

The Michigan Socialist

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The Michigan Socialist is the voice of the Socialist Party of Michigan, a feminist and revolutionary democratic socialist party of the working class. For more information, check us out at <http://www.spmichigan.org>



Socialist Party USA Statement on the Recent Bombings in London

[Passed by the SP USA National
Action Committee 7/8/05]

The Socialist Party USA believes we must work toward a new society; a new society free of aggression and the violence of hunger, homelessness, and disease, and from the exploitation of labor; a new society where war is written in history books, not reported in the daily news media; a new society based on radical democracy from below; a socialist rebirth of humankind.

The recent tragedy in London that resulted in murdering and maiming hundreds of working people, is a deplorable and dehumanizing act. The unintended consequences of the global "war on terror" has made it's way into the streets of London and in other unspoken streets, not against the imperialist State

engaged in the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, but working people travelling to work, to school, to visit family and friends and to home.

It is our responsibility as brothers and sisters of humanity to condemn these acts of aggression and the imperialism of our governments in waging a war that results in untold victims without regard for age, class, race, religion, politics, sex, sexuality or nationality. The murder of civilian non combatants, whether it be by individuals, groups or States, cannot be supported nor defended in the face of such brutal reality.

It is our duty as brothers and sisters of humanity to continue the working class struggle against imperialism, against capitalism and against war.

Viva La Cause

by Ben Burgis

Editor, *The Michigan Socialist*

A lot has gone on since the last time *The Michigan Socialist* went out, here in our little arena of the class war here in Michigan and on other fronts across the globe.

New and damning evidence has come out that Bush's colonial war against the people of Iraq was based on lies. The leaking of the so-called "Downing Street Memo" provided new and official confirmation to what the majority of the population of the world knew or guessed--that almost 2,000 American working-class kids in uniform and untold thousands of Iraqi civilians, soldiers and resistance fighters have lost their lives not because Saddam Hussein and the boogie man were plotting to pass phantom WMD stockpiles to Al Qaeda, but because corporate America coveted Iraq's enormous oil reserves.

This has given new ground to the movement to impeach the unelected War Criminal-in-Chief, and this is certainly good. An impeachment of Bush would be an important symbolic victory.



It would not, however, be enough. No matter how widely the impeachment net was cast--

former Attorney General Ramsey Clark has suggested that Cheney and other co-conspirators be included--the problem runs deeper than that. Bush's policies of rollbacks against civil liberties at home and endless wars for oil and empire abroad are deeply and fundamentally bi-partisan policies.

Bush represents a bizarrely naked expression of this agenda, but there is a fundamental reason that even "progressive" Democrats lined up to vote for the USA-PATRIOT Act and the entire Democratic leadership lined up behind the war in Iraq. There is a reason why Governor Granholm and the Republicans in Michigan's legislature differ on the degree and details of budget cuts that harm the health care and education of ordinary Michigan residents, but not on the fundamental course.

Remember that in 2004 elections, we were given a "choice" between Bush's vision of "staying the course" in Iraq and Kerry's proposal to send 100,000 more soldiers to Iraq to "pacify" that country in rivers of blood. The fact is that these policies are enacted at the most fundamental level not because of the unique

evil of “the neo-cons” or Emperor Bush’s belief that he has a direct line to God. They are enacted because they represent the agenda of the corporate paymasters of *both* pro-imperialist parties, and he who pays the piper calls the tune.



Still, this is a dangerous gamble on their part. The more that the basic livelihood of the American people is sacrificed to pay for the imperial ambitions of our rulers, the more discontent will exist from below. All that anger has to go somewhere, and the corporations that own the media and pay the politicians certainly won't let it be directed towards *them* or they would be in trouble. Hence, they indulge all kinds of infantile bigoted nonsense. Lost your job? Blame Mexicans for working more cheaply. Don't have as good a job as you want? Blame the blacks for affirmative action. Just don't blame your boss, don't realize that he's the common enemy.

