

# Oregon Socialist

<http://www.thesocialistparty.org/>

Spring 2007

## Vote for Delegates

- **Vote for Delegates**
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**"Full opportunity for full development is the unalienable right of all. He who denies it is a tyrant; he who does not demand it is a coward; he who is indifferent to it is a slave; he who does not desire it is dead. The earth for all the people! That is the demand. -Eugene Debs, 1904**

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SPUSA members: a delegate ballot is enclosed for voting for our delegates to the SPUSA Convention in October. You may vote for up to three male AND three female delegates; the ballot includes the names of those nominated to date, plus has extra lines for write-in candidacies.

To make the ballots secret and SPUSA-only: only SPUSA members in good standing are receiving ballots. Sign the envelope, but not the ballot, itself. The signed envelopes will constitute the polling book (record of who voted), and the ballots will be tallied separately.

There are some of the current drafts of proposed materials for the upcoming Convention in this issue of *Oregon Socialist*.

At the Convention on August 12 (yes, THAT soon!), votes will be tallied and delegates selected. The delegate list will then be adjusted by the Convention to take into account anyone who drops out or wishes to be substituted.

Send in your ballot even after the 12<sup>th</sup> – the SEC can continue to adjust the list. (After the 15<sup>th</sup>, do not bother; that's when our paperwork is due.) We usually have fewer people able to go than we are allotted, so your last-minute vote may well help to get somebody who has decided, at the last minute, that s/he can take the time off work to go to

St. Louis, after all. Copy of the travel subsidy request also included.

This is (roughly) the process we used in 2005; before then, delegates were only selected by the Convention and the SEC. Once again, the job is somewhat bungled, but we want ALL members to have a say in who are representatives will be, not just the ones who can make it to a meeting.

The Convention, mentioned above, is for August 12: the location is Pizza Schmizza, 320 NW 21<sup>st</sup>, Portland.

The biggest question for the Convention to decide is the election of a new State Executive Committee. Our last one, devoted folks all, did not really work out. Let's put together an SEC that will work.

Making sure we actually have people to go to the Convention is another item of business.

Miscellaneous items such as Resolutions would also be brought up here.

The delegation we send to the Convention will be printed in the Summer issue of *Oregon Socialist*, and the results from the Convention printed in the Autumn issue.

## Ralph Nader Sparks Debate

### Claims US is Fascist

#### Cornet Joyce's Take on Fascism

[I'm farther from it than when I lived within walking distance from the white house; but] I see no reason to claim that fascism has not arrived, notwithstanding Nader's shallow reading of the terminology. It is not the Italian original, but neither was the German version. The most obvious difference is that the trains still don't run on time. Fascism is past the first rush of enthusiasm and the faithful are disgruntled, but the great transformation is behind us now and the Republic is gone. Unlike the fascists and the Nazis, American fascism was never nationalist but globalist. The home country is valued only for its military power, and this has made for great unhappiness. But great unhappiness is easily trumped by great stupidity. A Actually it's quite narrow. The only fascist state I'm aware of is the USA. But some

thoughts... Firstly, "fascism" is a specific 20th century refinement of despotism and a subgroup thereof. The "ideal type" of fascism, in Weberian terms, is Italian. The antecedents of fascism are in Catholic corporatism and much of the ideological thrust is contained in the Futurist Manifesto, which calls for "action" at the expense of reason. Mussolini lays out the fascist vision in "The Corporate State." Fascism is "the third way," in which capital and labor cooperate under the domination of the former. Thus, American progressives such as Herbert Croly and John Dewey are enthused. They are soon disappointed. Fascism is, as we say, Italian; but related phenomena can be observed in many other countries. They're catalogued and analyzed in Robert Brady's "Business Power" (Harvard, 1940)The nazis

#### Michael Marino's Take on Fascism

Ralph says the USA is fascist? I wonder what countries he would say were not? I have my list of the ones that are:

I do believe the CIA World Fact [sic] Book comes with a fairly complete listing. The mere fact that the title is misleading does not mean that it is not fairly well researched.

