

# the Socialist

Magazine of the Socialist Party USA - 2013 Issue 3 \$2.00

Special 40th Anniversary  
Information Inside!



**international workers day 2013**

# EDITORIAL

Viva May Day & Happy 40th Anniversary!

Every day when I wake to go to work in the “comfort” of a cubicle, I’m so grateful that I only have to do it for eight hours. For that, I am eternally grateful to those before me who toiled such long hours doing work that was sometimes incredibly dangerous; it is the struggle and vicious slayings of the Haymarket strikers who made a more humane work day possible.

At the same time, I know – as you all well know – that an 8-hour work day is not enough. We must continue the struggle to radically transform a system that places power so squarely into the hands of very few. As Scott Tucker writes, May Day is not simply about labor. It’s about capital. Who owns it, who controls it.

This makes me think about what my friend Taro said to me: it is workers who really control capital; without the work of the 99 percent, there would be no capital. I often think about that when at work I am pushed to produce

more under stricter deadlines and fewer resources. I think about that when I see the same few people doing so little and gaining so much because of the work that I and others do. I think about that when I start to feel guilty for taking a day off simply to rest and regroup.

We, as workers, have tremendous power. Work can be so much more than a job; it can also be a means to cultivate our strengths in ways that fulfill us individually and support us collectively.

As socialists, we see this and understand this. It is in our hands to ensure that this vision is illuminated and shared. Let us think about that as we contemplate this special anniversary of the Party and what we hope to do in the coming years..

In unity,  
Lynn

## MAY DAY 2013

**May 1st: Join the Socialist Party of Los Angeles** at the May Day/March for FULL Legalization and Workers Rights for ALL! March and Rally - 4:00 pm @ Olympic Ave & Broadway, Los Angeles, CA. Contingent Info: zesty-session@gmail.com.

**May 1st: Join Members of the Chicago Socialist Party** at the Haymarket Square The International Workers’ Day Rally 2:30 PM @ Haymarket Square Randolph & Des Plaines, Chicago, IL. Contingent Info: akazar@netzero.com.

**May 1st: Join the Memphis Socialist Party** at the Teamsters/Immigrant Workers Rally 6:00 - 7:30 pm @ First Congregational Church 100 So. Cooper Memphis, TN. Contingent Info: memphisocialistparty@gmail.com.

**May 1st: Join Members of the Socialist Party of Central Virginia** at events in Charlottesville and Richmond. Charlottesville - May Day Rally and March for Dignity and Justice in Public Housing 3:00 – 6:00 pm @ the Federal Courthouse (corner McIntire and W. Main) March to City Hall/Free Speech Wall, Downtown Charlottesville. Richmond - May Day Living Wage Rally and Protest/May Day Parade 5:00 pm @ VCU Student Commons (The Plaza, Richmond VA 23222). Parade begins at Monroe Park (W. Main and N. Belvidere). Contingent Info: brandoncollins@comcast.net.

**May 1st: Join the Brattleboro Area (VT) Socialist Party** at the Brattleboro May Day Celebration - 3 to 5:30 on the Brattleboro Common. The event will include its usual mix of lively music, labor history and soap box speeches from attendees. Contingent Info: malherbe@svcable.net.

**May 1st: Join the Socialist Party NYC** at the NYC May Day Actions- 4:00 pm SPNYC members will congregate at the SP-National Office at the AJ. Muste building and head to the rally at Union Square Park wearing SPUSA shirts and brandishing red flags. Contingent Info: nick629@gmail.com.

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# WHAT DOES MAY DAY MEAN TODAY?

by Scott Tucker

May Day belongs to the workers of the world, but the meaning of this day changes over time, even as national borders have been redrawn over various regions, and even as power has shifted among various political regimes. If only one strong lesson is drawn from the world history of May Days, it must be that every open class struggle is marked by the global reach of capital across national borders; and May Day must likewise widen the horizon of solidarity beyond one workplace, one labor union, or one nation.