This inevitably receives a much more powerful expression from outside the mainstream. This is the kind of sewer that fascist movements arise from in more extreme circumstances, and even in ours we have got the “Minutemen,” armed gangs of racists “patrolling” the southern border to stop those damn brown-skinned people from coming in, as convinced as Scorsese’s “Bill the Butcher” that all the problems in the world arise from them, and holding any one they suspect of being an “illegal immigrant” at gunpoint. Like Hitler’s take on the Jews, this is a way of pinning all of society’s problems on one of its poorest and most powerless segments-- undocumented workers fleeing the levels of poverty and oppression in America’s Mexican colony to find a somewhat lesser but still severe degree of poverty and repression in the imperial heartland.

Playing into this despicable strategy, this spring the College Republicans at Western Michigan University decided that Caesar Chavez Day would be a pretty good time to lavish student activity money paid for by an unwilling student body on Pat Buchanan, America’s most famous

anti-immigrant demagogue, to preach hatred against Chicanos on campus. No one disputed his right to speak, but a lot of us thought that it would be a pretty sad commentary if there was no sign of protest or disagreement at all.

As such, a couple of dozen of us stood silently in the hall outside the room where he was to speak. We did not hinder any one going in to listen (indeed, most of us eventually went in to listen ourselves). We did not even chant. There was no conceivable way that we could have posed a threat of even mild disruption to Buchanan's right to speak or student's right to listen. What we did, as WMU students, was to stand in our own student union holding up a few Mexican and United Farmer Workers' flags and a few signs with incendiary slogans on them like, "WMU rejects racism."

The campus police, however, shut this protest down totally. Apparently, the normal right of students to stand around their own student union is null and void if they silently express some political opinions while they do so.

Signs were confiscated, students were told that they would be

arrested if they didn't relinquish all of it. One Chicana student was threatened with arrest if she didn't leave behind a tiny UFW flag once carried by Caesar Chavez that she was planning on sticking in her pocket while she listened. Such is "freedom of speech" at Western Michigan. Just broad enough to allow thousands of dollars of student activity money to be spent to fund the preaching of race hatred on Caesar Chavez day, just narrow enough to prevent students from silently expressing disagreement with this message.

Buchanan spoke without interruption, ranting about "Chinese crap on the shelves," the "murder" of Terri Shiavo and the "invasion" of brown-skinned people from the southern border.



He used that term again and again, so just for the record here, let's get something straight: cluster-bombing a population into devastation and sending hundreds of thousands of soldiers to patrol

their cities is an "invasion." That is what the peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti have experienced at the hands of the President who Buchanan endorsed in 2004. If Americans had come in not to bomb and occupy the Iraqis but to wash their dishes and mow their lawns for poverty wages, they might not have minded so much.



Once this screed was finished and Buchanan was well into the q-and-a and praising the Minutemen, Kalamazoo Socialist Party Chair Sam Messick walked calmly up to the stage, doused Buchanan with Caesar salad dressing and shouted the old farm workers' slogan, "Viva La Cause!" before being hauled off in handcuffs. Angry College Republicans surrounded him yelling things and in at least one case kicking him as he was in handcuffs. I went off with another friend to the police station to help pay Sam's bail.

Later, I would be called in for a bullshit harassment meeting with the WMU administration, given my position as a (sadly, thus far non-unionized) Graduate Assistant at Western. Apparently, I was mentioned on a police report as having "possibly encouraged" Sam, apparently by flashing him a clenched fist salute while he was being led away, and the police felt the need to share this with my employer.

Sam was banned from campus entirely, and given jail time, community service and a hefty fine. Local liberals, predictably, could be seen from a distance in the back as then ran like frightened animals bleating surrender to the far right. Again and again, they said that this small symbolic act of civil disobedience somehow threatened Pat Buchanan's "free speech" and "played into the hands of the right." As I pointed out when I called a local progressive radio show about it later, this defies imagination when you consider that Buchanan is a household name who has access to the bullhorn of the corporate media whenever he chooses to use it. His free speech is in zero danger. Those

movements who oppose Buchanan's scapegoating and think that the problem lies with capitalism of course are carefully blacked out of any forum where there is any danger that this message could reach any one.

