

# Socialist Vanguard

November 2019 Newsletter

Issue # 110

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Presenting Democratic Socialist Viewpoints

## Environmental Protection: A Moral Imperative!

Environmentalists proudly proclaim that science is on their side on most if not all environmental issues. This is true, but is science the best argument? Recently, the *New York Times* printed an article titled: "How Scientists Got Climate Change So Wrong." The article did not change the need to address climate change, as the mistake was that climate change was coming sooner than most predictions. Almost everybody, including those opposed to adopting environmental regulations, agree that climate change is presents many threats to our earth!



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The problems come from those, who are not convinced that human activity is driving the rise of temperatures. Many of the same doubters also question the effect of human activity on air pollution, water pollution, soil erosion, the depletion of natural resources, and many other challenges facing the earth.

## Cream City Crime Syndicate: Politics and Anarchy

Cabaret Milwaukee recently performed a locally play about the first years of the Dan Hoan administration (1916). It was two plays in one as it provided an overview of the events of the time via a radio show. The one half was a portrayal of some of the drama facing newly elected Dan Hoan. Dan Hoan, besides lending his name to Milwaukee's harbor bridge, was the second Socialist mayor of Milwaukee. Hoan went on to serve for 24 years before losing his only mayoral election in 1940 when he identified as a Democrat for the first time!

What was most striking was the conflict Hoan faced and its relevance to problems we face today. Hoan faced opposition from the city's economic elites who wanted to control the political landscape as well.

In the glimpse of Hoan's personal life we see him being pressured to ignore campaign promises and give only lip service to supporting working people. The economic leaders wanted a business-friendly leader not one likely to side with working folks.

In the radio broadcast there was also dissension as several of the radio performers liked Hoan's ideas, (continued on the back)

### Words for thought

*"Start with your grandest ideas, and any eventual compromise is likely to end up in the middle; start with middling ideas, and your compromise will end up as right-lite." - Charles M. Blow*

*"Trump Takes Incoherence and Inhumanity and Calls It Foreign Policy" By Nicholas Kristof*

***I'M A SOCIALIST!! NOT A LIBERAL!! NOT A PROGRESSIVE!!***

How many feel sick when getting guilt trips from a political party or cause? Sometimes it's the Democratic Party. Sometimes, it is the GOP. Or maybe groups within one of the parties. The assumption is if you identify as one eager to get rid of Trump, you are a liberal or a progressive. If one wants to keep Trump, one is pictured as a libertarian or a Christian fundamentalist. If one is a purist, one can find these assumptions to be offensive and often ignorant.

The word "liberal" stems from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century writers/political philosophers like John Locke or Thomas Jefferson, who believed in everyone enjoying *inalienable natural rights* to life, liberty and property. The purpose of government (which was expected to be minimal) was to protect those rights.

Thanks to some bigotry and the need for the civil rights movement, the US government stepped in to protect everyone's rights in the 1960s. Liberalism in the USA became identified with big government solving problems. One of the disappointments for many was once a number of laws were passed and some programs adopted to ensure that everyone's right are protected by a legal system. The bigots hate liberalism as they see it as a threat to their place in society and many "liberals" accept the idea of minimal government and oppose efforts to contain the abuses of an economic market place that allows (and promotes) the great economic divisions that plague the USA today.

It is exciting to see a Socialist like Bernie Sanders (or a proclaimed capitalist like Elizabeth Warren) promoting policies aimed at leveling the playing field and providing basic rights and amenities for all. Somehow the word progressive has been borrowed from the business reformers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to describe themselves. In tandem with the socialist movement that spread through many of American cities in the early 1900s, there was a number of business leaders who wanted to reform the cities, which were governed by corrupt political machines. These business leaders called themselves progressives, they wanted to reform city services to make them efficient. For the, often supporting efforts to ban

the consumption of alcoholic beverages and to stop immigration which most part the progressives were anti-immigrant. Immigrants were seen as evil tools for the corrupt political machines, that learned how to generate voter turnout (there were instances when local elections would report 120% voter turnout rates). The politicians would take over city government (also county and state ones as well) and reward friends and often themselves with lucrative contracts to build or pave roads, build parks, get some graft for issuing building permits or looking the other way when there were building code violations.

The Socialists were active especially in cities where businesses were viciously exploiting working people, many of whom were immigrants. Milwaukee's Socialists were ridiculed by many other Socialists (who looked for an international workers' movement and world peace) as *sewer socialists* who emphasized public improvements such as providing clean drinking water and sewerage system to clean the water, better education systems, parks and recreation programs, adult education to help immigrants assimilate into mainstream society, skilled fire departments, professional police departments whose focus would be to protect the people not the industries.

In Wisconsin, the Progressives under the leadership of Robert LaFollette (fighting Bob) found that the Socialists could be an important ally in their drive for reforms. The result for Wisconsin and Milwaukee was several decades of low crime rates, excellent public services, and governments that worked.

Progressives were business owners who wanted reforms, but only through necessity adopted many socialist programs. If one gets a solicitation for support with a guilt trip questioning ones' commitment to liberalism or progressivism, depending on the cause and one's financial well-being, one may send some measure of support, but it might also be a good idea to educate and tell the guilt-tripper to stop calling you a Progressive or liberal, **because you are a SOCIALIST! You work for a living!**

**Cream City Crime Syndicate: Politics and Anarchy (*continued from the front*)**

but had to suppress them if they wanted to keep their job. This is not very different from today's angst within the Democratic Party where the economic elites and media support some candidates for president by entering the prediction of electability into the choice in choosing a candidate for the Party's presidential nominee. The electorate is expected to choose someone with no strong commitment to a political program rather than choosing one with ideas on how to improve the world.

It is too late to catch a live presentation of the play, but one can listen to WMSE (91.7 FM in Milwaukee) on Sunday mornings between 8 and 9. WMSE archives can be listened to online (<https://www.wmse.org/program/frontier-radio-theater/>). The Cabaret performs at the Astor Hotel on E. Juneau Street. It has two more productions planned, one: Ransom is Relative in February and in April; Pick Your Poison. Cabaret can be reached at [cabaretmke@gmail.com](mailto:cabaretmke@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/cabmke](https://www.facebook.com/cabmke). Support local artists!

**SP-Wisconsin Meeting: Saturday, Dec. 7 at 1:30 p.m. at the Eastside Library, 2320 N. Cramer St., Milwaukee**

**Wisconsin Injured Workers will be having one of their fundraisers on Dec. 14 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**

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