

# Socialist Vanguard

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Edited by Dave Schall

Presenting Democratic Socialist Viewpoints

## Trump's "America First" vs A Socialist Vision

Donald Trump is a reactionary. While efforts to implement Trump's programs and words get implemented are troubling, and his calls to make America Great Again may be foolish, they serve a valuable purpose of making thoughtful people look back and consider their positions. Looking back at the world (and the USA) history since World War II, we are reminded of Charles Dickens opening of his novel, *The Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, and the worst of times."

World War II and the Cold War that followed brought about policies that attempted to guarantee that there would never be another war of such mass destruction. While we have lived under the threat of a nuclear war, we also saw meaningful efforts made to reduce the risk of such a war. The United Nations was formed and has given rise to a weak, but none-the-less public body that promotes the redistribution of wealth, promotes workers' rights, provides a structure for addressing health issues, and a forum for nations to talk about injustices and grievances.

In addition to the UN, numerous regional alliances (both military and economic) have been formed which provide a commonality among many previously warring nations. While the UN and the regional alliances have not been able to end war, as we know it or to bring about a truly redistributive prosperity, they have promoted globalization and greater integration of the people of this planet. Slowly poverty is being reduced and a middle-class lifestyle is increasing.

While globalization brings the promise of better times, it also brings changes and new threats to human existence. As our earth is increasingly exploited to spread a "middle class" lifestyle, it is becoming more polluted and natural resources

are becoming scarce. As economies change and become more developed, there are winners and losers.

Good governments try to alleviate the losses of those hurt by change. Unfortunately globalization directed by corporate America has led to many global changes and ignores the suffering of those devastated brought by the corporate power enhancing trade deals and the neo-liberal, free market ideology supporting globalization efforts.

Trump's America First policies attack globalization, including some of benefits, by reintroducing a new version of isolation. Trump's ideas, which are now beginning to crystallize, do not ameliorate the suffering. Most of Trump's efforts appear to be bringing us back to a pre-WWII, where nation-states were constantly bickering and threatening war, people were suffering from a worldwide depression as tariffs and other barriers to trade reduced sharing throughout the world.

The world needs more efforts to protect its resources so that people can breath clean air, drink clean water, eat healthy food and enjoy peace and a sense of security free of fearing a nuclear war. Trump's America First promises breed isolation, restrict sharing; discourage developing new technology and practices aimed at protecting the earth's resources, and promoting a segregated world where each person is a dangerous unknown.

Trump's world is a dangerous world, one of isolation and competition for basic resources. It is a mean world that resembles the world of the 1930s. Trump's vision does not improve conditions; it returns us to a place with greater suffering. **We need a democratic socialist vision that promotes working together, living together, sharing both work and the rewards of a healthy planet!** DS

## Scott: Where Are the Jobs?

In 2010 Wisconsin candidate for Governor Scott Walker promised to create 250,000 by the end of his first term and like any tough talking politician said that he should be held accountable, if he failed in delivering his promise. Well his four-year term ended but Wisconsin voters failed to hold Walker accountable and reelected him to another 4-year term. Walker continues to boast about creating jobs, but it is now 6 years since he was first elected and according to Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development reports, Walker is still 64,000 jobs short of his promise and if trends in the last two years continue, he will still be short of his promise when his second term ends in 2018.

If Walker were the honorable person he claims to be, he would hold himself accountable and admit his policies failed to deliver his promise and step aside for an election without a person running without the powers of incumbency and allow Wisconsinites to elect someone with better job creating policies!

**Not expecting Walker to be so principled, we need to carry on the efforts ignited by the Sanders campaign for DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM and find a candidate who will promote real job creating policies!** DS

*Words for thought*

*"Latin American history shows that populist nationalism is a recipe for national decline."*

*The Economist*

**Undoing Privatization: Milwaukee Schools**

*"That you don't know what you've got, Til it's gone  
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot"  
By Joni Mitchell*

When governments opt for privatization, they often get rid of the equipment that was used to provide the service. As we see school privatization take place in Wisconsin, particularly Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Public Schools are losing enrollment and essential funding. Many schools have been closed and left vacant. While conservative forces have continuously pushed vouchers and charter schools as a solution to our education problems, the results for the most part have been disappointing.