Jefferson commented on the world belonging to the living, not to those who lived in the past, because that would mean the world was owned (and ingabited) by the dead. Yet corporations rule the world, and they live not. It is the land of the dead from the Antarctic to the Arctic. (Ooh -- chilling way to put it.) (Get it? Antarctic? Arctic? Chilling? Ah, never throwin' 'em...) One need not consider the possibility of having varities or categories or degrees of fascism, for the world has never played by

those rules. I prefer to dispense with "varieties", since they are masks of language used to obscure meaning and not to clarify the matters at hand. Perhaps China could have boasted, once, that it has no corporations that own the joint. I would have disagreed then and now: what China is and what a corporation is are identical in that they are fictae. They can own land and people, they can ruin the Earth, they can have products made or canceled. So the term "nation" and "corporation" are blinders. There is only one nation: humanity. I address the criticism that this perspective does not allow differentiation between fascism from the normal workings of "liberal democracy" as it has historically existed - quite simply, the difference exists only in our imeaginations. "Liberal democracy" as it has historically

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have the fascist franchise in Germany and outdo the original model. Progressives see the world as political economy and so they see fascism as a smokescreen for capital, but it's much more. It's a mass movement in which the masses submerge their personalities in that of the Leader. Talking about political economy avails progressives little: it's about the psychic economy. Pavlov trumps Marx. Wilhelm Reich explores this in "The Mass Psychology of Fascism." He posits a layer of personality below the civilized veneer- the sadomasochistic depths of the soul bared by fascist techniques - and spends the rest of his life looking for the orgone he imagines will enable man to break through that layer to the inner core of true humanity. At the Nuremberg trials, Goering explains that everything that had happened was based upon "the

Leader Principle, which we all accept," and stares knowingly at his accusers. The Russian judge wriggles nervously and the English lawyer furiously criticizes Robert Jackson for allowing Goering to speak. As the war and the trials end, Bruce Catton, soon to be America's most popular historian of the civil war, writes a little book in which he observes that the collusion of State and Corporation in the war against fascism has created the basis for a corporate state. In Italy and Germany, a Leader needed charisma, but in America all charisma is bestowed upon the monarchy. The Leader Principle is built into the constitution of the empire, whether the emperor be an Abe Lincoln or an orangutan. America got its Leader. That he is the intellectual peer of an orangutan and the moral peer of a cancer cell does not tarnish his

## Michael Marino's Take on Fascism

existed has always been fascism. The mighty Greeks (who invented democracy, philosophy, plays, and other stuff [I know, I know -- in reality they did not "invent" them so much as dabble in them, but just going by what is said...]) had a very long tradition of using the polarization of wealth to enslave, and slavery to further the polarization of wealth, believing whole-heartedly that one man should, BY RIGHT, rule another. I rather liked the Spartans who pretty much marked their towns: "Fascist to the bone and PROUD of it! You want some? Come and get some!" What can I say? I prefer folks who put it like it is. In the spirit of sharing my opinion (which comes in a bottle with that skull and crossbones symbol to mark it as hazardous), here 'tis: every societal organization we see, that forms in a mass and is represented by a control system, a name, a flag, an army, and so on and so forth, has been a scam. They have always been designed to protect the wealthy and exploit the weak. "Fascism", or corporatism, is

nothing more than an elaborate con act -- and that is why the tiny differences (such as, "Was it 10% of the population who killed 20% so they could control the other 70%, or was it that very different [sic] example, in which 5% of the population killed 15% in order to control the remaining 80%?") are trivialities with which I am unconcerned. I suspect that there may have been non-fascist states, but there certainly aren't any today. The Great Law of the Six Nations Confederacy (correct me and/or club me if I got that name garbled) may very well have been part of an effort to make a society not based on exploitation, but the Great Law, great as it was, has built-in expectations of people to follow certain roles in life -- the women vote... for men. The men vote if they are elected as representatives. So it's a competition among the males, and the women get to pick out which silverback did the best silverbacking. That silverbacker then goes and silverbacks until the women vote to

