

= Socialist Party USA =

The Socialist Party of the United States of America (SPUSA) , usually simplified as Socialist Party USA , is a multi @-@ tendency socialist party in the United States . The SPUSA was founded in 1973 as a split from the Socialist Party of America , which had been renamed Social Democrats , USA a year before .

The party is officially committed to socialism . The Socialist Party USA , along with its predecessor , has received varying degrees of support when its candidates have competed against those from the Republican and Democratic parties . The party supports independent political action and opposes working within the two larger , capitalism supporting parties .

The SPUSA self @-@ describes as opposing all forms of oppression , specifically capitalism and authoritarian forms of communism , the Party advocates for the creation of a " radical democracy that places people 's lives under their own control ? a non @-@ racist , classless , feminist socialist society [...] where working people own and control the means of production and distribution through democratically @-@ controlled public agencies , cooperatives , or other collective groups ; where full employment is realized for everyone who wants to work ; where workers have the right to form unions freely , and to strike and engage in other forms of job actions ; and where the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity , not for the private profit of a few " .

The SPUSA 's National Office is located at the AJ Muste Institute in New York . The party has four chartered state organizations in California , Michigan , New Jersey , and New York , as well as eighteen chartered locals throughout the country .

In October 2015 , the Socialist Party USA nominated Mimi Soltysik for President and Angela Walker for Vice President .

= = History = =

= = = Background = = =

In 1958 , the Independent Socialist League led by Max Shachtman dissolved to join the Socialist Party of America . Shachtman had written that Soviet communism was a new form of class society , bureaucratic collectivism , in which the ruling class exploited and oppressed the population , and therefore he opposed the spread of communism . Shachtman also argued that democratic socialists should work with activists from labor unions and civil @-@ rights organizations to help build a social @-@ democratic " realignment " of the Democratic Party . Though he died on 4 November 1972 and had little involvement with the Socialist Party in the year proceeding his death , his followers , identified as " Shachmanites " , exercised a tremendous amount of influence on the party .

In its 1972 Convention , the Socialist Party changed its name to " Social Democrats , USA " by a vote of 73 to 34 . The change of name was supported by the two co @-@ chairmen , Bayard Rustin and Charles S. Zimmerman (of the International Ladies Garment Workers ' Union , ILGWU) , and by the First National Vice Chairman , James S. Glaser ; these three were re @-@ elected by acclamation .

Renaming the party as SDUSA was meant to be " realistic " . The New York Times observed that the Socialist Party had last sponsored Darlington Hoopes as its candidate for President in the 1956 election , who received only 2 @,@ 121 votes , which were cast in only six states . Because the party no longer sponsored candidates in presidential elections , the name " party " had been " misleading " ; " party " had hindered the recruiting of activists who participated in the Democratic Party , according to the majority report . The name " Socialist " was replaced by " Social Democrats " because many American associated the word " socialism " with Soviet communism . Also , the Party wished to distinguish itself from two small Marxist parties .

The Convention elected a national committee of 33 members , with 22 seats for the majority caucus , 8 seats for Harrington 's coalition caucus , 2 for the Debs caucus , and one for the " independent " Samuel H. Friedman , who also had opposed the name change .

The convention voted on and adopted proposals for its program by a two @-@ one vote , with the majority caucus winning every vote . On foreign policy , the program called for " firmness toward Communist aggression " . However , on the Vietnam War , the program opposed " any efforts to bomb Hanoi into submission " and to work for a peace agreement that would protect Communist political cadres in South Vietnam from further military or police reprisals . Harrington 's proposal for an immediate cease fire and an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces was defeated . Harrington complained that , after its previous convention , the Socialist Party had endorsed George McGovern with a statement of " constructive criticism " and had not mobilized enough support for McGovern .

After their defeat at the Convention , members of two minority caucuses helped to found new socialist organizations . At most 200 members of the Coalition Caucus joined Michael Harrington in forming the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee , which later became the Democratic Socialists of America . At its start , DSOC had 840 members , of which 2 percent served on its national board in 1973 when SDUSA stated its membership at 1 @,@ 800 , according to a 1973 profile of Harrington . Second , many members of the Debs Caucus joined David McReynolds in reconstituting the Socialist Party USA also in 1973 .

= = = Founding = = =

The Debs Caucus formed the Union for Democratic Socialism , and , on May 30 , 1973 , incorporated the Socialist Party of the United States of America , (Socialist Party USA) . Many activists from the local and state branches of the old Socialist Party , including the party 's Wisconsin , California , Illinois , New York City , Philadelphia , and Washington D.C. organizations , participated in the reconstitution of the Socialist Party USA .

After its founding , the party promoted itself as the legitimate heir of the Socialist Party of America . Former Mayor of Milwaukee , Frank Zeidler , was elected the first national chairperson of the party . Zeidler also helped re @-@ organizing the party structure during its early years . He was later nominated as the party 's candidacy for the presidential office , with Zeidler believing the party would be able to collaborate with other socialist parties nationwide to spread the message of socialism .

