

Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky Socialist Agitator

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ORSANCO DECISION LOOMS - FEB. 14TH

By Kevin H and Eira T



Do you drink water? Well, if you're one of the 5 million people whose drinking water comes from the Ohio River, you should be doing everything you can to sway ORSANCO's commissioners to continue to do their job.

For those who don't know, ORSANCO (the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission) is considering giving up its responsibility to regulate the Ohio River. ORSANCO has existed since 1948 to control pollution in the Ohio River Basin. With the progress of the Clean Water Act, some ORSANCO Commissioners believe their job is no longer necessary. However, there are nearly 200 pollutants ORSANCO regulates that the Clean Water Act doesn't cover, and more than 200 pollutants which ORSANCO regulates more stringently than the Clean Water Act. We've seen what happens in places like Flint, Michigan when regulatory standards are loosened or ignored, and we don't want that to happen here. Specifically, ORSANCO's abdication of its responsibility would mean chemicals like Ammonia, Asbestos, Cyanide, E. Coli, Mercury, Strontium 90, and combined radium-226 and -228 would go unregulated or under regulated. These chemicals can cause sickness, cancer, and death, and without region-wide regulation, we become victims of whatever pollution is coming downriver to us.

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2019 WOMEN'S MARCH SPEECH



The following speech was written and delivered by Christine U-N at the 2019 Cincinnati Women's March hosted by SA, DSA, and ISO on 1/19/19:

"This weekend, millions around the world are standing and marching in solidarity. Two years removed from the first Women's March, a sexual predator is still the president and another sexual predator is newly seated on the supreme court, but the MeToo movement has emerged, and is growing stronger.

Women, workers, all those oppressed must stand up and say that the feminism we're fighting for, the emancipation we're fighting for, the world we're fighting for is not one where we seek to simply "lean in" and win individual duels against rampant workplace prejudices that affect us all, not one where we bow to the patriarchal myth of meritocracy, not one where we content ourselves with news that CEO's of four of the nation's five largest defense contractors are now women. No! We're here to talk about the fact that the unpaid labor of women is an essential, structurally reinforcing component of our capitalist system. We are here to fight against the patriarchy propping up this system. Socialist Feminism is the future.

We march today in the streets of Cincinnati, a city where, in the midst of rapidly rising rents and soulless development projects, it is now criminal to be without a home...

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ORSANCO DECISION LOOMS Con't.

With all of these public health reasons to maintain regulatory standards, who could be in favor of weakening them? Capitalists, of course. Specifically, corporate capitalists who dump shit in the Ohio River. Even though the Ohio River is already ranked as Most Polluted in the US, apparently that's not dirty enough for companies like AK Steel, FirstEnergy, Alcoa, and Nucor Steel.

ORSANCO was expected to make its decision on October 4th; however, bowing to pressure, the Commissioners decided to punt until their next meeting, which is February 14th in Covington. Now, it all comes down to this meeting, right here, in our own backyard. There are a number of actions you can take to avert this potential crisis. First of all, you can spread the word among your network. The more people who know about this, the better.

Additionally, you can contact your ORSANCO commissioners. We can provide a table with the commissioners' contact information upon request (kevin.hengehold@gmail.com). You don't need to say much, just a few sentences detailing how important clean water is to you.

The more commissioners you can contact, the greater the impact you have. If you have a minute, write your thoughts down and mail them to a Commissioner's home – that should surprise them a little bit.

Finally, a major way to have an impact is to show up at the public hearing on Thursday, February 14 at 9am at 10 East Rivercenter Boulevard, Covington, Kentucky, 41011. There you'll have a chance to tell the ORSANCO commissioners exactly what you think of their proposed deregulation. In preparation for the hearing, we'll be putting out a call for DSA members in our network to come to the meeting; if you've got a couch or floor space they can crash on, it would be most appreciated.

This is going to take all of us, but I'm confident if we band together we can shut down their deregulatory agenda.

LOCAL LEFTIST HISTORY:

BATTLE IN NEWPORT!

By Brendan F



In November of 1921 negotiations between the president of the Andrews Steel Company, William N. Andrews, and union representatives broke down. Andrews told the union to "go to hell" and on November 30th delivered an ultimatum: workers would have their pay cut down to 28 cents per hour and the company would be organized as an open shop, functioning under what we now know as Right to Work rules. Anyone not agreeing to these terms would be fired. A thousand workers walked out on strike and management started hiring scabs.

