



**Fight Imperialism - Stand Together Youth say:**

# **FIGHT THE SYSTEM THAT POISONED FLINT!**

On March 6 the two Democratic Party presidential candidates and nominee hopefuls, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Senator Bernie Sanders, will take part in a televised debate in Flint, Michigan. Flint has been the subject of global media attention after it was revealed that the city's residents have been continually poisoned by the water coming from their faucets.

Flint, along with many other cities in the so-called U.S. "Rust Belt," has been absolutely decimated by deindustrialization. These cities, primarily in the Midwest and especially in Michigan, were built from the ground up by the working class tied directly to the auto industry. Once hotbeds of militant trade unionism and a burgeoning revolutionary movement, they have been nearly destroyed by the closing of the vast majority of production facilities. Capitalism's robotization, offshoring and union-busting have left these cities devastated. Flint has a 40% poverty rate, official unemployment close to 10% (which is an underestimate) and 20,000 vacant homes caused by bank and tax foreclosures.

The decision by the Democratic National Committee to host its debate in Flint is the height of shameless opportunism. Neither the Democratic Party as a whole and certainly neither Sanders or Clinton have pointed fingers at the source of the crisis: the major banking institutions and the auto manufacturers. Sanders has called for the resignation of Gov. Rick Snyder and Clinton has complained of his not requesting federal aid to the city. Neither would dare demand reparations from GM and finance capital for those who have been lead poisoned, particularly the 8,000+ children who will be permanently damaged. They are not calling for criminal charges against those involved in the poisoning and cover-up.

Many in the Democratic Party rightly call for Snyder's resignation, albeit for political gain, to regain the governor's office. But if the criminal, anti-people Snyder were to step down and face jail time, would his successor, presumably a Democrat, be any less callous towards the working class? Would they enact a jobs program to put people back to work with good wages to fix the roads, feed the hungry and educate our next generation? Democratic Gov. Jim Blanchard presided over GM's mass plant closings and Gov. Jennifer Granholm did nothing about the racist banks' mass home foreclosures.

The disaster of Flint and other cities like it is not an issue of Republican versus Democrat, but rather a fight between the multinational working class and the capitalist class which profits directly from its attacks against us. We need an independent and militant movement, based among the working class and oppressed, separate from the two major imperialist parties and capable of challenging capitalist class rule and their ability to exploit us and put our very lives in danger. Our goal must be a revolutionary movement with the power to overthrow those who deprive us of homes, decent jobs, food, healthcare, education and clean water. The resources exist and it is the task of the majority to seize what we've built from the hands of the minority of exploiters who own it!

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