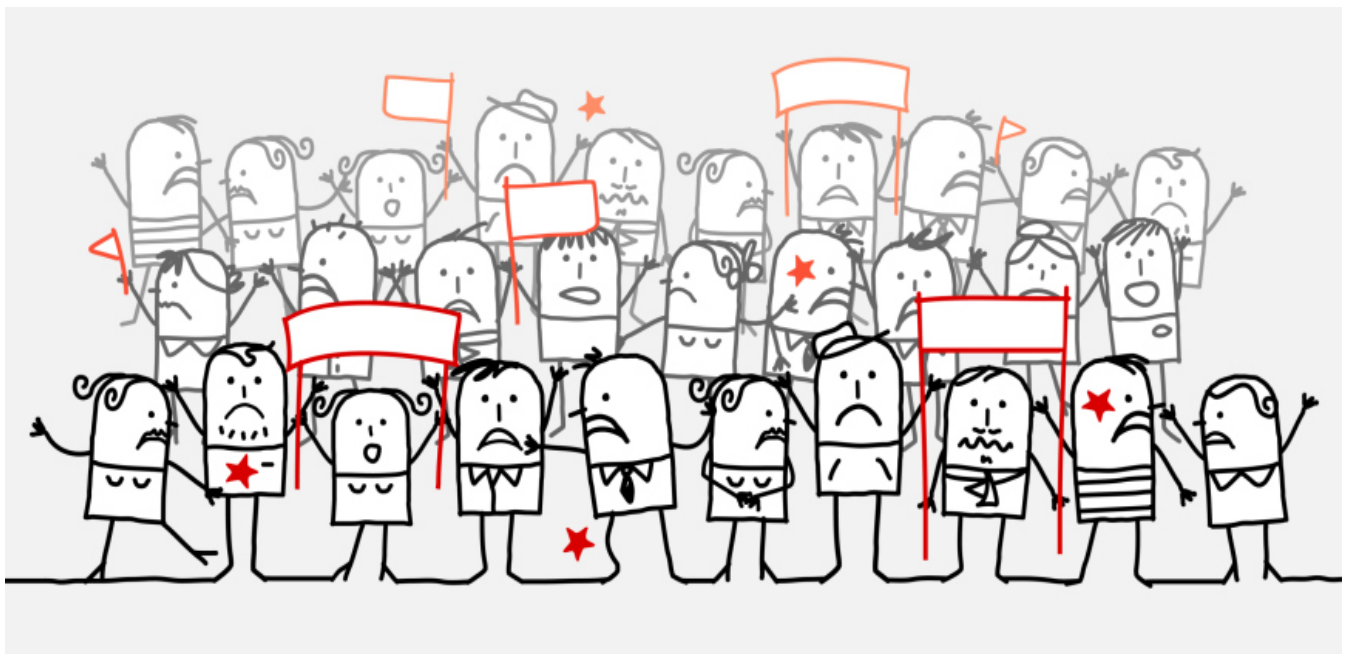
Yes, our own workplaces and neighborhoods may be very dear to us, but the economic storms of one country can gain hurricane force when they cross the wide ocean and strike another country. Socialists are internationalists by moral conviction, of course, but also by stark necessity. We can no more build “socialism in one country” than modern corporations can be turned back into the mercantile guilds of the fifteenth century.

When the many immigrant workers of the world gather for May Day in Los Angeles, of course the flags of many countries are displayed, and so are the flags and banners of class-conscious solidarity across all borders. Red flags and black flags testify to the rich history of the working class in the creation of May Day marches and demonstrations. Indeed, May Day cannot be claimed as the exclusive property of any single party, tendency, or sect.

The history of May Day really begins in the working class struggle for the ten-hour day, and then for the eight-hour day, both in Europe and in the United States. The limitation of work hours was indeed a major demand in the mass strikes among workers in mines, mills, and railroad yards of 1877, which were put down in this country by conniving politicians and brutal police. In 1884, a resolution was passed at a convention of the predecessor of the American Federation of Labor, stating, “that eight hours shall constitute legal day’s labor from and after May 1, 1886.”