More than that, it is amazing how selective is the memory of a scared liberal. The free speech of Pat Buchanan was somehow threatened by a symbolic act that did not stop him from speaking and for which Sam took jail time. The free speech of the Chicano and white students protesting Buchanan, however, is apparently no big deal. As one of the hosts of that show, 89.1's "People's Power Hour" (Thursday nights at 7 in K'zoo), pointed out at the time, the absurd charge that Sam's protest played into the hands of the right *itself* plays into the hands of the right, pretending that the problem was Sam not Buchanan or the campus police.

Those of us, though, not inclined to buy into the scapegoating of immigrant workers or of the people's protest movements, can safely ignore this nonsense. Our flag is not the emblem of American imperialism fawned over by liberals and conservatives alike, it is the scarlet banner of

workers' democracy and international solidarity against all forms of oppression and exploitation. As the old British workers' song puts it, "though cowards flinch and traitor's sneer/we'll keep the red flag flying here."

For those of us who stand by that banner, Sam is a hero. To paraphrase Che Guevara's famous comment about Vietnam, we need "two, three many" Sams.

Viva La Cause!

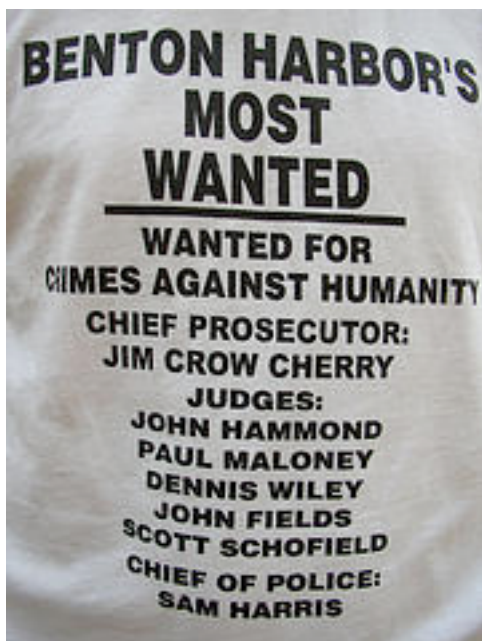


Benton Harbor Fights Back

Reprinted from an E-mail Announcement Sent out by Reverend Pinkney's office. Rev Pinkney a civil rights leaders in Benton Harbor is currently fighting against trumped up charges of voter arising from a successful recall campaign against a local officeholder known for siding with brutal cops. For the previous history of the struggle in Benton Harbor, see "It's All So

Unnecessary: Repression, Rebellion and Hypocrisy in Benton Harbor in the July/August 2003 issue of *The Michigan Socialist*, available on the web at <http://www.spmichigan.org>]

Once a month, in the city of Benton Harbor, where justice is almost unheard of, and the promise of the constitution is but a dream, crowds gather to hear speakers inform listeners about the current state of social injustice in Benton Harbor, the state, and the country. Both the speakers and the audience are becoming more and more multi-cultural. For an activist, it feels like there's now a place to go on a regular basis to listen to people talk about problems, solutions, opinions, to gather information, and to network. Many of the speakers are



inspiring and exciting to hear.

Benton Harbor Community Forums, sometimes called Rallies, are held once a month. Last Saturday's Rally was held in the BH library and brought people from Chicago, Detroit, Lansing, Ann Arbor, Albion, St. Joseph, and Flint. Dorothy Pinkney opened the afternoon with a prayer, and reminded us that we are in a war (right in BH). Rev. Carl Brown said that the entire state and country is witness to what's going on in Berrien County.