Events rapidly escalated. Of the 10,000 working men in Newport at the time the strike involved about one in every five. Factory management purchased thirty six machine guns. Strikers formed checkpoints around the perimeter of the plant to head off scabs, demeaning and insulting anyone who crossed the picket line. Workers took to shooting out the windows of the factory from a distance while Andrews supposedly returned fire with his own rifle. Sporadic gunfire in the West End became a common feature of the 1921-22 winter.

The company pressured Governor Edwin P. Morrow to send in the Kentucky National Guard. On December 4th 200 guardsmen arrived to take up their stations, commanded by Colonel H.H. Denhardt. As they patrolled their routes they were subjected to taunts and curses from the strikers' wives. Governor Morrow proceeded to increase the deployment to 330 guardsmen.

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SOCIALIST FEMINIST TOWN HALL SPEECH



The following speech was written and delivered by Molly S at the Socialist Feminist Town Hall that our chapter co-hosted along with SA and ISO on 1/23/19.

"Good evening, thank you so much for being here with us tonight. Thank you so much to comrades Robin and Mireille for those words that truly blessed this room tonight. I appreciate your thought and action, and I am honored beyond measure to be doing it beside you. I want to start this with vulnerability. I want to come to y'all from a place of honesty and authenticity. Over the years of my life, I've felt lonely. I've felt frustrated. I've felt enraged. The oppression in this world, a tie that has bound me to every woman I have ever met, admired, and loved, still felt like mine to bear. I had all this trauma to process. I'm a survivor of child abuse, domestic violence, rape, and harassment in the workplace. Just like probably every other non-man in this room. But I had nowhere to put it. I was suffering, all of us are.

But let's re-frame that narrative. We have to name the things that crush our existence, we must call monsters what they are, and we absolutely have to take care of ourselves while we walk this path. I call for us to re-name our suffering. Rather, let's call it our struggle. And the struggle is real, fam. It's imperative that we actively engage with that struggle. But what does that even mean? It means examining our material conditions, the structures that create them, and our relation as exploited people to those structures.

Early in my journey as a feminist, I bought into this aesthetic of a Ruth Bader Ginsburg t-shirt, an enamel pin of the transgender symbol, whatever. It never felt like enough.

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THE CRISIS OF GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY



This speech was written and delivered by Timothy B at our celebration of Rosa Luxemburg on 1/12/19:

"I'm going to start by asking comrades to use their imaginations for a minute. Let's try to place ourselves in the shoes of the average German socialist in August 1914. We're all SDP members, of course, everyone is - from Luxemburg on the left to Bernstein on the right. Our party is a rather powerful organization; it commands the loyalty of most of the politically active workers, it has representation in the legislature, and maintains strong ties to the trade union leadership. There are dozens of party papers, offices in every major city, and even bars directly run by party networks. Surely, we are on the cusp of a revolutionary movement the like of which the world has never seen! And that's when it all collapses around our ears. The party's representatives in the legislature vote for the war credits and pledge their allegiance to imperial war aims, the party leadership tries to ban any kind of independent working class action and cracks down on dissent, party papers stop publishing revolutionary content and start putting forward propaganda in favor of class peace and racist appeals for national unity in the face of the Russian threat.

This is a situation Luxemburg and her supporters found themselves in 1914 and early 1915. They had realized a break was coming, of course, and tried to prepare for it- in many ways that what's even such early works as Reform or Revolution are about- but seeing a split on the horizon and living through the collapse of the party you've given years of your life to build are quite different things.

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BATTLE IN NEWPORT! Con't.

The militia proved trigger-happy, blasting machine-gun fire into the hills of Kenton County to quell reports of union snipers. Denhardt issued "shoot to kill" orders. Nervous guardsmen opened fire on two civilian boats which they suspected of mining the Ohio River. The only known death from the entire strike consisted of Private Robert Deaton, who was accidentally shot on patrol by a fellow guardsman.

Renewed negotiations started by the governor in January failed. Management began evicting any strikers living in company-owned properties and transferred the leases to scabs. Rumors spread of infiltration by heavily armed Wobblies. On February 1st there was another prolonged gun battle, lasting from 1:00 in the afternoon to 4:00 in the morning. The governor escalated, this time sending in machine guns and tanks. The appearance of the tanks triggered a riot that lasted twelve hours and Newport was placed under martial law.