On that date, over a half million workers went on strike or joined in marches of protest. In Chicago, the demonstrations begun on May 1 lasted several days, and for the most part endured provocations from hired thugs with good order. On May 3, however, police fired at workers who had rallied outside the factory of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, killing two workers. To protest the shootings, workers rallied the next day at Haymarket Square. When police moved to clear the crowd from the Square, an unknown person threw a bomb. In the resulting riot, both policemen and protesters were killed, with many injured. Seven anarchists were prosecuted and sentenced to death, and another was given a fifteen-year prison term.

The trials were so flawed and inflamed by political prejudice that Governor John Peter Altgeld, a leading figure



of the Progressive movement, would later pardon three of the convicted men. In 1894, when Eugene V. Debs and others organized the Pullman Rail Strike, Altgeld also refused to have federal troops break it up by force. (President Grover Cleveland proceeded to crush the strike in several states, and tried to distract angry workers by offering them an official Labor Day.) The bronze plaque on Altgeld's grave quotes his words in making both decisions; and these words remain a stark rebuke to the cowardice of present career politicians.

Theodore Roosevelt, who once called Thomas Paine "that filthy little atheist," denounced Altgeld as "one who would connive at wholesale murder" and "who would substitute for the government of Washington and Lincoln a red welter of lawlessness and dishonesty as fantastic and vicious as the Paris Commune." Since Altgeld was a Democrat (though on the left of that party), and since Roosevelt was then a Republican, his rhetoric was pitched with partisan vehemence. But we must recall that Roosevelt was himself a leader of the Progressive movement of that era, and indeed became a candidate of the short-lived Progressive Party. Roosevelt was a militarist, an imperialist, and (from 1901 to 1909) the 26th President of the United States.

If the Progressive movement could encompass both Altgeld and Roosevelt among its leaders, this only underscores the contradictions within that movement, not only in the realm of ideology, but also in the corporate economy, in civil liberties, and in foreign policy. Even the rhetorical appeal to Abraham Lincoln, a founder of the Republican Party, is used in the cause of red-baiting, though the actual class politics of Lincoln emerged and evolved in direct engagement with the institution of slavery. Lincoln often said that his great aim was not the abolition of slavery, but the preservation of the Union. Only in the course of the Civil War did Lincoln come round to the view that slavery had to be abolished, and only the Abolitionists (including John Brown and Frederick Douglass) had been resolute in that cause even before the war. The class analysis of the republic that Lincoln gave to Congress on December 3, 1861 is worth study:

"Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves the much higher consideration."

Those words are sufficiently radical that no recent President has dared to speak as directly in public, or even to quote Lincoln on these subjects. But Lincoln went on to state that capital and labor do not exhaust the actual social and productive relations between classes: "The error is in assuming that the whole labor of community exists within that relation." Lincoln considers a diverse group of people who are "neither slaves nor masters" in the southern states, and who are "neither hirers nor hired" in the northern states:

"Men, with their families — wives, sons, and daughters — work for themselves on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital; that is they labor with their own hands and also buy or hire others to labor for them; but this is only a mixed and not a distinct class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class."

Plainly, Lincoln's view is not explicitly socialist, and far less strictly Marxist; but his words are genuinely more populist than we will hear from almost any career politician now in the White House or in Congress or in fifty state legislatures. This "mixed class" was Lincoln's special concern, since here he found the real class foundation of any viable republic. He still held out the ideal that a large "mixed class" of workers (largely within an economy of small farms, patriarchal households, and domestic production) could maintain their liberty against the power of capital. They might indeed "mingle their own labor with capital," though with considerable autonomy, perhaps through loans, credit, and contract, for example. This "mixed class" was not what we would now call "the middle class," under present class conditions, but was rather the general public unencumbered by the institution of slavery.

The accumulation of capital, however, became the ruling passion of a ruling class; and the corporation, which had once been subject to fairly strict public charters, gained much greater power over and against the public. Every war encourages shady deals, and in the wake of the Civil War the new victors often dictated terms favorable to their own class advancement. In a letter to Col. William F. Elkins (Ref: The Lincoln Encyclopedia, Archer H. Shaw, NY, NY: Macmillan, 1950), Lincoln wrote:

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country... corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed."

In 1886, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad* that a private corporation was a natural person under the U.S. Constitution, protected by the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment. As Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas wrote sixty years later, "There was no history, logic, or reason to support that view." No, but there were powerful corporations rigging elections, buying candidates, and lobbying to make sure their case was heard loud and clear in the courts of the land.