We had an honored guest. Carl E. Person, NYC anti-trust attorney, flew in to speak about the fact that oppression by elected officials can and should be offset by filing civil rights and anti-trust lawsuits against gov't. agencies and major corporations to get back much of the money and opportunity which they are stealing from the poor and un-represented. This will have the effect of elevating civil lawsuits and lowering a community's reliance on costly, unjust criminal prosecution. Atty. Person has written three books and is one of the most interesting minds I've ever met.

Many people spoke to him after the rally.

I reminded everyone to leave the Rally and tell ten people to stand up and fight. We're the busiest people in the world and we're doing nothing. There are four families in BH who control drugs in the city. Everything they do is bad for the city and county. The recall election was good for one reason: those in power now see that BH residents can get organized and take action. This is a real war and the opposition leaders in Berrien County should be criminalized.

Marian Kramer from Michigan Welfare Rights League: "Malcolm X said that if you live south of the Canadian border, you live in the South. Highland Park is run by an appointed, not elected, manager - that's the plan for all cities. Water is the next gold. It is being privatized for the benefit of those who will make maximum profit.

Flint speaker from the Poverty Round Table, Clara McClinton: "The struggle in Benton Harbor is a blessing because you're standing up and making a difference. We've got to educate people on how the system works. When a police officer strikes a

person that is the state against the people."



Roderick Casey from Ypsilanti is circulating a petition for juries to be comprised of at least 6 (50%) who are the same color as the defendant. His email: casey_36@juno.com

This is only a partial representation of the stimulating speakers we were fortunate to hear in Benton Harbor on June 25.

Benton Harbor Rally Sat. July 30, 1pm
Benton Harbor Public Library
215 Wall Street. Take I-94 to exit 33, about 5 lights turn left on Pipestone, go one block.

Send tax-deductible donations for atty. fees to
BANCO
1940 Union St.

Benton Harbor, MI 49022
(desperately needed)

call or email me with ANY
questions, anytime!
Rev. Edward Pinkney, 269-925-
0001
email: banco9342@sbcglobal.net



website: bhbanco.blogspot.com

**Million Worker March
Movement Points the Way**
by Jim Griffin

The following is a statement by the national steering committee of the Million Worker March movement, which is continuing after the demonstration last October 17th. Look it over. When you consider that this statement was put out mainly by actual union leaders and officials, it represents an important departure from the usual fearful, cautious, sell out attitudes of the union bureaucracy.

The Million Worker March movement may or may not last and expand, but it certainly represents a very promising development in the working class. The clear direction of the

statement below points toward the idea of a mass workers' party. It does all but openly call for it. As revolutionary socialists, we should join, take part in, build, and attempt to influence the direction of the MWM movement - -- toward mass independent working class electoral and organizing action and mobilization.

The platform of demands of the MWM will need expanding sooner or later in areas such as full employment (Shorten the workweek with no loss of net pay or benefits. Take over idled facilities under workers' control to create socially useful employment). More needs to be said about workers' control in general, and a section on democratic and union rights for soldiers. Obviously, the clear idea of socialization of basic industry under the democratic control of workers' and the communities is essential too.

There are some indications that internal democracy within the MWM movement is in question and that there are pressures to keep the movement "controlled" from the top. A section of the steering committee feel somewhat threatened by what

they have potentially unleashed. We must take part in the fight to make and keep the MWM movement fully democratic and controlled from the bottom up. This will be a do or die issue for the new movement, and will be one of the only ways that it can reach its promise. In fact, at the recent MWM National Fightback Conference held in Detroit, May 14 & 15, there was some talk about this issue, and it appears that there may indeed be changes made, including a possible web site connected discussion forum and an democratic opening up of the MWM newspaper supplement that is already a part of the Commemorator, the newspaper of the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party, based in Oakland California. We will see how all this goes, and we should be a part of it.

