

The Organizer

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY USA NATIONAL OFFICE

EARLY-FEBRUARY 2014

Socialist Party USA Points of Agreement

The following points represent the key ideas of agreement of the Socialist Party USA.

- 1) The Socialist Party is a democratic socialist organization. We see socialism as a new social and economic order in which workers and consumers control production and community residents control their neighborhoods, homes and school and the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not the private profit of a few..
- 2) We see the working class as in a key and central position to fight back against the ruling 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.
- 3) We stand in opposition to all forms of oppression including but not limited to racism, sexism and homophobia.
- 4) We are a “multi-tendency” organization. We orient ourselves around our principles and develop a common program, but our members have various underlying philosophies and views of the world. Therefore we reject vanguardism and democratic centralism.
- 5) We advocate for independent political action outside the Democratic and Republican parties.
- 6) Our tactics in the struggle for radical democratic change reflects our ultimate goal of a society founded on principles of egalitarian, non-exploitative and non-violent relations among all people and between all peoples.

Socialist Party Response to the State of the Union



My name is Greg Pason, National Secretary of the Socialist Party USA, the voice of democratic socialism in the US. Below is my response to the State of the Union address.

I probably do not have to remind you that the state of the union is not good.

The policies of the Democratic and Republican parties have led to mass unemployment, extreme income inequality, endless war and cuts to social services. Neither the president nor Congress are putting forward ideas to clearly address these issues.

The Socialist Party provides an alternative vision – a vision of social justice and economic democracy – let me put forward some ideas.

Income inequality is part of the free-market economic system we live under. Republicans speak of trickle-down economics, while Democrats talk about tax fairness and minimum wage increases and a so-called living wage. Socialists understand that the idea of a living wage is contrary to every principle of capitalism — just as the concept of a “fair” wage is code for the least we can pay you and make you feel reasonably compensated.

The Socialist Party calls for both a minimum income and a maximum income of no more than 10 times the lowest wage with the lowest wage any worker can make being \$15 an hour. But as socialists, we move beyond that; we want to transform the way workers and the community relate to their workplace and the communities they serve.

Change will not come from just raising minimum standards of living, but from transforming the way the economy is run. We need to clearly address who owns and controls production and distribution.

Who has the say on how natural resources are used and what our national priorities are. We believe these decisions should be made by all of us, specifically the workers in these industries and the communities they serve, and not a small group of individuals and corporations with little connection to the communities and who prioritize profit over all else. The Socialist Party believes that the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not for the private profit of a few.

the Socialist

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One of the basic needs we all have is healthcare. The Socialist Party USA has been fighting for a national healthcare system for decades, not for a system run by private companies profiting off of healthcare, but as a socialized healthcare service. A socialized system would not include health insurance, but would be an actual national health-care system that would be publicly funded through progressive taxation and controlled by democratically elected assemblies of healthcare workers and patients.

A positive step toward this goal would be a single-payer system or medicare for all. But that's not all — we will continue to fight until healthcare is treated as a basic right and services every resident of this country.

While Congress complains about deficits and debt, we understand that our largest expense is military spending. US spending on military is estimated to be almost half of all spending, and our national representatives continue to push for further intervention and occupation. The truth is both the Democrats and Republicans are united on this issue.

The United States must change our international policies to be policies of cooperation not intervention, and solidarity not occupation and imperialism.

The Socialist Party calls for an immediate cut in military spending by at least 50 percent. Those funds should immediately be available to pay for infrastructure, social needs and free post-secondary education for all. Socialist Party locals have joined with peace and justice organizations across the US to promote this idea through the "Move the Money" campaign and have helped succeed in local resolutions to move the money from military spending to social spending.

One issue that may not be mentioned in budgets but affects our daily life is the environment. We need to completely change the way we treat the Earth. Our national policy has been profit first and we've all experienced where that has led us. A very smart person once said that we face two choices, "socialism or barbarism." While still true, we now face an even more harrowing choice: socialism or extinction.

Some small steps would make a big difference: We can stop the Keystone Pipeline, end hydraulic fracturing (i.e. "fracking"), ban mountaintop removal and invest in sustainable energy. We also need to end pro-business anti-worker/anti-environment trade agreements like the Trans Pacific Partnership. This agreement would destroy the environment and hurt workers across the globe.

We need to put the earth and the environment as a higher priority. While US residents suffer from climate change, the rest of the world – specifically the developing world – suffers more. We need to change our overall environmental philosophy and change it to more of an eco-socialist point of view.

Immigration is a political hot potato and the discussion seems more about how the two parties can best win over voting blocks rather than find ways to best include and welcome immigrants to this country.

The Socialist Party works to build a world in which everyone will be able to freely move across borders, to visit and to live wherever they choose. We recognize the central role global capitalism plays in forcing the immigration of people from the less developed to the more industrialized countries, often leading to further economic and social injustice. We oppose "guest worker" programs. We call for full citizenship rights upon demonstrating residency for six months.

We also recognize the rights of the first inhabitants of what we now called the United State – Native Americans, as well as the Africans who were brought to the US in chains. When discussing immigration, we also need to equally discuss our history. The Socialist Party calls for reparations from the federal government for its role in the slave trade and the genocide of Native American nations. As we welcome new immigrants, we need to recognize these groups still suffer from US political policy.

We do not believe that real problems can be addressed politically until all voices are heard. Our winner-takes-all electoral system entrenches the two parties of capitalism. The Socialist Party joins others in fighting for a true democratic electoral system. Everyone should be able to register in the parties of their choice and vote for the political positions they support. A system of proportional representation would help break hegemony of capitalist political parties and encourage more people to take part in the electoral system, just as democratizing the workplace would encourage workers and the communities to involve themselves in every day decision.

We could go on, but the reality is nothing will change without grassroots mobilizations of people like you.

The Socialist Party will continue our fight. We will be organizing across the country and in solidarity with workers and oppressed people globally.

We will be fighting alongside:
working people and families
with people of color
with women
with the lesbian, gay and transgendered
and hopefully with you
for social justice and economic democracy.
We contrast our vision with that of the President and his party as well as the Republican minority.

We encourage you to join us.

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