Colonel Denhardt cracked down. Convinced the widespread public support for the strikers meant every resident of Newport was an enemy he announced that he "meant business" and ordered his men to "get rid of undesirables." A strict curfew was enforced. Anyone violating it, including children, were marched home at gunpoint. Numerous civilians testified to guardsmen breaking up union meetings, arresting and beating people randomly, and firing without provocation. One man was thrown out of a window, twenty feet above the ground.

The military occupation of the West End lasted for months, despite repeated pleas from the mayor and petitions signed by thousands of Newport residents, only ending in April. The union was effectively broken, with many members forced to move to other towns to feed their families. Though the Andrews steel empire had been hurt financially, pro-industry newspapers in Pittsburgh hailed the results as a company victory, strengthening the bargaining hand of factory owners across the country.

Our own movement is fledgling, but events such as these remind us that if we get anywhere close to where we want to be, forces like this will be brought to bear against us.

2019 Women's March Speech Con't.

...Western and Southern cruelly fighting against the Anna Louise Inn is still fresh in this city's collective memory. We know because we've witnessed first hand that when it comes down to it, the bottom line is the only thing that matters, and the corporations that rule Cincinnati will throw women and families onto the street or in jail if they decide that a piece of property would be a good investment.

Why did the organizers of this event feel that something needed to be planned in Cincinnati, despite the last minute cancellation of the original march? Because in Indiana, Home of reactionary vice-president Mike Pence, ninety five percent of counties are without a clinic that provides abortions, and millions of dollars have been siphoned out of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to combat reproductive health through the establishment of fake "crisis pregnancy centers" who shame pregnant people and lie to them about their options. In Kentucky, three abortion related cases are being fought over in court, which could ultimately lead to a US supreme court decision potentially overturning Roe v Wade. It's a similar situation in Ohio, where despite vetoing several of the most comic book evil and draconian bills related to reproductive health recently, John Kasich spent his eight years in office signing off on anti-choice legislation dozens of times. Mike Dewine promises to be even worse. As residents of the tri-state, we find ourselves in the middle of all of this. So why are we here today? Because we have to be. A movement is building, and the fight will only be won by standing in solidarity, insisting that a better world is possible, and knowing that we will win!

We, in the Cincinnati/ Northern Kentucky chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, aren't fighting for a feminism that is purely rooted in consumption habits, or individual market choices. We believe that the systems of oppression that keep women paid at a rate significantly below that of their male counterparts, that allows twelve-year-old black boys to be murdered by the police, that sees such an astonishingly high suicide rate among the trans community...Con't. on Page 6

SOCIALIST FEMINIST TOWN HALL

SPEECH Con't.

...And really, who benefits from that? Certainly not the factory worker making far below a living wage who's making it. And that worker is probably a black or brown woman. If she isn't, perhaps a child in a country where US imperialism has vested interest in the most slack of labor laws. Can the inability to spend \$30 on a coffee mug, some proceeds supposedly benefitting clean water efforts for indigenous women, exclude one from participating in their own liberation? We have become so convinced that feminism is something we can buy on Etsy, that freedom is something we can wear, but never have we been told liberation is something we can truly seize with only our own hands. I say we collectively smash that coffee mug against the wall of the patriarchy and lift our sisters up in the most revolutionary act of all; unbridled solidarity. Commodifying our struggle into a dollar amount never felt like enough for me, because it will never be enough. As long as someone stands to make a single penny off of our fight for freedom, that fight will bear no fruit.

When we actively engage in our own struggle, we recognize it in the eyes, hearts, and hands of everyone we see. When we examine the ways we are exploited, we learn that ALL LABOR HAS DIGNITY. Political analysis can feel like some scary, daunting task. It doesn't have to be. It's simply looking at who stands to benefit from our misery? Who is most threatened by our freedom? How will they attempt to keep us in our chains, because those chains are literally ALL WE HAVE LEFT TO LOSE. And to be explicitly clear, that's capitalism. Plain and simple.

Capitalism and the patriarchy cannot be separated; one cannot survive without the other. This is because they both depend on exploitation. They feed on the suffering of the masses. While they feast, rape, pillage, and PROFIT, we struggle. But we will struggle together. We will struggle in radical solidarity. It is now time to cast aside the inevitable loneliness of fighting through this world alone, it's finally time to join arms and build a new world from the ashes of the old.