In the United States, the corruption in big banks and high finance resulted in great part from a deliberate bipartisan policy of deregulation. The career politicians of the two big capitalist parties were not "equally" responsible, however, when President Bill Clinton signed The Financial Services Modernization Act, also known as the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999. Clinton was glad that "centrist" career politicians in the Democratic Party would get the main credit as modernizers, and thus sweep into the dustbin of history the last effective provisions of the Glass-Steagall Act, part of the legislative firewall that was designed in the 1930s to prevent a new cycle of financial corruption and, consequently, a new economic depression.

There were dissenters, of course. As Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, commented:

"Commercial banks are not supposed to be high-risk ventures; they are supposed to manage other people's money very conservatively. It is with this understanding that the government agrees to pick up the tab should they fail. Investment banks, on the other hand, have traditionally managed rich people's money -- people who can take bigger risks in order to get bigger -- returns. When repeal of Glass-Steagall brought investment and commercial banks together, the investment-bank culture came out on top. There was a demand for the kind of high returns that could be obtained only through high leverage and big risk-taking." [Source: <http://www.commondreams.org/view/2009/11/12-8>]:

The economic shock waves that had been building even before 2008 soon sent the first tsunami even to the shores of Europe. In turn, the ongoing euro crisis (largely the result of a currency union where no coherent political union exists) also threatens the stability of the economy of the United States.

The economic weather in these countries may be described as a serious recession if we live in Los Angeles, but is better described as a real depression if we live in Athens. Berlin, however, is relatively prosperous, while Detroit is still in pain. The city of Philadelphia, where well over forty percent of the citizens are African American, still proves that racial fractures run through the foundation of our economy, and that economic class in this country is by no means "color-blind." There are still, to be sure, micro-climates of inherited wealth. Much more significantly, corporate executives have soared to a new stratosphere of power and accumulation of capital.

May Days in Los Angeles sometimes drew hundreds, and at most a few thousand, participants in Los Angeles between 2001 and 2005, through the dedicated work of some labor unions and civic groups for immigrant workers. The legislative assault on the rights of immigrant workers, and especially a bill sponsored by Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wisconsin), was well publicized through Spanish language newspapers and radio stations. In 2006, May Day became an event the corporate broadcasters and stations could not ignore, because millions of people marched in over 100 cities. Los Angeles certainly had the largest number of people in the streets and parks, by some estimates roughly one million. Hundreds of thousands of people participated in Chicago and New York, and smaller marches and protests took place

in other cities and towns.

The meteoric rise and fall of the Occupy Wall Street movement, which began with one small encampment in Zuccotti Park in Manhattan, points the way to future coalitions across class and region; but it also underscored the power of the state. In roughly ten days, a coordinated police crackdown erased most of the major Occupy encampments in most of the major cities across the country. In Los Angeles, the encampment at City Hall held out a while longer, and then the police closed it down as well. Have the conditions that drove so many to heartbreak, and then to anger, and then to action changed? Have the corporate politicians responded with sanity and practical programs? There are reformers such as Elizabeth Warren, recently elected from Massachusetts to the U.S. Senate, and there are upticks in some housing markets. But the structural faults of the corporate system remain, and the class divisions are still growing. Barely 12 percent of workers are members of labor unions, and every big election is rigged to place corporate candidates on the ballot.

As the Keynesian economist Paul Krugman wrote in his New York Times op ed column of April 22, 2013, “The financial crisis struck, leading to a terrifying economic plunge followed by a weak recovery. Five years after the crisis, unemployment remains elevated, with almost 12 million Americans out of work. But what’s really striking is the huge number of long-term unemployed, with 4.6 million more than six months and more, and more than three million who have been jobless for a year or more. Oh, and these numbers don’t count those who have given up looking for work because there are no jobs to be found.” Krugman added, “So we are indeed creating a permanent class of jobless Americans. And let’s be clear: this is a policy decision.”

