in its size. Due to the constant betrayals by both political parties, many working people have become severely disillusioned. Even for those who haven't become jaded, they still cling to the old electoral system and the parties that represent it.

All of this means that in order for our words to reach the masses, they have to be tied to concrete actions that connect to and serve the interests of working and oppressed people in the immediate and in the future. In doing this, by engaging in regular, effective, and fruitful praxis, we become closer to the masses, gain their trust, and validate our ideas. Through this, our ideas gain greater traction and become a real and material force that can challenge the hegemony of the owning class's rule and ideas. We become a real alternative that people can back.

The rise of the left, a true left (not Democrats), underscores the direness of the conditions of working and oppressed people. As time passes, greater swathes of workers are awakening to the exploitation and oppression they experience and recognizing that change is needed. However, while hopeful, passivity in building class consciousness and spreading revolutionary theory isn't something we can allow. History has shown us that if we don't seize upon the opportunity before us, the infantile revolutionary sentiments of the working class will be co-opted and directed

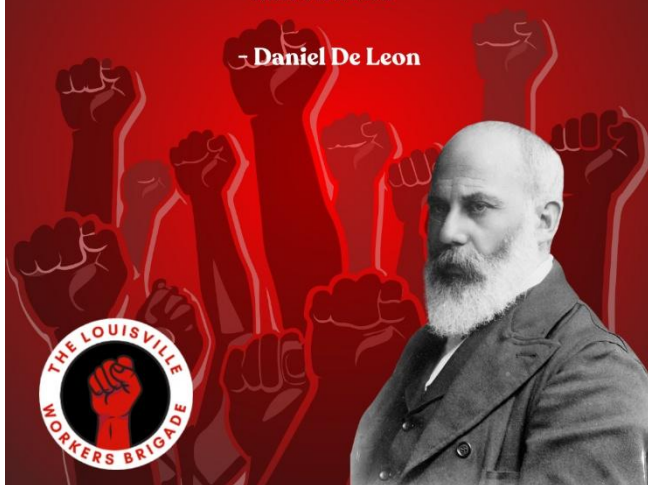


toward backing the establishment parties, or worse, they become disillusioned and jaded to any form of political action. To achieve a world for working and oppressed people, we need to be actively reaching out to working people, conveying our ideas into language they can understand, and standing with them and for their struggles.

Only in this can the return of radical and revolutionary language become the prelude to a mass revolutionary working class movement.

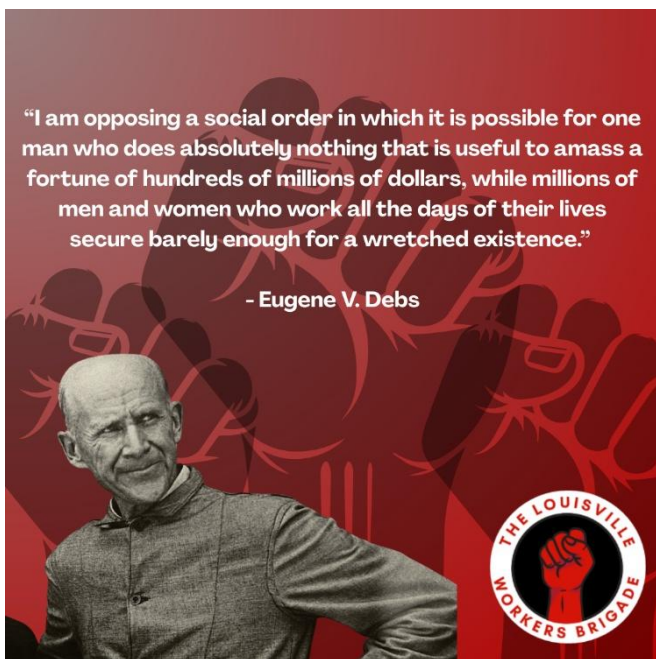
**"Make no mistake: The organization of the working class must be both economic and political. The capitalist is organized upon both lines. You must attack him on both."**

**- Daniel De Leon**



**"I am opposing a social order in which it is possible for one man who does absolutely nothing that is useful to amass a fortune of hundreds of millions of dollars, while millions of men and women who work all the days of their lives secure barely enough for a wretched existence."**

**- Eugene V. Debs**









NOW AVAILABLE ON THE BRIGADE'S  
WEBSITE AND YOUTUBE CHANNEL.

## **A STRUGGLE AGAINST INJUSTICE FEATURING THE RAYTHEON 5**


[WWW.LOUWORKERSBRIGADE.ORG/  
2025-EDUCATIONAL-PRESENTATIONS](http://WWW.LOUWORKERSBRIGADE.ORG/2025-EDUCATIONAL-PRESENTATIONS)

[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/  
@LOUWORKERSBRIGADE](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/@LOUWORKERSBRIGADE)



## **MAY EDUCATIONAL: THE HISTORY OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE**

**THURSDAY, MAY 15, 6:15-8:15 PM  
SHAWNEE LIBRARY  
(3912 W BROADWAY, LOUISVILLE, KY 40211)**



# THE CLASS STRUGGLE CHRONICLE

*The Class Struggle Chronicle* is the publication of **The Louisville Workers Brigade**. It is a free, worker-run newspaper that circulates both online and physical copies.

The primary purpose of *The Class Struggle Chronicle* is to offer coverage of working class issues, particularly involving organized Labor, in the Louisville, Kentucky area.

We are an unabashedly pro-worker publication, seeking to contribute to the class struggle against the owning class who daily exploits, oppresses, and demoralizes laborers here in Louisville and the world over.

We publish articles on topics ranging from union organizing efforts, strikes, worker grievances, worker-related issues, etc. Submissions from Louisville workers are encouraged and accepted, but are subject to review and editing by the editorial staff of *The Class Struggle Chronicle*. Submissions can be sent to [csc@louworkersbrigade.org](mailto:csc@louworkersbrigade.org).



**To Educate.**

**To Support.**

**To Unite.**



## THE PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE LOUISVILLE WORKERS BRIGADE

The establishment of the Louisville Workers Brigade is an outward, physical expression of the rising class consciousness of the working masses and the intensification of the class struggle between this majority working class against the ruling minority owning class. This intensification of class struggle—a result of the brutalized working class standing firm and using its position as the producer of all things as leverage—must be strengthened further.

The only hope the working and oppressed masses have is to organize into a cohesive, united collective—regardless of industry, employment status, race, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.—to oppose the more powerful and resourced owning class. This is the mission of the Louisville Workers Brigade: to build unity and power among working people, pushing for stronger union contracts, broader union representation, and a return to radical rank-and-file organizing that secures the most gains and victories for our class. We are not separate from the existing trade unions, but seek to educate and empower union members and non-union members alike, so that they can better participate as workers in the economic, political, and social spheres of our community. As workers ourselves, we remain intrinsically tied to and committed to the conditions of the working masses, not only in this country, but in all countries. This is why we dedicate our time, resources, and experience to the aims and goals of this cause. Only through an unwavering devotion to solidarity with all working people of this world can the workers of all countries fight for their collective empowerment and liberation.

[www.louworkersbrigade.org](http://www.louworkersbrigade.org)

[contact@louworkersbrigade.org](mailto:contact@louworkersbrigade.org)

# SOLIDARITY FOREVER!