

DO YOU WANT TO STOP

Right Wing Attacks on Living Standards and Democratic Rights?



Are you interested in Socialism?
Then check out the
COMMUNIST PARTY USA!

by Rick Nagin

The Communist Party is dedicated to building a broad democratic movement against right wing extremism in both the electoral-legislative arena and through progressive grass roots movements.

We have a 95-year history, with deep roots in labor and the progressive struggles of the American working class and people; we believe that defeating the ultra-right will clear the path for more fundamental change.

Our goal is a modern 21st century socialist society that

- puts people and nature before profits,***
- defends and extends the Bill of Rights,***
- promotes the full and free development of individuals and***
- is based on the needs of the American people for jobs, economic security, equal rights, a clean, safe environment and peace.***

If you wish to be active in the movement for social justice, we invite you to check us out.

How to Defend Our Living Standards and Democratic Rights

The Communist Party calls for building a broad democratic movement to block the right wing extremist danger and lay the basis for a modern democratic socialist society. Based on the current balance of forces and political situation in our country, here is our approach to achieving these goals.

American capitalism is a system in which the unprecedented wealth created by the most productive work force in world history is appropriated to an ever growing degree by an ever diminishing number of corporate billionaires. This system of extreme and intolerable exploitation is driven by the corporate need for maximum immediate private profits, a need stemming from the dog-eat-dog competition between the billionaires. The reckless drive for maximum private profits is destroying the environmental conditions for the survival of the human species. It has also led to an unprecedented right wing movement for austerity and class warfare to force living standards of working families down to the bare minimum and to limit the democratic and political rights of the people, in blatant contradiction to Abraham Lincoln's vision of "government of the people, by the people and for the people."

The Electoral Arena

Not all billionaires support the extremist agenda. An important minority, including high profile investors like George Soros and Warren Buffet, believe that concessions to working people, both economic and political, must be made to preserve class peace and prevent a fundamental challenge to the entire system of exploitation. This division among the billionaires is reflected in the two main political parties, both of which defend capitalism, but have fundamentally different policies. The Republicans have been almost entirely taken over by the extremists, especially at the state and federal levels, while the Democrats, whose leaders have strong ties to Wall St. finance, rely on labor and its allies for funds, volunteers and votes and generally reflect the demands of this base for decent living standards, social equality and political rights.

At one time it was possible to argue that the Democrats may be better than the Republicans, but there was really no important difference. After the election of Ronald Reagan and his declaration of war on unions, progressive income taxes and all the social gains of the 1930's and 1960's, it became harder to defend that position and today it is completely untenable. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid was right when he said the Republicans are "addicted to Koch." Charles and David Koch (pronounced 'Coke') are described in the media as "conservative," but, other than their personal wealth and power, they are not trying to conserve anything. They are fascist-minded individuals intent on using their vast financial resources and organizational network to destroy the living standards and rights of the American people. "The truth is, they fear and hate Abraham Lincoln's vision of democratic government. They and a small group of other extremist billionaires control major media outlets, the Tea Party



movement, right wing lobby groups and the Republican Party. Together this alliance works relentlessly to weaken and dismantle all democratic institutions, especially unions and public education, as well as voting rights, women's rights, immigrant and gay people's rights and the right of all people to a safe and healthy environment. It seeks to unleash a regime of naked class warfare against the working people.

We have differences with the Democrats, especially in areas of foreign and military policy, and cannot endorse or vouch for their candidates. We do not agree with their defense of the capitalist system, but, despite simmering discontent, our country is far from being in a revolutionary situation and the immediate issue before the American people is not whether we will have socialism; it's whether we will have democracy. It is hard to imagine how the working class and people can defeat corporate power generally if we cannot defeat its extreme right wing section. In this fight the two parties are on opposite sides and, no matter how weak, imperfect and unreliable some Democrats may be, like it or not, they are essential allies in this life or death struggle. There are certainly important class contradictions within the Democratic Party and we support efforts to strengthen the progressive working-class forces in that Party, but we must recognize that, for the time being, there is no other political organization capable of defeating the GOP in the decisive electoral and legislative arenas.

This means that so long as democracy is preserved, fundamental policy questions will depend critically on the outcome of elections. The right wing extremists work endlessly to limit access to voting and to discourage involvement in this arena by flooding the media with negative attack ads and claims that all "politicians" and "government" in general are hopelessly corrupt and are the source of the problems people face. They are aided in this by some religious and ultra-left political sects and individuals who discourage involvement in the electoral-legislative arena and downplay the conflict between the two main parties. Despite all this, there is growing public understanding of the need to participate, at least to register and vote, with the result that voter turn out has grown and the fierce and massively funded efforts by the right wing and the ideological attacks by sectarian forces were unable to prevent the re-election of President Barack Obama.

For the foreseeable future, elections will continue to be the main arena of the class struggle in the United States. That is where the main resources of the contending classes are deployed, the greatest number of people are mobilized both as voters and campaign workers, and where ultimately the issue of power is decided.

