Elections 2020: Who Will Decide Our Future?

Many people are looking at the primary election on March 3, Super Tuesday, as a way to change the situation in this country. They want to get rid of Trump - given who he is, what he has done, and what he might do. So the focus on the elections is - who can beat Trump? Some think that Sanders could. Others fear that he can't beat Trump because he says he is a socialist and won't get enough votes.

Sanders' campaign forced the other candidates to address some of the real problems like the enormous wealth that the 1% has gained while many have little or nothing. He says we need a government to defend the interests of working class people and with programs liken Medicare For All, ending student debt, and to deal with the environmental crisis with the Green New Deal. Even though the Democratic Party doesn't want Sanders as its candidate, they are using his popularity to gain support for the candidate they finally run. His criticism of Trump and the 1% gives good cover for the Democrats.

Trump represents the open functioning of this capitalist system that puts the profits of the 1% ahead of the health, well-being and future of the majority. He proudly defends his policies that put the profits of the oil, coal and gas corporations ahead of the needs of humanity and the planet. He openly encourages and defends racist, sexist, anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim attitudes. He disregards existing laws and basic civil liberties if they get in his way.

The Democrats don't usually have such a vicious and ignorant face and certainly didn't during the Obama administration. They acknowledge the climate crisis and claim to defend the majority. But what do they really do? They are the defenders of a system that rests on the exploitation of the vast majority. They support the corporations and the banks over the needs of the majority. They showed this with the bailout of the corporations and banks after 2008 economic crisis, while millions lost their homes and jobs. They vote for the national budget giving billions to the military industrial complex, while children in this country go hungry, receive substandard education and face uncertain futures. Like Trump, they defend the same system - they just do it in a kinder and gentler way.

Democrats try to appear to stand on the side of working people. And when people have mobilized and organized demanding social change, the Democratic Party has corralled these movements into electoral politics. It was true with the workers' movement of the 1930s and with the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements in the 1960s. We saw the same tactics in 2016 when there was an outrage over Trump's election. People took to the streets with the Women's March, the Science March, Environmental marches, and others. The Democratic Party worked behind the scenes to promote these responses. And as the 2018 elections approached shifted the direction to an electoral focus. This was most obvious when the Women's March slogan changed from "Hear my Voice" to "Hear my Vote."

We can't afford to waste our energy on dead-end electoral strategies and vague promises of reform. We need deep systemic change to save our lives and save this planet. All over the world today people are out in the streets demanding solutions to their problems. They are demanding that their governments, whose policies favor the wealthy resign. And in response the political oppositions promise new election and new politicians to take their place. Sound familiar?

Who can we count on to defend our interests? We can count on ourselves. We are the majority, the 99%. We produce everything and make everything run. If we organize and mobilize our forces we have the power to change the world and guarantee we have a future.

> Come to a presentation and discussion:
> **The 2020 Elections: What's at Stake?**
> **What Are Our Choices?**
> **Sat. March 7th, 7PM** (doors open at 6:30)
> S. Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis St, Berkeley,
> $5 admission