= = = Subsequent History = = =

Since 1936 , a member of the party was elected to the city council of Iowa City and several members have won tens of thousands of votes when losing elections for statewide offices . In 1992 , Socialist Iowa City Councilwoman Karen Kubby won her re @-@ election with the highest vote in a contested election in the history of the Iowa City Council , and was re @-@ elected until retiring from the Council in 2000 . In 2000 , Socialist Wendell Harris received 19 % of the vote for Mayor of Milwaukee , Wisconsin in the primary . In 2008 , Socialist Jon Osborne pulled in 22 % of the vote for Rhode Island 's 34th District State Senate seat , while listed on the ballot under the Socialist Party USA label . During the 2010 United States Senate elections Dan La Botz of the Socialist Party of Ohio received 25 @,@ 368 (0 @.@ 68 %) votes in Ohio . In 2011 , Socialist Matt Erard was elected to a three @-@ year term on the city of Detroit 's Downtown District Citizens ' District Council . In 2012 , Socialist Pat Noble unseated his incumbent opponent in winning election to the Red Bank Regional High School Board of Education , Socialist John Strinka received 10 % of the vote while running with the party 's ballot label for Indiana 's 39th district State House seat , and Socialist Troy Thompson received 27 % of the vote for Mayor of Floodwood , Minnesota . Also in 2012 , candidate Mary Alice Herbert received 13 @.@ 1 % of the vote for Vermont Secretary of State while running with the dual nomination of both the Socialist and Vermont Liberty Union parties .

= = = Membership = = =

According to the party 's first chairman , Frank Zeidler , the party had around 500 members nationwide in 1975 . The Socialist Party experienced substantial growth during the late 1970s and

early to mid 1980s , expanding from only around 600 dues paying members to around 1,700 . In 2008 , WMNF claimed that the party had around 3,000 paying members . However , in 2010 a CommonDreams article suggested that the organization had only 1,000 members with party members claiming it to be an increase in the amount of members . A New York Times article in May 2011 stated that the party has " about 1,000 members nationally " . In February 2012 , an article from The Root stated that the Party had a " membership around 1,500 " .

== Current Elected Officials ==

=== Local Boards of Education ===

Pat Noble , member of the Red Bank Regional High School Board of Education

== Ideology ==

=== Positions ===

While some SP members favor a more gradual approach to socialism , most others envision a more sweeping or revolutionary transformation of society from capitalist to socialist through the decisive victory of the working class in the class struggle . Some SP members also advocate revolutionary nonviolence or pacifism , while some consider armed struggle a possible necessity . The Party 's Statement of Principles rejects equating socialism with a " welfare state " and calls for democratic social revolution from below . The party is strongly committed to principles of socialist feminism and strives to further embody such commitment in its organizational structure . Its national constitution requires gender parity among its national co chairs and co vice chairs , its national committee members and alternates , and seated members of its branch- and region elected delegations to the Party 's biennial national conventions . The Socialist Party also rejected the new healthcare reform law of 2010 approved by the Obama administration , with SP National Co Chair Billy Wharton claiming it to be " a corporate restructuring of the health insurance industry created to protect the profit margins of private insurance companies " .

During his campaign , the Socialist Party candidate for president , Brian Moore , was very vocal against the idea that Barack Obama was a socialist of any kind . He further commented on the issue , saying it was " misleading of the Republicans " to spread that message . In a later statement about Obama 's policies , Wharton called Obama 's 2010 State of the Union Address a " public relations ploy " . He concluded with ; " The time for slick public relations campaigns has ended ? the time for building our grassroots movements is more urgent than ever . The Socialist Party USA stands ready to join in such a political revitalization " .

=== International affairs ===

The Party 's National Action Committee condemned the Israeli actions during the Gaza War . The party demands that the Federal government of the United States cease providing military aid to the State of Israel as a precondition for peace . The party also seeks to begin an immediate withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan . During the 2008 presidential election , the Socialist Party continued to place a strong emphasis on its full scale opposition to U.S. wars abroad , with Brian Moore , the presidential candidate , claiming the war was destroying small communities throughout the country . He also criticized what he called " pressure on the local governments " by the Bush administration . The Socialist Party of Connecticut denounced Obama 's troop surge in Afghanistan , claiming that the president was throwing away much needed resources the country needed to get pulled out of the financial crisis . After denouncing him , the state affiliate organized a

protest in front of the federal building in Hartford .

= = = = Government = = = =

SP candidates , such as New Jersey gubernatorial and senate candidate Greg Pason , have also emphasized immediate public service demands ; these reforms include socializing the U.S. health care system , a steeply graduated income tax , universal rent control , and the elimination of all educational debts and tuition fees . In 1997 , Pason called auto insurance " a regressive tax against working people " . Moore was also vocal of his support for public healthcare and socialized medicine . Moore believes that capitalism is a system based on both exploitation and selfishness , which operates to serve the interests of corporations and the ruling class , at the expense of workers and the poor . During his presidential campaign he claimed that the lack of available remedy to collapsing economic conditions stems from the capitalist system 's foundation upon " greed " , and advocated its replacement with a new system founded upon economic democracy through social ownership and workers ' control of our reigning industrial and financial institutions .

= = Presidential tickets = =

? In each line the first note refers to candidates and results , the second (if any) to ballot access (the number of state + D.C. ballots , out of 51 , on which the Socialist Party candidates appeared)
? ^ Endorsed the Citizens Party 's candidates in 1984 .