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charisma but adds to it: he "makes us safe" and confounds the evil ones who plot against us. His adherents insanely shriek his praises. The Leader Principle is in full force. This is the core of fascism and it is in power. The Leader is above the constitution and announces it almost daily, over a thousand times now even as he signs laws. That is an element of fascism. The Leader has abrogated the Bill of Rights and the "citizen" has no rights which the Leader is bound to respect. That is an element of fascism. The Leader has erected a vast surveillance apparatus and we are spied upon, recorded, tracked, judged by the apparatus. That is an element of fascism. The Leader has erected a network of torture camps spanning the world, into which victims are thrust at the whim of the apparatus. That is an element of fascism. The Leader offers the masses endless "wars" not against actual enemies but against the powers and principalities of the air. That is an element of fascism. The Leader has moved to subject the means of communication to the rigorous control of the corporate state, which has turned the media into weapons of mass delusion. That is an element of fascism. The Leader has fallen into disrepute lately, but correctly supposes that "historians" will rule in his favor. The Leader will pass from the scene, but the elements of fascism will not be renounced by his successor. American possessive individualism- meum and teum- is a sort of collectivized atomism in which the atoms are all separate together, and is perfectly at home with state surveillance and the occasional computer raid and state abduction in the fight against "terror" (truth). Optimism and good ole American individualism notwithstanding, the paper constitution is, as the Leader says, just a piece of paper. The separation of

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have his antlers recalled. Among the 4th world and primitive societies, there can be some form of anarchy or democracy, but we never see it in larger groups. As people move in more densely, they form more and more complex social structures, and then some people learn how to take advantage of the systems they create. There are always some who can't resist "beating the system" and, of course, there are always some who are more concerned for the common good, or for the poor. That latter body is never as effective as the former; the group that seeks to take advantage of others has always been victorious in that they get away with it, at least for a time. For those of us who are socialists, we are still seeking the mechanism by which it can work the other way: that those who seek to gain advantage not be able to do so quite as easily as it seems to work in our "modern" societies. Take my own District Association: shortly after I was elected, I learned which real estate cartels owned which officers on my Board; the same cartels, roughly, own the people in City Council. Often the balance is not the same, so my District approves crosswalks on NW 23rd, and City Council says no. Next year, it may very well be that my District wants to put more restaurants on NW 23rd, and City Council says, "Only if you let us put in those crosswalks we wanted." The part of the government I am in is owned by corporations; the level above and the level below are also owned, by mostly the same folks. It's all run by people who have connections to business; businesses, run by unelected persons, make all the decisions here, and then we merry governmenters get to ratify them, announce them to the public, and, very often, take the heat for whatever was decided for us. When the

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powers merely separates the two legislatures from power, which is totally under the control of one Leader who bluntly asserts, without fear of contradiction, that he is above the paper constitution and that his whim is law.

The most serious difference between American fascism, aside from its 100% Americanism (which of course is what the Kingfish predicted) and the fascisms of the 20th century, is that it infests a world empire instead of an European state, and is therefore unchallengeable on the battlefield: fascism without Gotterdammerung. The Leader will pass the baton in a

normal succession to the next Leader, who will be more genteel- Claudius to the present Caligula. The sun will indeed break through, but the great transformation has occurred, and the sun will be the Leader, for good or ill.

"The great Liberal daily of Milan, against which Mussolini hardly dares take action, consistently reiterates its faith in liberalism and democratic processes." Carleton Beales, 1923.

## Michael Marino's Take on Fascism

government is owned and run by business, there is fascism. Everything that happens here, it's all a scam. You know, a dodge. A hustle. That was how Hitler got into power; and, so long as profits are up, it will be a nice, peaceful fascist state. As soon as the bubble bursts, they will have to start feeding on each other, and they will use us to fight their wars, because that is what they have always done. Y remain determined to seek a better way, but I am sure it won't be easy.