The conservative "reformers" are not addressing the real problems facing our schools, but are really at war with teacher's unions and teacher salaries (not to mention using "choice" as a way to perpetuate racial/ethnic inequalities).

Sooner or later the public will wake up to the deceit. The Republicans in the Wisconsin legislature must be seeing the writing on the wall as more studies are coming in showing the fraud being perpetuated. In 2015 the state passed a law forcing the sale of surplus MPS school buildings. A conservative legal group, Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, is pressuring the state to force Milwaukee into selling the buildings to "choice" schools.

Such a sale of the buildings will make it much more expensive and difficult to undo the wasteful privatization of our schools that has already occurred.

**It is time that legislators woke up and realized that "school choice" is a mistake and a poor use of resources that should be spent differently for improving our schools. They might as well put up a parking lot! DS**

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**Words to the Wise!**

**H.L. Mencken:** "As democracy is perfected, the office of president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be adorned by a downright moron."

**Maureen Dowd:** "If he (Trump) seems less like a mad man aiming to rip everything apart, he can more easily rip everything apart."

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**Health Care: From the Country Club To You**

Well, the GOP finally revealed their replacement for the Affordable Care Act (ACA or Obamacare). There are no surprises. It did not improve the ACA by moving the nation toward a single-payer system. It raises costs, especially for those in the older age brackets (Medicare recipients are not directly affected.).

It relies heavily on tax breaks, rather than subsidies. This is par for the course of many things coming out of Washington, as most of our legislators come from privileged classes that make lots of money and seem to be focused on dodging taxes (remember Trump claiming that paying very little taxes was a sign of intelligence). While our regressive tax system takes a relatively larger chunk of our money, we live for the Packers, the lottery, a Thanksgiving meal and worry mostly about having a paycheck. For most of us tax deductions/credits are a minor consideration as we eke out a financial existence.

Most subsidies for health care are in the form of tax credits rather than subsidies for insurance premiums. The tax credits increase with age, based on actuarial tables that show older people in greater need of medical care. They do not take into consideration income or ability to pay. Insurance companies will be allowed to bilk older adults more for insurance than they could the current program that focuses

more on ability to pay than risk for the insurance companies. This was one of the provisions that produced the most angry feedback for the GOP and has been modified slightly in the most recent versions by increasing the amount of health expenses that can be deducted from taxes (again the tax thing).

The GOP bill would prohibit states from covering single adults and take away state funding if adults above a set minimum are covered.

One of the expected revisions to the bill is a clause that would make some Medicaid recipients prove that they are looking for work. This is totally against the SOCIALIST principle that health care is a right not a privilege. Those in the country-club world believe that handouts make poor people lazy, as they do not understand that poor people like most everyone else have pride and would prefer to work and do their fair share to contribute to society. (Don't ask what the difference is between receiving subsidies paid through taxes and subsidies given directly to people, that's another topic and the answers will not make any sense.)

The GOP efforts to replace the ACA are not about improving health care; they are more about exerting the power enjoyed by the country club set! **Improving the ACA would be to adopt a single-payer plan that covers all people equally and affordably! DS**

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**SP-Wisconsin Local Meeting: Saturday, April 1 at 1:30 p.m. at the Washington Park Library, 2121 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee**

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**Wisconsin Injured Workers will be having one of their fundraisers on April 1 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 3022 W. Wisconsin (enter from W. Wells St.) at 3:30 p.m. Come for Great Mexican food & door prizes. Suggested donations: \$7.00**

**Socialist Party of Wisconsin**

**2025 N. Martin Luther King Dr #305- Milwaukee, WI 53212 - Phone: 414-332-0654  
email: demsocvanguard@gmail.com**