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THE CRISIS OF GERMAN SOCIAL

DEMOCRACY Con't.

...It's in this political moment, that Luxemburg writes the Junius Pamphlet, or the Crisis of German Social Democracy as it was officially titled.

The pamphlet begins with, in Luxemburg's words "Self-criticism, remorseless, cruel, and going to the core of things " The 2nd International had, in her view, failed its historical test, and the task of revolutionaries was to learn what lessons they could from the four decades it had stood at the head of the world socialist movement -and then to ruthlessly break from it. "In refuting the existence of the class struggle", Luxemburg argued, "the social democracy has denied the very basis of its own existence.... It's only mission now is to play the role of the gendarme over the working class under a state of military rule." Socialists must therefore, form new organizations and new movements- for the German Spartacists that would ultimately be the Communist Party and the 3rd International, but for Luxemburg that was still the music of the future and the immediate question was of how to organize the workers for the coming revolution. Tragically when it occurred in 1918-1919 the German Revolution would only serve highlight the treacherous role of social democracy.

On January 15th 1919, Rosa Luxemburg was murdered on the orders of a social democratic government that employed the proto-Nazi freikorps to crush the workers. Still, as Fred Hampton said, "you can kill the revolutionary, but you can't kill the revolution" or as Luxemburg wrote mere hours before her assassination "Tomorrow the revolution will "rise up again, clashing its weapons," and to your horror it will proclaim with trumpets blazing: I was, I am, I shall be!""

SOCIALIST FEMINIST TOWN HALL SPEECH

Con't.

...The brilliant women of the Combahee River Collective said in their radical statement, “We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy. We are socialists because we believe that work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, and not for the profit of the bosses. Material resources must be equally distributed among those who create these resources.” The intersectional and radical nature of this collective of black lesbian socialist women should inspire us all to action. We’re actually discussing the whole piece in this very room on Sunday, I hope to further engage with you all there.

I learned a lot about how to engage in my struggle with the Democratic Socialists of America. I had a place to lay down my rage where it matters, organize for the world we all deserve, grow my own political education...I could go on. You will hear a similar love letter from anyone affiliated with an organization in here tonight. Talk to us! Join our ranks! Your struggle just can’t be one you face alone, there’s no way we can accomplish the massive task ahead of us without doing it together. We MUST create a mass movement of women, non-men, workers, caregivers, people of color, immigrants, and every exploited person in every corner of this dying planet to wrestle power from the cold grip of capitalism and save our lives. Join a socialist organization tonight. Socialist Alternative, the International Socialist Organization, and Democratic Socialists of America are here to engage in struggle, coalition, and solidarity together. Enough is enough. Scream “ME TOO” alongside everyone who has had to settle for less than dignity, alongside everyone who also knows struggle. Together, we will win. Solidarity forever, and ever.”

2019 Women's March Speech Con't.

...that tells people that they don’t deserve a place to sleep at night if they were suddenly laid off and can’t get the rent together in time are all connected. These systems of oppression reinforce each other and we refuse to accept it any longer.

*After this march is over today, our work is not done. We have to build a women’s movement for the 99%. If you’re wondering how we can do this, you should join DSA, SA, and ISO at our Socialist Feminist Town Hall this Wednesday at 7pm at the Covington Public Library. Childcare will be provided. We’re going to need as many voices as possible to win this fight, so we need you there with us. What are you planning to do for the movement *after* this march?*

We recently saw the one hundredth anniversary of the murder of the socialist revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg. She saw a great defeat of working people in Germany and knew that she was likely about to die for her cause. But hours before her assassination, she wrote about the hope that lives on after defeat. We, the masses, will continue to fight and future victories of our struggle will rise out of these defeats. We have suffered many defeats this past year, with the attacks on our reproductive rights, and the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, but we will not let that discourage us. Far right reactionaries and the one percent think that they have us cornered, and that the status quo will remain. But Rosa had some words for them that I will leave you with today:

"You foolish lackeys! Your "order" is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will "rise up again, clashing its weapons," and to your horror it will proclaim with trumpets blazing:

I was, I am, I shall be!"