### **Solidarity with SP-Wisconsin!**

**-Michael C. Marino**

**Suspended Chair, SPUSA-Oregon**

*"Any right, or privilege not expressly granted the National Committee or the National Action Committee in the Socialist Party USA Constitution, by Convention Resolution or membership referendum, resides solely with Locals, State Affiliates, or members at large where neither of these exist."*

-Current draft amendment to SPUSA Constitution

### **Other words by Cornet Joyce:**

In the 60s, I taught my friend's high school class one day of each year. The kids were inquisitive and openminded, and I had fun. On one occasion I introduced them to the Jeffersonian Catechism for students from the early Republic.

Question: What form of government is best?

Answer: That which governs least.

Question: What shall we think of those who wish to keep the people, and especially young people, ignorant of their rights?

Answer: The same as we thought of the blind guides of former ages.

(and so on)

## Happenings...

### Vancouver Library Display Case and Peace Fair

Do you have a creative bent that you would like to use for peace and justice? There are two opportunities for you below. Also, if you work with a non-profit or a business that might like to come to the Peace and Justice Fair, see item 3 below!

1. Ft. Vancouver Regional Library's Community Branch has a super display case that Den Mark Wichar has gotten the permission to use in September. YAY, Den! If you would like to help make this display, or even loan some stuff to put in the display case, we are meeting this Sunday, August 12th, at 5 PM at Burgerville on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way. This meeting is to plan what we want to put in the display on the 4 weeks of September. Cool.

2. I am looking for people who like to act, or create costumes for the Peace and Justice Fair, which is Saturday, September 8. My dream is to have people reenact people who have worked for peace and justice. We already have someone who will "be" Gandhi, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. If you like to pretend (OK, I am an elementary school teacher... can't help but use that word) then this will be FUN! We also need some help with costumes. Call me! Kay Ellison, 696-4840

3. If you are a part of a non-profit or a business that might like to be an exhibitor at the Vancouver Peace and Justice Fair on Saturday, September 8, please look at our website [www.vancouverpeaceandjusticefair.org](http://www.vancouverpeaceandjusticefair.org) and click on "Become an Exhibitor" link on the left. Print the form

and send it in with your check. We'd love to have you!  
THANKS!

Kay Ellison 696-4840

### Portland

State Convention  
August 12, 3pm  
Pizza Schmizza, 320 NW 21<sup>st</sup>

**See front page for details**

Conversation on Iraq  
August 14, 12 noon  
Hoffmann Hall, PSU  
1833 SW 11th St.  
Please join United States Senator Ron Wyden for a Town Hall Meeting and Community  
At the community meeting, the public is invited to comment on a first come, first served basis. Due to time constraints, speakers will be asked to limit their oral comments to 2 minutes. In addition, the public is invited to submit written comments.

If you have any questions about the event, please call Loretta Smith or Mary Gautreaux in Sen. Wyden's office at 503.326.7525.  
MCSP Monthly Meeting  
August 19, 1pm  
Belmont Library

### Willamette Valley Local

For upcoming meetings and events, contact the Mid-Willamette Local at:

Mid-Willamette Local  
c/o Bob Rossi  
P.O. Box 2766  
Salem, OR 97308  
[rjrossi@opeuseiu.com](mailto:rjrossi@opeuseiu.com)

No activity reported from Eugene.

No activity reported in Helen Keller Memorial Local; question re: the Local pending before national Committee.

## October 6 Salem Event

*The Frederick Douglass School/Willamette Reds will sponsor a talk by community solidarity activist Juanita Rodriguez and Communist Party leader Scott Marshall on Saturday, October 6 in Salem, Oregon. The event will be held at Salem's First Congregational Church, 700 Marion St. NE. We will start at 2:00 pm on Saturday, Oct. 6. The title of the event will be: **Who's World Is It? Global and Local Communities In Action.***

*Please attend and please tell others.*

Scott Marshall is a vice-chair of the Communist Party, USA and chair of its national labor commission. Scott grew up in Alabama and Virginia where he first became active in the movements for civil rights and against the Vietnam War in high school in the mid 1960's.

