

*from the SPUSA Statement of Principles....*

THE SOCIALIST PARTY strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control - a non-racist, classless, feminist socialist society... where working people own and control the means of production and distribution through democratically-controlled public agencies; where full employment is realized for everyone who wants to work; where workers have the right to form unions freely, and to strike and engage in other forms of job actions; and where the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not for the private profit of a few. We believe socialism and democracy are one and indivisible. The working class is in a key and central position to fight back against the ruling capitalist class and its power. The working class is the major force worldwide that can lead the way to a socialist future - to a real radical democracy from below. The Socialist Party fights for progressive changes compatible with a socialist future. We support militant working class struggles and electoral action, independent of the capitalist controlled two-party system, to present socialist alternatives. We strive for democratic revolutions - radical and fundamental changes in the structure and quality of economic, political, and personal relations - to abolish the power now exercised by the few who control great wealth and the government. The Socialist Party is a democratic, multi-tendency organization, with structure and practices visible and accessible to all members.

**Join us today!**

[www.socialistparty-usa.org](http://www.socialistparty-usa.org)



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Enclosed is \$10 for a year's subscription to *The Socialist*.

I want to join the Socialist Party USA; please send me a membership application.

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# Socialists and the Labor Movement



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The Socialist party USA considers the working class, as an organized class, essential to the fundamental transformation of capitalism, and a key force in building a new democratic socialist society.

We as socialists must work in the unions, labor organizations, and other labor-oriented bodies, to organize them towards an anti-capitalist, democratic socialist perspective, and to help fight for a revolution from below. We see that the working class itself, not its representatives as union officials or other representatives, must emancipate itself from capitalism, towards the creation of this new society. Workers who are organized into unions form the beginning base for class-consciousness, in developing the understanding of their role in the capitalist system, and the beginnings of a socialist movement based on that organization.

The crisis in U.S. labor is intolerable. The falling rate of union density and organization in industry is at an all time low. All socialists must support the labor movement in their communities, regions, and nationally. The globalization of capital supported by the Democrats and Republicans, two parties of global capital, have made the transnational corporations all powerful in the face of a weakened labor and socialist movement.

Nationally, the Sweeney administration of the AFL-CIO has brought a certain revitalization to the dead-end, collaborationist policies of Meany and Kirkland. New organizing methods, commitments of resources, and organizing staff, have focused on the need to organize the unorganized, and to bring in and support the new immigrants. Nevertheless, Sweeney and the current AFL-CIO leaders have not challenged the fundamental defects of business unionism. They still look to top-down maneuvers to wrest limited concessions, rather than seeking to strengthen rank and file democracy to mobilize direct action at the workplace, and in the streets. They are also committed to the capitalist market economy, and seek to win narrowly based gains without looking for the need for a fundamentally different social system. We work with other radicals to promote a militant opposition to the current union bureaucracy, from the level of the union local to the bureaucratic sanctuaries of Sweeney and his cohorts. We also call on the AFL-CIO and all of its affiliates to break with the Democratic and Republican parties.

New movements from below in the labor movement are needed to bring about this radical change. Working with radical caucuses in the AFL-CIO unions and with such groups as the IWW committed to democratic, revolutionary change in the workplace, the SP will work towards these ends:

1. The Socialist Party USA will work to build democratic, militant, worker-controlled trade unions and labor organizations, with militant, democratic, rank and file caucuses towards winning broader union democracy and worker control of unions;

2. Our aim is to bring socialist ideas, principles, and political program, to workers in their local unions and to unions at large; we will work to urge unions to commit themselves to independent political action, to break from the corporate-dominated two party system of Capital, and build a radical democratic socialist movement;

3. We will support organizing of the unorganized: all workers and employees need to fight for and have the support of a democratic and militant union.

4. We therefore urge SP Locals and members to activate these principles in the labor movement, to study the labor movement, make labor work part of their local action programs, organize unions at their workplaces, and/or support unions in their industry, do strike support, and other labor support activity where possible.

*passed by the SPUSA National Convention  
October 2001*