Grassroots Movements and the Fight for Unity

Non-electoral, grassroots movements on a wide range of issues are growing and gaining importance in molding the political climate and mass thought patterns in a more progressive direction. They lay the basis for the decisions of voters on election day.

Right wing grassroots movements have not caught on to the same degree, despite massive funding by extremist billionaires and continual incitement from extremist media, think tanks, religious and other ideological forces. At some point they could pose a real threat to democracy because they are heavily armed and prone to violence and domestic terrorism. But at the present time, although their importance is often magnified and exaggerated by the corporate media, their views and tactics are rejected by the overwhelming majority of the people and they are dwarfed in size by the progressive mass movements in the areas of labor, civil rights, immigration, the environmental crisis, anti-gun violence, democratic rights for women, the LGBT community and other groups facing discrimination.

The challenge for these disparate progressive movements is to recognize that they all confront a common enemy in the form of right wing extremism, that they need to support each others' demands to weaken that enemy and can only ultimately disempower and defeat the right wing if they unite and mobilize their forces in all aspects of the mass movement, especially in the electoral arena.

The right makes every effort to prevent such unity, the chief weapon being racism, which is at the heart of all right wing politics. The right wing attacks on "government", public employee unions, increases in the minimum wage, public education, voting and civil rights and Medicaid are directed first and foremost at African Americans, Hispanics and other people of color. Right wing propaganda, both overt and covert, seeks to convince the white majority that these democratic institutions and rights primarily exist to serve the minority populations at the expense of the white majority. According to this mindset, African Americans and other people of color are inherently dependent, lazy and criminally inclined. Such racist views are at the core of the beliefs of the right wing gun fanatics and vigilante groups who believe they are preparing for a "race war" or an anti-government insurrection. Unfortunately, these views are also widespread in local police departments throughout the country, which are prone to act like an occupying army and feel justified in using violent force, including lethal force, against civilians, especially young Black men, who in any way seem to challenge their authority.



Thus, labor and all progressive forces, not only for moral reasons, but also if there is any hope of defeating the right, must vigorously reject racism and support demands for full minority representation and equal rights in every situation. In similar ways, the right employs other tactics, including male supremacy, homophobia, Islamophobia, xenophobia, red-baiting and anti-Semitism in its drive against democratic unity. It is no exaggeration to say that the GOP has become the party of bigotry and an organized conspiracy against American democracy.

The Republican Party faces growing isolation, scandal and internal fracturing. With mass support declining, it increasingly depends on gross violations of democratic norms and practices to elect candidates and block progressive legislation. These include voter suppression, gerrymandering, massive infusion of funds from extremist billionaires, reckless filibustering, shutting down the federal government and threatening to destroy its credit worthiness.

But the patience of the American people has grown thin. The popular uprising to the shooting in Ferguson, the national march against the climate crisis and the nationwide strike movement of low wage workers all reflect that people are ready to take part in grassroots democratic movements. "Something is brewing in the United States," says AFL-CIO President Rich Trumka. "There is a pent up populism, a pent up hunger for a better life." Rev. William Barber, who has led marches of thousands against voter suppression and other issues in North Carolina, calls it a "moral fusion movement" merging all aspects of the fight of right wing extremism.

The Special Role of Communists

The Communist Party is a critical part of the emerging democratic majority. We are actively involved in the electoral arena, in the labor movement and every other grassroots movement to defend the living standards and democratic rights of the American people. We work to strengthen and unite those movements with the aim of weakening and defeating right wing extremism. At the same time we seek to build a movement and popularize a vision for "Bill of Rights" socialism where working people and their allies can replace private corporate power as the main influence in American society.

We have no blueprint, but believe that a humane 21st century society can emerge from the needs, struggles and democratic traditions of the American working class and people and from the urgent need to preserve the environment for future generations. Numerous polls show substantial and growing support for socialism. They reflect the widespread anger over the economic crisis and the extreme and growing disparities in wealth and income. They also reflect revulsion at systemic racism and bigotry, the fading influence of Cold War anti-Communist propaganda and the right wing use of "socialism" to describe everything the American people want and need, whether it is health-care, public education, federal jobs programs, regulating corporate recklessness or fair wages and taxes. The 2011 Pew poll showed that majorities of major demographics, including African Americans, young people and liberal Democrats, have a positive attitude toward socialism and a negative attitude toward capitalism.

If you share this general outlook, we invite you to join us. We urge you to check out the Communist Party USA website - for more information, weekly alerts and to join: cpusa.org, and that of our online publication, People's World - daily online progressive news and analysis: peoplesworld.org. We urge high school and college students to check out the website of the Young Communist League: yclusa.org. Those interested in discussions of Marxist theory may be interested in the website of Political Affairs: politicalaffairs.net.



Communist Party USA

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People's World

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