Scott has been a life long trade unionist and was active in rank and file reform movements in the Teamsters, Machinists and Steelworkers unions in the 1970's and '80's. He was co-chair of the Save Our Jobs committee of USWA local 1834 at Pullman Standard in Chicago and active in nationwide organizing against plant closings and layoffs.

Scott has worked for the Communist Party since 1987 when he became the district organizer for the party in Illinois. He was elected chair of the labor commission in 1998. His main focus is on labor and anti-globalization issues. Scott is also active in the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR). He is the author of

*Working Class Strategy in the Era of Capitalist Globalization*, a basic text used by Willamette Reds in creating a series of local events.

Juanita Rodriguez lives in Corvallis, Oregon and calls herself a "Freelance Community Catalyst". While he has traveled to South America, the Caribbean, and Latin America to learn first hand about the effects of Plan Colombia, the Blockade against Cuba, and NAFTA, her advocacy at home includes everything from representing women escaping domestic violence, to working through the deportation process with a young, undocumented Latino, to getting financial assistance for a Mexican mother to have a necessary operation, and to helping marginalized youth apply for scholarships to study medicine in Cuba. Since 2001 she has been a volunteer representative of a Zapotec women's weaving collective from Oaxaca, Mexico, working together with them to develop fair pricing and a dignified and mutually supportive group that markets their handcrafted goods directly to the consumer. She is a single mother of four, a gardener and an artist.

*The sponsoring group hopes to have music at the event. There will be snacks and beverages and time to dialogue with the speakers.*

*More information on Willamette Reds may be found at <http://willamettereds.blogspot.com>. Please call Bob Rossi at 503-838-6676 for additional information.*

# A MODERN CONSTITUTION FOR THE SOCIALIST PARTY

By Rob Tucker

(We are hemorrhaging members because of all the acrimony; Pennsylvania has lost 60 members in the past year! Two major state parties have withdrawn, and several others are considering withdrawal. If we want to salvage the Socialist Party, we need to make drastic changes. This constitution is designed to decrease acrimony and factionalism by modernizing our internal operations, shifting certain powers to the state parties, and decreasing the need for expensive cross-country trips and hotel fees.)

(THIRD DRAFT. To be offered to Hammer and Tongs. Your comments and suggestions have been incorporated; more will be much appreciated. Reply SOONESY to [RWTucker@AOL.com](mailto:RWTucker@AOL.com))

1. MEMBERSHIP. Applicants for membership must be aged 16 or older. They must sign a statement: "Desiring to bring about, by democratic means, a democratic socialist society in which all exploitation has been eliminated, I hereby apply for membership in the Socialist Party. I agree to abide by its principles and platforms." In organized states, this statement shall be sent to the state officers, who shall accept or reject the proposed membership. In unorganized states, it shall be sent to the National Office, and the National Committee shall accept or reject the member.

There shall be no further ideological requirements.

(Comment: "abide by" does not necessarily mean "agree with.")

Membership in good standing also requires up-to-date dues payments. The National Committee shall set a minimum sum for national dues, with a reduced sum for students and members who claim impoverishment, and no dues for prisoners. The State Parties can require additional dues. In

organized states, members may send their dues to the state treasurer, who shall forward the monies to the National Office; or to the National Office, which shall remit a portion to the state treasurer. Members at large shall send their dues to the National Office.

2. CONVENTIONS. A national convention shall be held every four years, in the year preceding a Presidential election. Delegates shall be elected; national conventions shall never be open to the general membership. Organized states shall arrange elections of delegates; the National Committee shall arrange elections from members at large.

State delegations shall, if possible, have approximately the same gender balance as does the membership of the state.

The national convention shall enact a Platform, which shall remain in force until another convention alters or replaces it.

Decisions of a convention shall be the highest authority in the Socialist Party until the next convention, and are not subject to alteration by referendum.

(Argument: I decided, after the ISL referendum in 1958, that a delegated convention, where comrades can argue face-to-face, is more democratic than a referendum in which half the membership doesn't bother to vote. And I observed that the referendum took months, during which all other activities came to a standstill, and that it was expensive, and that it left lasting wounds. I warned of all this in 2004 and begged comrades not to go forward with the referendum of that year, but I was ignored. And now look where we are!)