Extracts from **Forging the Fightback: The Million Worker March Movement Calls for Rank-and-File Unity in the Struggle for Workers' Rights and An End to the War in Iraq**

Dec. 2, 2004 (SF, CA) - The Million Worker March Movement emerged from a historic summons to working people by ILWU Local 10, calling upon the rank and file

of the labor movement, organized and unorganized, to mobilize in our own name and to challenge the passivity of the AFL-CIO leadership in the face of unrestrained class warfare waged by the captains of capital against the mass of our people.



Working people need to have a political expression of our own which is an alternative to the U.S. corporate sector that both the Democrats and the Republicans represent. The timing of the March on Washington was to prepare the beginning of a fight-back precisely because the two political parties, acting as one, were confining political discourse to the corporate agenda of permanent war, destruction of all social services, and a relentless assault upon the union movement itself.

It was clear to us that the crisis in a labor movement whose numbers had dwindled to under 12% of the work force in America, was linked directly to the business unionism that has done everything possible to stifle

rank and file leadership. It is reflected in the wholesale concessionary bargaining that has produced setback after setback and led to the dismantling of the trade union movement. Pension funds go belly-up, workers' rights are eroded and, while all this unfolds, dependence upon the Democratic Party deepens— a Party whose funding, personnel, track record and program are at the very center of the assault upon our class.



Behind a façade of two parties, the captains of industry call the political shots while labor has been put in the position of providing cover for undisguised attacks upon working people.

Here is a political party and a candidate who supported the war in Iraq and attacked the Republican administration from the right for “hesitating” to carry out a Guernica-like genocide in Fallujah. Here was a party whose leadership called for increasing

the military budget by nearly \$800 billion, adding 40,000 troops in Iraq, attacking Iran preemptively, cutting social services and reducing the federal deficit by slashing two million public sector jobs.

Writing in the Wall Street Journal, John Kerry stated that his administration would not only protect business but contain any challenge to its rule. He stated that the election was about “a change in CEO,” adding: “election day will be a national shareholders’ meeting.”..... In handing over union funds of well over \$100 million to the Democratic Party, labor was put in the position of funding a political campaign waged on behalf of corporate capital.....

Debate Feature: Is the Section of Our Statement of Principles on the so-called “Communist” Countries Incomplete?

The Socialist Party’s USA’s Statement of Principles, the basic document which all prospective members have to be in general agreement with to join, currently contains the following paragraph:

Under capitalist and “Communist” states, people have little control over fundamental areas of their lives. The capitalist system forces workers to sell their abilities and skills to the few

who own the workplaces, profit from these workers' labor, and use the government to maintain their privileged position. Under "Communist" states, decisions are made by Communist Party officials, the bureaucracy and the military. The inevitable product of each system is a class society with gross inequality of privileges, a draining of the productive wealth and goods of the society into military purposes, environmental pollution, and war in which workers are compelled to fight other workers.

People across the world need to cast off the systems which oppress them, and build a new world fit for all humanity.

The Socialist Party of Michigan's Organizer Jim Griffin argues that this paragraph needs to be amended in order to more fully reflect the differences between the two systems. "The Michigan Socialist" Editor Ben Burgis disagrees, arguing that this is not a fundamental enough issue to require every one to agree with a more complete statement.

What Role Did Those Commie Bastards Really Play Anyway? By Jim Griffin

I really do think that we need to get away from equating the negative impacts of the so-called "communist" states over the years on the one hand and the world capitalist system on the other hand. (Stalinism is really a more accurate term. Using "communist" to describe them is a

distortion, just as is calling the United States a democracy---I mean, really!). No doubt there are areas where such an equation fits to some extent, at least superficially. But there are areas where such a comparison just does not fit.



It just is not true that the impetus toward war and conquest has been equal or even really similar between the two systems. The Soviet Union and Co. were nothing to preen over, and some extremely brutal repressions took place in various places. Even on a day to day level, the Stalinist system made life a dreary, grey, dingy, miserable affair for the average people --- and that was during GOOD times. But the Soviet system was NOT compulsively expansionist, always needing new markets or cheap labor, like capitalism is and does. It was NOT an imperialistic system in that sense at all. Even the Chinese invasion and take-over of Tibet, horrific and bloody and unjustified as it

was, was not done for these kinds of reasons.



The Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe at the end of WW II was done first of all to chase the Nazis back, second of all to destroy pro-Nazi collaborationist regimes, and third of all to create a buffer between Western imperialism and the Soviet Union. The nasty part was that the Stalinists had no concept of inspiring the masses in these countries to rise up and organize themselves into their own form of democratic socialism. They only saw places of former anti-Soviet regimes and peoples who had to be subjugated and kept under control. They carried out anti-capitalist measures and eliminated capitalism in the major means of production (and pretty much totally, even against most small business and family farms -- not necessary), something which these countries benefited from in fact and in general, but they did it in a totally top down, bureaucratic-military manner, which did not help anyone (and which sowed the seeds of anti-

socialist feelings on the part of many as the decades went by).

On a world scale and in terms of military buildup and the arms race, the truth is that the Soviet Union was in a defensive position throughout, always under threat from the imperialist West, most particularly, of course, the United States. While the idea that they could somehow out arm the United States became more and more ludicrous as the decades went by, and while they totally missed and feared the idea of actively promoting and encouraging world socialist revolution --- the only way to REALLY defeat Western imperialism --- the Soviet Union really did have serious security concerns and a truthfully self-defensive need to arm themselves massively. A revolutionary, workers' democracy government in the Soviet Union would have done tons of things differently, but it still would have had to have a no nonsense armed forces.

Equating that with the voracious, vampire like aggressiveness of the United States is like comparing a group of smaller kids in a schoolyard, who walk home together to discourage a thug bully from attacking them, and

who occasionally have to stand up to him and fight back, to the bully himself. Both sides are using force and both sides are organized in their strategy, and occasionally the smaller kids bully someone even smaller than them, but only a totally disconnected teacher or principal would "equate" the two. Let's not us be that teacher or principal.

None of this is to excuse or support in any way the totalitarian nature of Stalinism, but at the same time we must not blind ourselves with all that to the point that we create a fiction which equates Stalinism with imperial capitalism. They are both enemies of the working class and the oppressed in the final analysis and overall (although the Soviet Union did give material support to many anti-imperialist movements and regimes over the years, including making life a lot easier for Cuba), but they are DIFFERENT kinds of enemies with



different natures. I am simply saying that our Socialist Party Statement of Principles should reflect that truth more clearly.

Will the Real Commie Bastards Please Stand Up? A Reply to Jim Griffin

by Ben Burgis

The Soviet Union is dead and gone, and one's precise view of the Cold War is about as relevant to contemporary politics as one's view of the Fraco-Prussian War of the 19th century. I think, in either case, people could reasonably disagree (no matter how general and carefully worded a statement was) and both could be good revolutionary democratic socialists in a contemporary American setting. No formulation would satisfy both the followers of Tony Cliff, who argued that the USSR was "state capitalist" and the followers of Leon Trotsky, who argued that it represented some sort of "degenerated workers' state" that contained in a distorted form some sort of step in the direction of socialism.

Sure, a few outposts still exist in which Soviet-style "communism" is mixed with some market forces (Cuba, North Korea, etc.). These are all fairly marginal third world

countries, and some of them may be targets of Iraq-style "regime change" attempts by "our" government in the future. Does this mean, however, that the debate over the exact nature of this system (which is now largely extinct, increasingly even in these countries) is an important dividing line between contemporary radicals?

No, it doesn't. No one regarded Saddam Hussein's Iraq as any sort of "socialist" society or a "workers' state," but every one on the radical left saw the need to oppose and resist the imperialist assault on that country. Why would a hypothetical attack on Cuba or North Korea be any different?