President Obama is now proposing a bipartisan Grand Bargain to undermine Social Security, and his patchwork health care reform is already allowing many sick people to fall once again through fraying safety nets. MoveOn and other groups that labored to raise funds and votes to get Obama elected to a second term are now pushing petitions online expressing their “disappointment” in the party and candidate of their choice. Such “progressives” give progress a bad name, and give every sign they will vote by rote in 2016.

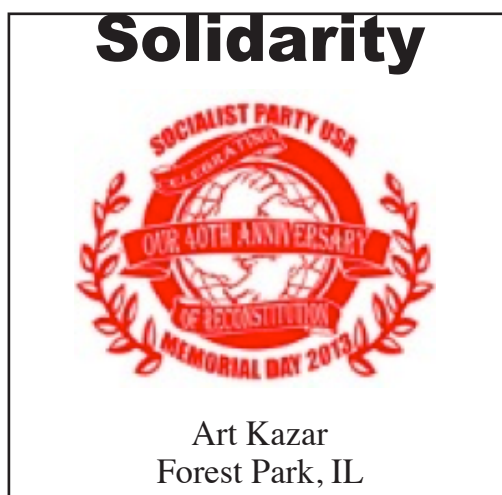
The Socialist Party of the United States is a party of (small d) democratic socialism, and we have a solid program. On May Day, we will join the Southern California Immigration Coalition in Los Angeles. We welcome a good faith conversation with members of other parties, and indeed with people beyond our national borders. We stand for peace and economic democracy, for civil liberties and fair elections, for ecological sanity and international solidarity. We oppose war and weapons of mass destruction, and we call for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. We still think workers, who are the great majority of humanity, have the power to change the world.

“I am not a Labor Leader,” said Eugene V. Debs. “I do not want you to follow me or anyone else; if you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of this capitalist wilderness, you will stay right where you are. I could not lead you into the Promised Land if I could, because if I could someone else would lead you out. You must use your heads as well as your hands, and get yourselves out of your present condition; as it is now it is the capitalists who use your heads and your hands.”

Not one cent and not one vote for the parties of war and empire!

**Make every May Day a festival of solidarity!**

*SCOTT TUCKER is a journalist, author and member of the Los Angeles Local.*







**O**ur local, the CNY Reds ([www.cnyreds.org](http://www.cnyreds.org)) held a forum in April on the campus of Syracuse University and the SUNY School of Environmental Science. The topic Socialism: An Alternative to Austerity and Unemployment drew over 40 people. It was a great panel discussion with thoughtful questions. One of the questions posed is one that we often get: Are there real world examples of the bottom-up socialism that we advocate?

Panelists responded that there was no society yet that was fully socialist, but there were glimpses of socialism present in various organizations around the globe. Examples given by the panel included the TRADOC Cooperative in Mexico (1,050 worker-owners), the Mondragon cooperative network in the Basque region with 85,000 worker-owners, and Syracuse's own Cooperative Federal, a radical credit union with 3800 member-owners that opened in 1982 and has a community development mission ([www.coopfed.org](http://www.coopfed.org)).

Cooperative Federal's founders, mostly "baby boom" generation activists, learned organizing skills through participation in the Civil Rights movement, the feminist

movement, the student and anti-war movements, and other social justice movements of the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Yes, some of us were Socialists.

Like other Rust Belt cities, Syracuse was in the midst of a spiral of "deindustrialization" and "hollowing out." These resulted in relocation of capital, workplaces, and jobs. Deindustrialization was really a move of capital, industry, etc. to low-wage areas of the globe in quest for higher profits. Hollowing out moved capital, jobs and housing from inner-city urban areas into the surrounding suburban sprawl — driven by the quest for profits, government subsidized green-field development, and discrimination of class and race.

## Return of the Jedi

Urban residents fought back in many ways. Cooperative Federal was envisioned as a vehicle for meeting community financial needs in our distressed urban neighborhoods, and for deploying collective savings positively and responsibly. To get it started, I passed the hat at a meeting of our SP local, and came up with the initial



capital investment for the credit union — \$30.

Not realizing that it was impossible to start a financial institution with \$30, we went ahead anyway. Our goals included divestment from the racist Apartheid regime in South Africa; and providing fair and friendly financial services for everyone that banks turned away, including low-wage workers, people of color, single women, the LGBTQ community, activists and part-time or nontraditional workers. Cooperative Federal would be a non-profit financial cooperative operated by the people, for the people.