A convention may pass resolutions, which shall remain in force for twelve years and then become extinct, unless re-enacted.

A convention shall elect for four-year terms two co-chairs of opposite genders and two co-vice chairs of opposite gender.

A convention shall nominate candidates for President and Vice President, unless a majority of the delegates vote not to offer candidates for these offices.

A convention may review and alter all decisions by the National Committee.

A convention may charter or decharter a state organization.

3. CONFERENCES. In the biennium halfway between National Conventions, the National Committee shall arrange for one national or several regional conferences, which all members may attend. These conferences shall have no legislative authority, but may recommend anything to the National Committee, which must take up such recommendations and vote them up or down.

4. NATIONAL COMMITTEE. The National Committee shall include the co-chairs and co-vice chairs, and one representative and alternate appointed from time to time by the State Executive Committee of each organized state, to serve at the pleasure of the SEC. It shall also include, ex officio, the National Secretary and the National Treasurer, who shall be elected by the National Committee, and shall hold no other Party offices.

All members of the National Committee must have access to full use of a computer and an e-mail account.

The National Committee shall appoint an International Secretary.

The National Committee shall appoint, and may replace, an Editor for the Party publication, but it is enjoined to refrain from micro-managing the the publication, either itself or through an editorial committee.

The National Committee shall determine if a state is organized enough to be deemed an organized state. It shall supervise the at-large members in unorganized states, collecting their dues, and arranging

their elections of delegates to national conventions.

The National Committee shall appoint a Platform Committee several months before each convention, to prepare a Platform or revisions to the existing Platform for the convention.

The National Committee may expel, or suspend for a stated time, any member, by two-thirds vote in two consecutive meetings.

The National Committee shall pass resolutions regarding current political issues, which shall become extinct after eight years unless re-enacted.

The National Committee shall meet electronically, for instance in a chat room or by telephone conference, at 1:00 pm Eastern Time (10:00 am Pacific Time) on the first Saturday of each month; except if the first Saturday falls on New Year's Day or the Fourth of July, it shall meet on the second Saturday. This schedule may be altered by the National Committee. Once a year it shall instead meet face-to-face; in convention years, that meeting shall take place at the time and place of the convention.

The National Chairs may convene additional meetings if needed.

All decision-making shall be transparent.

5. ORGANIZED STATES. An organized state shall elect a State Executive Committee, consisting of a state chair, a state secretary-treasurer or secretary and treasurer, the chairs or chosen representatives of each Local, and two or more members at large. The SEC shall appoint from time to time a representative and an alternate, of opposite genders if possible, to serve on the National Committee; who shall be members ex officio of the SEC, if they are not already members of it.

The SEC may set state dues and other criteria for membership. Dues do not have to be the same in every state. An SEC is free to decide to fund itself entirely by voluntary contributions.

An SEC may expel or suspend any member, who shall then have the right of appeal to the National Committee, which will decide the case by majority vote.

Once a year, the SECs shall report to the National Committee how many members their states have in good standing, and forward a list of their names and addresses.

An SEC may endorse the candidacy for any state-level office of persons nominated by other minor nonBolshevik parties, or of

Independents. It may endorse candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties in general elections or in their Primaries, if they advocate an agenda consistent with ours.

6. UNORGANIZED STATES. The National Committee shall endeavor to create new Locals in unorganized states, and to advance them to the status of organized states. Members in unorganized states have full rights of representation at national conventions; their elections shall be run by the National Committee. The National Committee shall set and collect dues for members in unorganized states.

(NOTE: There is no longer any need for a National Action Committee.)

(Note: There is no Statement of Principles. See Membership, above. A Statement of Principles is reduplicative, and a cause of friction, and is sometimes misused as a litmus test for new members, a type of creedalism the SP does not need. The Platform can and should take care of issues such as peace, labor, feminism, racism, civil liberties, and free speech.)

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