China, of course, is more than a 'marginal third world country,' but the only thing "Communist" about it (even in the Stalinist sense) is the name of its ruling party (not unlike Hitler's "National Socialist" government.) In some ways, it represents a far purer form of capitalism, with fewer concessions to workers, than even the U.S. "model." U.S. companies routinely move their because they can pay Chinese workers lower wages (i.e. exploit them to a higher degree, letting them take a lower

percentage of the value that they create) than they are forced by unions and reforms won in struggle (like the minimum wage) to pay U.S. workers. The only people who still think that China represents some sort of non-capitalist system are small children and Republicans.

There is, however, a subject that *is* relevant to contemporary U.S. politics which this argument has close parallels to: the Democratic Party. In the 2000 and 2004 elections, when the Nader campaigns brought the subject of "third party" voting to the forefront, many mainline liberal and even radical commentators argued that it was necessary to vote for the "lesser evil" to prevent the greater evil from winning.



These commentators--folks like Ted Glick, Norman Solomon and sometimes even Noam Chomsky--admitted freely that the Democrats were at their most fundamental level a corporate-

funded, pro-imperialist party. They freely admitted that the Democratic Party was basically an enemy. They argued, however, that there were vitally important differences in degree, that if both were enemies they were very different kinds of enemies. Above all, they ridiculed any notion of equating them, what they took to be the Naderite argument that there was "no difference."



Of course, those of us who opposed voting for a different face of corporate America never really argued that there was no difference. The problem with the Glick/Solomon argument was never really that it was totally wrong, but that it missed the point. Yes, they were different flavors of evil, but even the lesser evil is evil and one shouldn't vote it.

Similarly, I'm sure there were lots of interesting differences between the two systems of oppression and exploitation in the US and the USSR. It's a complicated subject, and lots of good revolutionary democratic socialists have

historically come down on many different sides of it. Emphasis on this, though, misses the point, and over-emphasis on it undermines the point that real socialists must be uncompromising in our opposition to all forms of oppression and exploitation.

I don't disagree with everything Jim says here by a long shot. What I disagree with, more than anything, is the suggestion that agreeing should be a prerequisite for joining the Socialist Party USA. This is a historical issue with zero impact on contemporary U.S. politics. If people agree with us on what kind of society we are fighting for and on the need to organize working people in the workplaces, on the streets and in the ballot boxes to get there (in total opposition to the capitalist parties), should that person be denied membership because they disagree with one view of whether the U.S. represented a worse form of oppression, exploitation and militarism than the U.S.S.R. or vice versa?

There is one, and exactly one, point about the Soviet-style system of "Communism" that every one should have to agree with to join, because it is the only

point that is relevant to contemporary U.S. politics. This is that, whatever the U.S.S.R. was, it was not socialist as we understand the term socialism.

Socialism is radical democracy in all spheres of society, with people controlling their own workplaces and communities from the bottom up. Soviet-style "Communism" (which was not really communism at all, which historically is a synonym for socialism, but rather Stalinism) was almost the opposite, a rigidly hierarchical society where ordinary people had no control over their own lives and (in the worst phases of that society) failure to show up at work could lead to time in the gulag. To explain what we mean by socialism, we have to explain how it differs from Stalinism (as well, of course, as social democratic "capitalism with a human face.")

Once that point has been made though, the SPUSA has a multi-tendency party can and should contain people with all sorts of views on the Cold War. Whether people believe (as Jim and I do) that the U.S. was always far bigger and more dangerous gangster than the U.S.S.R. ever was, or whether they think that

they were both equally bad or whatever the other options may be, that should not be a bar to membership if we all agree on fighting tooth and nail against capitalism and imperialism *now*. The Statement of Principles as it stands now takes no position whatsoever on which system was worse, nor should it.

There are lots of revolutionary socialist groups that are only open to those with one point of view on various historical and theoretical questions. The revolutionary democratic socialist movement, if it's to have any hope of amounting to anything, needs at least one multi-tendency party in which there can be many points of view on these issues and we can all struggle together on more important issues of the day. I'm proud to be a member of that party, the Socialist Party USA, and I'd like to keep it that way.



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