

National Platform

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The Socialist Labor Party of America, in 25th National Convention assembled on the 8th day of May, 1960, reaffirms its previous platform pronouncements and declares:

**The overriding issue of the 1960 campaign is—
SOCIALISM and SURVIVAL V. CAPITALISM and
CATASTROPHE!**

This conclusion is based on a sober and realistic appraisal of a situation that actually exists and from which no one can hide. The whole human race is poised on the razor edge of nuclear catastrophe. As each day ends with the missiles resting on their launching pads, the danger is so much greater that the next will witness the outbreak, by accident or design, of a suicidal nuclear war.

The political heads of the great Powers solemnly declare that all-out thermonuclear war is unthinkable. We are told that there is an atomic stalemate—a balance of terror that deters both sides from starting World War III. But, for two reasons, this confidence is unjustified.

The first reason is that behind the fateful arms race there is a fierce international struggle between capitalist imperialism and Soviet imperialism for the markets and raw materials of the world. For the capitalism masters of the Western bloc and the bureaucratic masters of the Soviet bloc—the ones who really determine their nations' policies regardless of which

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politicians or bureaucrats hold office—the markets of the world are indispensable. In the case of U.S. capitalism, lack of these overseas outlets for the surplus products that result from the exploitation of American labor causes commodities to pile up and threatens the economy with mass unemployment, stagnation and final collapse.

Reason and experience tell us that ruling classes faced with the breakdown of their system, and blinded by the threatened loss of their property and privileges, become desperate. Desperate men do desperate things. It is cause for the most sober reflection that today a few hundred top capitalists and their military and political pawns—or their Soviet imperialist adversaries—can, when they feel compelled by their material interests, set in motion fateful forces that could destroy the world.

The second reason our fears are not allayed by the assurances of statesmen is the danger than an unauthorized or accidental nuclear explosion may trigger an all-out nuclear war. The grim but simple facts are these: First, each side now has ready for instant use nuclear weapons of unimaginable power. Second, these weapons are in charge of militarists who, being human, are prone to err. As one deeply perturbed Congressman described our peril:

“If you place six chimpanzees in a small room with a couple of baskets of live hand grenades, a minor catastrophe is inevitable. If you place error-prone human beings in proximity to thousands of nuclear weapons, a major catastrophe is inevitable and the triggering of an all-out massive exchange is probable.”

The Socialist Labor Party urges every person to face this grim truth: We survive from day to day as hostages of a criminal, outmoded social system careening to its doom.

Nor does the danger to our survival stem from war alone. As a result of the capitalists’ insatiable profit hunger we are all exposed to a host of mortal dangers—unsuspected chemical

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poisons in our food, chemical and radioactive pollutants in our water, noxious gases in the air we breathe. Capitalism's irresponsible hunger to exploit for private profit the advances of science is illustrated by the fact that there are now 65 million gallons of high-level, boiling-hot, radioactive waste stored in tanks that are estimated to last from 10 to 50 years. This is enough radioactive material to pollute all the land and water area of the United States, and it will remain deadly to man for centuries. By 1980 there will be another 65 million gallons. Neither the Atomic Energy Commission nor anyone else knows how to dispose of this poisonous atomic waste.

The Socialist Labor Party declares that the alternative to capitalist catastrophe is Socialism. Socialism, which will eliminate competitive production for the profit of a handful of capitalist parasites, and which will create the economic conditions for peace and cooperation, is the only hope of humanity. Socialism has nothing in common with the bureaucratic despotism that masquerades as "Socialism" in Soviet Russia. Socialism, as its founder, Karl Marx, conceived it, as Daniel De Leon, the great American Marxist and social scientist, developed it, and as advocated by the Socialist Labor Party, is a society of industrial democracy—

- **in which the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land, etc., are owned collectively by all the people;**
- **in which production is carried on for use and not for the profit of a handful of capitalists;**
- **and in which the industries are administered democratically by the workers themselves through an integrated industrial union.**

In the United States the capitalist class is master. In Soviet Russia the master is a bureaucratic hierarchy. But the Socialist Industrial Union government proposed by the Socialist Labor Party eliminates both capitalist masters and bureaucratic masters. It is the only conceivable form of social and industrial administration that gives the workers collectively a democratic mastery of their tools and products.

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Socialism is the answer to all our grave and pressing social problems.

- It is the cure for recurring war because it replaces the international struggle for markets and other forms of economic competition with economic cooperation, thus creating a foundation for durable peace.

- It is the cure for recurring economic depression because it replaces capitalist production for private profit with production for human needs, thus freeing social production from the anarchy, waste and restrictions of private ownership and an unpredictable market.

- It is the answer to the problem of poverty in the midst of plenty, for it ends the exploitation of class by class and assures that every worker will receive the full social value of his labor.

- It is the answer to the threat of unemployment—a threat underscored by the rapid spread of automation—because democratic control of industry empowers the workers to utilize new machinery to reduce working hours rather than to eliminate jobs.

- It is the cure for race prejudice because it cleanses society of the sordid material interests that foment racism and because it creates the economic foundation and cooperative climate for universal human brotherhood.

- Socialism is also the answer to crime and juvenile delinquency, to the alarming spread of mental illness, alcoholism, dope addiction, and other manifestations of capitalist decadence, for it will replace irrational, inhuman relationships with rational, human ones.

To bring to birth this sane society of peace, abundance and freedom, the Socialist Labor Party appeals to the working class of America, and to all social-minded citizens, to support its principles at the polls by voting for the candidates of the Socialist Labor Party. It appeals to all voters to repudiate the Republican and Democratic parties, the political Siamese twins of capitalism. It appeals to them also to reject the self-styled “radicals” and “liberals” whose platforms consist of reform

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demands, every one of which is a concealed measure of reaction.

Finally, the Socialist Labor Party appeals to the working class to repudiate the present procapitalist unions. All of them accept capitalism as a finality, and they are under the domination and control of leaders who are in effect “labor lieutenants” of the capitalist class. The Socialist Labor Party calls on the workers to build a new union, one which denies the false claim that there is a brotherhood between exploiting capital and exploited labor—a union which has Socialism as its goal. It calls on them to build the all-embracing integral Socialist Industrial Union as the only power capable of enforcing a majority vote for Socialism and of taking over the administration of social production.

Supported at the polls by the working-class majority, the elected candidates of the Socialist Labor Party will take over the political State, not to administer it, but to disband it. The reins of government will simultaneously be passed to the integrally organized Socialist Industrial Union.

This is the peaceful and civilized way to accomplish the Socialist revolution in America so imperatively demanded in this greatest crisis in human history.

We repeat: The issue in this campaign is *Socialism and survival versus capitalism and catastrophe*.

Unite with us to save humanity from destruction—and to set an example in free industrial self-government for all mankind! Unite with us to establish the Socialist Commonwealth of Peace, Plenty and International Brotherhood!

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*Transcribed for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party
Of America by Robert Bills*

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