We Will Replace You

written by Dan La Botz | August 14, 2017

The “Unite the Right” rally held in Charlottesville, Virginia this past weekend attracted several hundred white men from the "alt-right," the neo-Nazis, and the Ku Klux Klan who marched with torches through the University of Virginia chanting, “You will not replace us.” Nothing better explains the fear at the root of their racist movement than that chant. They fear, as their political ancestors feared, that they will be replaced by blacks. They have now come to fear also that they will be replaced by Latinos and by Asians. They fear too that they will be replaced by women, by gay men or lesbians or bisexuals. Or by trans people or the disabled. Above all, they fear.

The next day the white nationalists, arriving with guns on their shoulders and armed with tear gas rallied at the statue of Rober E. Lee. There they were surrounded by anti-fascists and faced a fight. Filled with fear and hatred, one of the right-wing racists drove his car into the crowd of counter-protestors and killed Heather Heyer, a young anti-fascist activitist.

Tacitly encouraged by President Donald Trump and his "alt-right" advisor Steven Bannon, the fearful imbibe racist rants like liquid courage, and trembling inside march their white faces under Confederate flags and swastika-like banners to the statue of Robert E. Lee, the slave owner who became the symbol of defeat of the lost cause. What better symbolizes the desperateness of their desire to return to a mythical past of white power than the fact that they march to a monument to a loser, whose Confederate Army was destroyed by abolitionists, black soldiers, and the forward march of freedom.

Of course demography tells us that white people are gradually being displaced and in some areas eclipsed by the growth of populations of various people of color. And the civil rights movements of blacks, Latinos, women, and LGBT people have allowed them to push forward to try to claim their place in American society. In the face of this a small group of white men, shaken to their quick by fear, adopts hatred as their shield and racism as their sword and marches through America.

Even under the protective shadow of Trump’s White House and the racist Attorney General Jeff Sessions, a small number of white men showed up. White nationalism is their rallying cry, but we intend to make it the death rattle of white supremacy. Their small “Unite the Right” rally could bring together only a few hundred demonstrators, compared to the tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands who marched in the Black Lives Matter protests.

The counter-protestors stood firm against the racist right, one person losing their life and several others injured. They stood strong for us. We stand now for them. Throughout the country rallies are being held to protest against the neo-Nazis, the Klan, and the "alt-right," to support the anti-fascist movement, and to express our support for justice.

They chanted “you will not replace us” and sometimes “Jews will not replace us.” But they *will* be replaced. We will replace them, we—white people and people of color, women and men, straight and queer—who are building a movement for democracy and socialism. We will rebuild the unions not only as workers organizations fighting for better wages and conditions, but also as organizations

that stand for racial justice, democracy and workers' power. We will organize in our communities to defend the Muslims and Mexicans so feared and hated by the neo-fascists. We will march with women and the LGBT movement for full equality. We will while doing all of that also fight to stop climate change. We will build the Resistance to Trump, the Republicans and the neoliberal Democrats, and we will defeat them.

To the far right we say: We will replace you. We will replace racism with a diverse but united society. We will replace fear with security. We will replace hate with love. We will replace you. And America and even you will be better for it.