In addition, the founders demanded that the credit union be sound, fiscally responsible and accountable. Such a credit union, we hoped, would help build a foundation for a community-based economy and gain a measure of independence from a distant and unresponsive global economy.

### **Credit What?**

A credit union is a member-owned, not-for-profit, financial services cooperative. It is owned and governed by its “customers” or members, as they are called. There are no other owners. Credit unions are governed using the principle of one member, one vote, and follow the other cooperative principles as well.

Globally, there are 51,000 credit unions in 100 countries with a combined 196 million members. In the US, there are 7,070 credit unions, with 96 million members. Credit unions are the most extensive cooperative organizations in the US. Generally, credit unions have fairer terms,



lower fees, better rates, and more flexibility in meeting member needs than for-profit financial institutions like banks, check cashers, payday lenders, etc.

Of all US credit unions, only 244 are “Community Development Credit Unions” (CDCUs) with a mission to serve

underserved members or communities. Cooperative Federal has become a leader among this small group of CDCUs in its impact on its community.

### **What Can Be Done?**

What can a CDCU with a radical bent achieve? In 2013, Cooperative Federal has \$20 million in assets, 23 workers and operates three offices in urban neighborhoods abandoned by the banks. We also have three “nano” offices in the city’s high schools, run by students. We provide fair and affordable financial services and loans to people shunned by banks. A majority of members are people of color. Twenty percent of members have Spanish as their first language. And 82 percent of borrowers are living on low income. We serve many new Americans, immigrants, and refugees.

Financial services are coupled with what are called “development services” — financial education, advice, and coaching. Half of our staff is bilingual. We also provide development services for English Language Learners.

So far, Cooperative Federal has deployed (invested) over \$105 million into Syracuse in loans and mortgages to members. We serve as a recycling center for money. We use the otherwise idle money of savers to lend to borrowers. We focus loans where it will have the most impact for our community – creating first-time homeowners, starting or growing micro-businesses and cooperatives, and improving finances at the household level.

### **American Dream**

Cooperative Federal offers mortgages for purchase, repair, and improvement, and we help members refinance away from high-cost or predatory mortgages. First-time homebuyers can earn up to \$9,500 in downpayment matching grants. Since 2006, we have made 271 housing loans, totaling \$14.6 million. Seventy-two of these loans, for \$5.2 million, have been to first-time homebuyers (64 percent of purchase mortgages). We provided \$132,000 in “matching grants.”

### **Self-employment Instead of Unemployment**

We help create alternatives to unemployment by investing in small and micro businesses. We focus on serving businesses that are marginalized by mainstream banks,

including start-ups, businesses in low-income neighborhoods, businesses owned by women and people of color, and people with disabilities. Since 2006, we have made 219 business loans, totaling \$5.4 million. One hundred and fifty-one of these loans, for \$3 million, have been to businesses owned by women and/or people of color. We supported 804 local jobs through business loans and disbursed \$34,000 in “matching grants” to 34 businesses. We provided one-on-one business advising to 437 members, and classes to over 803 people.

### Fair and Affordable Credit

Cooperative Federal works to meet all of the personal financial needs of our members, from emergency loans, to auto loans, to credit cards and debt consolidation – we even make bicycle loans. Since 2006, we have made 2,295 personal loans, totaling \$10.5 million. We helped 572 members avoid predatory lenders through Alternatives to Payday and Auto Title Loans.

### Support, Advice & More

We provide classes, as well as Budget, Credit and Housing Counseling — including foreclosure intervention — through our HUD-approved Housing Counseling Program.

Since 2006, we have delivered financial education classes to about 3,800 adults and youth, and provided one-on-one housing or financial counseling to 1,968 households.

Plus, we provide matching grants to members who are saving for higher education, or who need to purchase vehicle for school or work. Since this part of the Matched Savings Program was launched in 2010, 10 members have received \$10,000.

