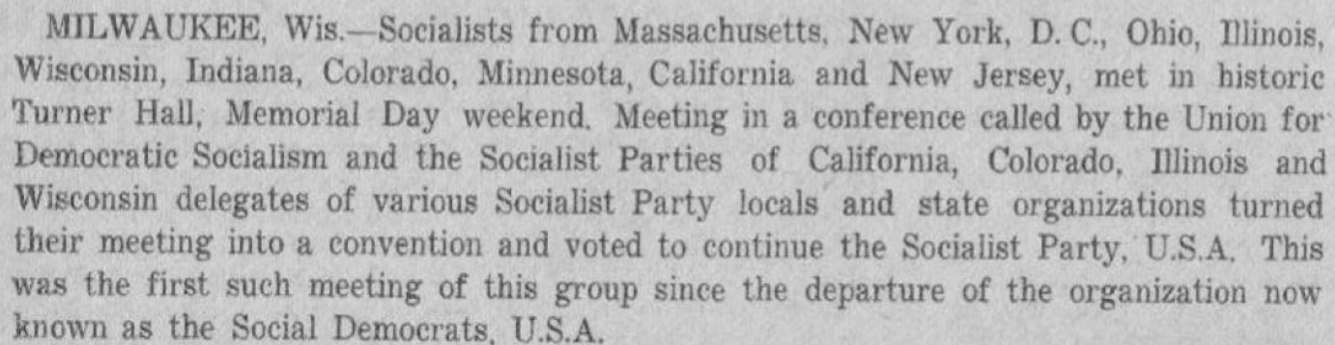


THE BIG 40!

The Socialist Party's history goes back more than 100 years to the founding of the Socialist Party of America in 1901, but our specific tradition, while inseparable from the Socialist Party of America, can be linked directly to Socialist Party USA reconstitution in 1973.

In the early 70s, the Socialist Party-SDF (Socialist Party of America) became sharply divided, and two caucuses organized. The "Realignment Caucus," led by Max Schachtman and Michael Harrington, called for realigning the movement inside the Democratic Party and supporting the War in Vietnam and the staunchly anti-war "Debs Caucus." By 1972, the Socialist Party was firmly under control of its right-wing, with the convention renaming the Party "Social Democrats USA" and reversing the Party's long-standing tradition of independent political action against war, and commitment to democratic socialism. This left a large number of disaffected and unhappy locals and Party members.

On Memorial Day 1973, these locals gathered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to reconstitute the Socialist Party USA. The convention was hosted by the Socialist Party of Wisconsin and included delegates from locals across the US. As the June 1973 Socialist Tribune reported:



MILWAUKEE, Wis.—Socialists from Massachusetts, New York, D. C., Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Colorado, Minnesota, California and New Jersey, met in historic Turner Hall, Memorial Day weekend. Meeting in a conference called by the Union for Democratic Socialism and the Socialist Parties of California, Colorado, Illinois and Wisconsin delegates of various Socialist Party locals and state organizations turned their meeting into a convention and voted to continue the Socialist Party, U.S.A. This was the first such meeting of this group since the departure of the organization now known as the Social Democrats, U.S.A.

The Party elected former Milwaukee Mayor Frank Ziedler as its new chair and the Socialist Party USA was born (or reborn).

Over the last 40 years, the Socialist Party USA has proudly carried forward the tradition of the original Socialist Party of America, promoting a radical democratic socialist ideology that rejects both liberal reformism and Leninist authoritarianism and maintaining its commitment to political action outside of the Democrat and Republican Parties.

From May through the National Convention (held this Fall), we will celebrate our history. We will celebrate our commitment to socialist-feminism, bottom-up organizing and radical democracy.

The Party has set up a website www.socialistorganizing.org where you can find photos and remembrances. We will be holding anniversary events through the summer, including a forum at our June 8th National Committee meeting and an anniversary journal available online and in print.

We invite you to join us in this celebration as we revisit the past and build toward the future.