NEWLY ELECTED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER STATEMENTS



Aaron B

LGBTQ Caucus Co-Chair

My name is Aaron B, and I'll be your new LGBTQ Caucus Chair. I joined DSA in June 2018 and have since become a very active member of the Chapter, working on the LGBTQ Caucus, CAR&F, and the Nominations Committee. I hope to continue faithfully serving the community by reaching out to real working class LGBTQ people and growing DSA through my work. This year, I hope to help people organize around LGBTQ rights and liberation. In these trying times, it's important that we rally around the marginalized people in our community. I thank the chapter at large for their faith in me, and look forward to the coming year eagerly.

Bryan G

Treasurer

My primary goal as Treasurer is to maintain continuity of treasury functions, i.e. a list of members in good standing and monthly reports. By the end of 2019 I hope to have arranged a way to allow members to pay monthly dues automatically. As for the chapter, my primary goal for this year is to help nourish an organizational culture and to help develop organizational mechanisms which will empower us to have conversations about our political and personal concerns in a loving and comradely way. We draw our strength from solidarity in spirit and in action, both of which will become impossible without a chapter-wide commitment to earnestness, love, patience, and humility, especially in the service of better communication between comrades.

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Molly S

Uptown Branch Chair

Molly Stephens has been a member of DSA Cincy since late 2017 and a Northside resident since 2016. She's a member of the Committee Against Racism and Fascism and the Socialist Feminist Branch, and attended the Rust Belt Caucus in August 2018. In the new year, Molly wants to focus on local organizing in the Uptown region by creating a welcoming environment that facilitates public facing initiatives. Tabling, canvassing, working with renters, and examining food deserts, among other things, build local solidarity and strengthen the ranks of DSA. Recruitment and revitalization of "paper" members are a core part of her strategy, and she looks forward to all the beautiful work this Branch will accomplish.

Timothy B

Co-Chair

My name is Timothy Bay and my pronouns are ne/nem/nir/nemself. I've been active in socialist organizing in various capacities for much of the past eight years and have interwoven many aspects of my identity into my political outlook. As a queer person, a writer, and a worker I am first and foremost a socialist. As co-chair I will seek to ensure that the chapter provides a socialist education consistent with revolutionary principles and is constantly developing itself through member-driven participation in mass action political campaigns. DSA must build a movement that connects the everyday concerns of the working class with socialist political principles, a "tribune of the people" that defends the interests of all oppressed and exploited groups.

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Christine U-N

Socialist Feminist Branch Chair

As 2019 Chair of the Socialist Feminist Branch, I am committed to helping the Branch develop and grow into what its members envision. Our vision at present is to create spaces for both men and non-men to have conversations about socialist feminism, to organize more events and actions throughout the year, and to educate the Chapter on how issues impacting non-men play a role in all Chapter activities. The Socialist Feminist Branch is committed to educating other Branches, committees, and the chapter as a whole, on how feminist issues interweave into various initiatives. It is the responsibility of all DSA members to dismantle the oppressive patriarchal capitalist system under which we all suffer.

Dewey E

Co-Chair

To effectively fight for a better world, our members require clear and ready access to the tools our organization has to offer. In our mission to better define our structure, we must ensure we do not succumb to the ease of structurelessness, nor restrict ourselves with the clumsiness of overly-centralized decision making. We must create for ourselves an organization that has the flexibility to explore the myriad forms of socialist struggle, any of which may be the one that we must seize upon when the revolutionary moment presents itself.

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Thanks to the following contributors!

Brendan F

Kevin H and Eira T

Christine U-N

Molly S

Timothy B

Editorial Team

Brendan F

Charlie C

Paul K

Rose C

Mary O

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Amanda S

Secretary

As Secretary I'd love to work on helping to create canvassing and tabling schedules for our branches and building capacity by building relationships with the people we meet. I'd like us to examine the committees we have and the work they do and hone them down so that we only have committees that are doing work that aligns with the immediate goals of building a socialist future. I'd like to see us continue to build internal education in the chapter because I think it helps us focus the work we decide to take on. I'd also like to see us focus as a chapter on a couple of larger campaigns, strategically planning them in a way that grants us concrete wins within the city. I'm looking forward to continuing to work alongside all of my comrades this year.



IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS FOR THE NEWSLETTER PLEASE REACH OUT TO US VIA SOCIALISTAGITATORCINCY@GMAIL.COM

SEE YOU AGAIN IN A COUPLE MONTHS!