### Alternatives to Capitalism

Cooperative Federal has provided loans to consumer, housing, and worker co-ops, and nonprofit land-trusts. We are still too small to finance worker cooperatives of the scale of Mondragon, but we still dream big. Over the years, we have been part of continual efforts to spark a cooperative economy. Cooperative Federal is cosponsor of the New York Cooperative Summit seeking to build a cooperative economy.

### Socialism?

So, you ask, is this socialism? It is not. It has many of the features of an enterprise in a socialist society – cooperative ownership, democratic governance, one-person-one vote, operated not-for-profit but for service, and is part of an ongoing movement for social justice and economic equity. CDCUs, however, still operate in a capitalist dominated market, within a mesh of laws and regulation largely dictated by the formidable banking lobby and governed by capitalist-backed legislators.

This is an issue for the entire cooperative sector. The injustice of the capitalist sphere creates limitations on what we can achieve in the real world, even in a broad cooperative and social-economy sector. For example, cheap prices created by Capitalism’s exploitation are still cheap prices. And cheap prices are still the heavy artillery of capitalism .

We can, however, create visible examples of what others have called pre-figurative or proto-socialist organizations which embody the change we want to see in the world.

*RON is a member of the Central New York Local.*



## IN MEMORY OF Comrade Kay Meyers

1915-2013

**CSP** CHICAGO SOCIALIST PARTY  
*For jobs, peace and freedom*

# Happy 40th Anniversary!

by Taro O'Sullivan



When I agreed to write a piece for the SP USA's May Day/40th Anniversary issue, I really gave it some thought. I thought about the history of modern socialism, tracing it's beginning to 18th century France, but, no. That wouldn't do. How about the earliest examples of Socialism in ancient Egypt, Japan, China and in Europe? That won't do either. Besides, ordinary people could care less about dates, names or some insignificant moment in the history of socialism. It isn't about that. It isn't now and it never has been. So what then? Let me give it a try.

Socialism has always been a notion that someone moved forward when something was inherently unfair. Sure, some of these incidents were more about some "boojie" white male coming to the front of the line and finding no reward he so felt entitled to. But, at other times, it was because a group of people, often the majority, lived a life that was fundamentally unjust where her/his labor and other assets were exploited by the ruling or elite class.

As we celebrate (if you can call it that) our 40th Anniver-

sary, I am reminded that we really haven't accomplished enough as a movement. How can I say such a thing? Easy. Consider this: no matter how we cut it, we in the United States have never really suffered. Not really. Look around the world. We are 5 percent of the world, yet we consume more than 60 percent of the global output. We feed our capitalist engine with the fuel derived from global human suffering and exploitation. We, as a society, a nation and community help to create the economic conditions around the world. Not individually of course, but we are part of this machine. So no matter what, we can't claim any victories large or small. We're too satisfied, too fat and too happy to revolt. It is part of the grand design by the ruling capitalist regime to keep the masses just happy and fat enough to keep us from completely revolting.

As a society, we are at an interesting place in time. Every constituency group is unhappy. Things seem to be getting worse for everyone. The very reason that we haven't been able to mount any serious actions in the United States was because we were all too well off. But now, things are changing. We are at a place where people



are dissatisfied and often living in fear of or hopelessness about our future. This is an incredible opportunity to make change. So how do we do that?

One of the first steps we take must be to become inclusive. What do I mean? Bear with me, and please, don't take anything personally or become too sensitive. Inclusive means that we have to reflect the people we want to organize. We have to be the people who want a revolution. The most marginalized members of our society must join our cause and fight. We cannot come from our boogie life and expect people to join the cause just because we want them to. We can't pretend to know what it is like to be truly marginalized. Let me explain a little more on this point. I know people in this movement who are White, often male and have had some access to things that the marginalized population does not. They attend college and often have wonderful opportunities ahead of them. So many people I've met in this movement are, for whatever reason, not able to work or are low-wage earners. They are often primary consumers of what our less than ideal government has to offer.

At this point, what kind of credibility does this individual have in this fight? Very little. Why? Because the very system that they are criticizing and opposing is their means of support. But for the system, they would be homeless and even worse. It can't just be a movement for people who didn't get theirs. It has to include absolutely successful people who, in spite of their success, prefer a just and moral system of government. We need to include more people of color and other systemically marginalized people as leaders in this movement as well. I am not creating a hierarchy of members of society by some arbitrary and artificial standards here. I am merely saying that most white people have so much more opportunities than non-whites in the United States. That is an empirical fact. Men are far better off than women in this world. That too, is an empirical fact. People of color and women of color in particular, have very little access to equality, equity or power. If we are really interested in changing that, we have to include others that are missing from the table to join us.

It isn't that White people cannot be part of the marginalized class. Far from it. What I am saying is that we need to bring the real enemy into the picture. The real enemy is, of course, class. But, the ruling elites have made the class struggle synonymous with race and gender. We

have to change that so that the battle front is around class, not race or gender. In order to do this, we have to become inclusive and fight the battle on the race and gender front as well as the class front. We cannot take this fight to the next level as long as our meetings are white and male or white and female. We need to recruit the people who are truly marginalized. How do we do this? We listen. We observe. We become respectful.

Most of us in the movement cannot understand what it is really like to be truly marginalized. I've met so many people over the years that are members of this or that socialist or communist organizations, and in the end they were people who could have it all. All the things I could never have. Why are they in this struggle? It is difficult to understand why one would struggle when one doesn't have to. There is no point to struggle if one doesn't have to. That very notion is boogie.

I learned over the years that I needed White people more than anything else to join the struggle to end race based bias and discrimination. Why? In part because they are the ones in power at the moment and they are the ones who control how the game is played. Just like the Women's movement needs men to join it, we all need each other in order to bring about real change. We are all part of humanity. Equality must be for every human being or it has no value.

Socialism is one way to that goal. It is a viable and worthy mechanism. Yet, try to convince someone of that if they have always been stopped by police just because they look a particular way? We have to connect to the people who are not part of the movement at this time but are part of the war that is going on. That is where the battle will be fought and we can't fight it without inclusion. It isn't our fight otherwise. Look at where the battle is being fought and then find a way to bring those folks into the socialist struggle. Expand your own world and the world will expand before your own eyes.

There are no shortcuts and it is not going to be easy. But I, for one, don't want to see so little change in the next 40 years if I live to be that old. That is how we can celebrate our 40th anniversary.

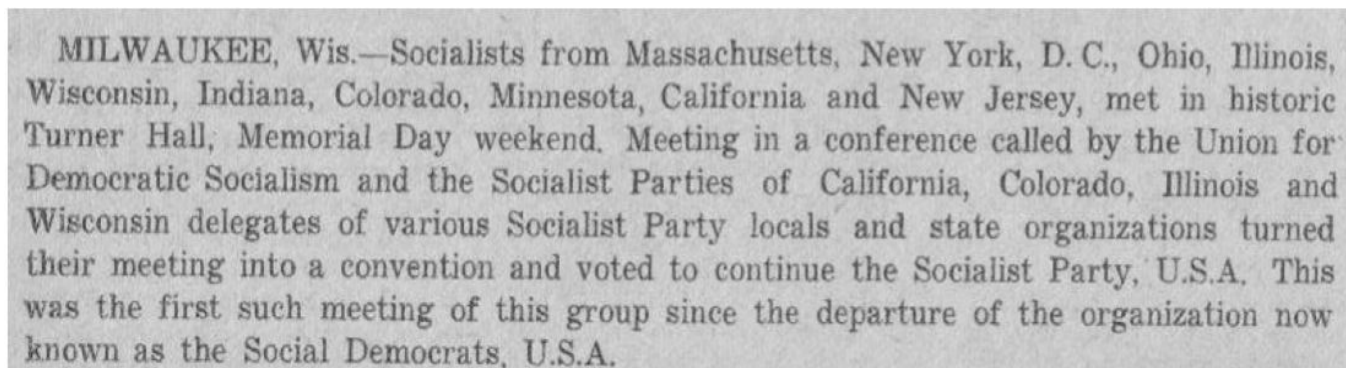
*TARO is a union organizer, writer and member of the Los Angeles Local.*

# 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](http://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.

# Socialist Party USA National Directory

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Socialist Party of Southern Arizona  
www.spusa-az.org

## CALIFORNIA

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