

Socialist Vanguard

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Presenting Democratic Socialist Viewpoints

Impeach or Censure!

At the June meeting of the SP-Wisconsin there was a brief debate over whether to impeach or censure President Donald Trump. To impeach or not to impeach is a question being debated within the Democratic Party and among many others on the left side of USA politics.

Arguments opposing impeachment tend to focus on it being a lost cause. The GOP controls the US Senate and at this point it seems unlikely that enough (if any GOP senators would vote to impeach Trump (approximately 21 of the 53 GOP Senators would have to vote to enforce an impeachment. Another argument is that VP Mike Pence would become the president (Pence would be saner, but tends to be further to the right of the ignorant one.) Another argument against an unsuccessful impeachment is the process could make Trump a martyr (he already likes to caste himself in this way) and probably insure his success in a run for re-election in 2020.

Proponents for impeachment argue that Trump and his behavior should be held accountable. Clinton was impeached for actions that

many questioned whether they could be classified as “high crimes and misdemeanors”. The accusations against Trump point to many activities that are dangerously corrupt, cruel and show a disregard for life and the well-being of many people! The impeachment would, even if unsuccessful, would be a great deterrent to future misuse of presidential authority.

At our June meeting one of the socialists argued very persuasively that there is another option, which does not carry the problems of impeachment but would hold Trump’s actions accountable. That action would be using a **vote of censure** to highlight Trump’s misconduct in office. Ultimately the goal is to have a new more competent president in 2021! With elections coming up next year, hearings that gather evidence **supporting censures would educate the public and shine some light on Trump’s abuse of power! The push toward the 2020 elections should be to enlighten the public of the seriousness of Trump’s abuses and incompetence.** DS

Dues Time!



It is time to pay 2019 dues to the Socialist Party of Wisconsin. Dues are \$10/year (members with limited incomes may pay dues as low as \$5/year.). Make checks payable to the **Socialist Party of Wisconsin.**



PAY YOUR DUES

Looking For A War!

Trump can do no right. Recently he ordered the military to stand down on planned retaliatory attacks against Iran. Given Trump’s wavering on most issues along with his history of lies and deceptions, we cannot be sure the stand down will be permanent.

Trump call for increasingly strict sanctions against Iran is a response to claims that he is showing weakness. The whole Iran row is a product of misguided policies promoted by the warmongers in the Trump administration. Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Iran agreement that curtailed any nuclear ambitions that Iran may have, precipitated actions that have escalated into the calamity we find today. All the other signers of the agreement said that it was working and still maintain it is working, but Trump continues to reimpose bans on Iran’s export of petroleum.

The ban imposes penalties on all companies that ignore the restrictions, regardless of the national base of the corporations. This results in demanding many corporations and nations to choose between the large, lucrative USA market and the smaller Iranian commercial interests. This choice has returned the former economic strangle—hold on the Iranian economy.

Most recently there was an incident involving the apparent explosion of some mines on a couple of tankers in the Gulf of

Oman. The tankers, one carried chemicals and is owned by the Japanese, the other carrying petroleum was owned by a Norwegian company (note neither is a US ship). The Iranian government has said that they will restrict the flow of products that may further damage the Iranian economy. No one (other than questionable USA intelligence) can positively identify who is responsible for placing the mines on the tankers. A couple of Iranian military craft were seen removing a mine from one of the ships. The damage from the blasts were contained.

Regardless of who placed the mines on the ships, the USA has no losses from the incident. Yet Trump and his administration have decided to retaliate. A few days later, the Iranians shot down a USA military drone flying at 65,000 feet. Trump was all set to retaliate, only to call off the effort ten minutes before deploying airplanes to attack Iran as a retaliation.

Trump’s actions calling off USA attacks were the right thing to do, but the withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Treaty and the ensuing conflicts and crises have undermined faith in the USA and created a dangerous level of instability in a world with enough other problems. **Let’s work for better news in 2020!** DS

Words for thought

“In most activist traditions, a key goal is to move an idea from the fringe to the center, transforming the impossible into the inevitable, the unthinkable into conventional wisdom.” Beverly Gage

Judges Gone Wild!

In April, we printed a section of the Wisconsin Constitution that clearly describes the requirement that special sessions of the state legislature can only be called by the governor. This is a provision inserting the principle of checks and balances (a benchmark of USA democracy) into Wisconsin governance. In a series of decisions, the 4 conservative members of the Wisconsin Supreme Court ignored the clause and ruled that the laws passed by the lame-duck GOP controlled legislature were OK. These decisions over-ruled numerous lower court decisions. This means that either our law schools are failing, as these judges cannot read, or the same judges do not care what the Constitution says (and are willing to ignore the vows taken to uphold the Constitution!

There needs to be some changes:

- 1) Require judges prove their ability to read. This would require a law or a constitutional amendment that would make literacy a requirement to be a judge.
- 2) Recall the four judges!
- 3) Change how we choose judges.



The first would likely be opposed on constitutional grounds by right-wingers, who constantly try to suppress voting in

elections. Literacy tests for the right to vote are banned because they discriminate against illiterate people, who have traditionally been deprived if a decent education.

The four Supreme Court Judges who failed in their duty to uphold the state Constitution failed in their duties and this sets a bad example for all other judges to follow. When one of us is unfortunate to have to go to court, s/he wants to be assured the judges will rule by laws **not by prejudice, whether it is politically, racially, religiously or based on some other personal bias.** Judges when they run for office often claim to want tough sentences to send a message to deter others from breaking the law. **We need a recall to send a message to other judges that they need to rule based on law!**

The third option is more pressing. A few years ago former State Representative Fred Kessler pushed hard to change the way judges were selected in Wisconsin. Admittedly, there is no perfect method for choosing judges, who can provide fair and impartial justice.

Wisconsin's system of electing judges in non-partisan elections reflects the polarization of the electorate, Judges need to be more even tempered and less biased than those electing them. Decisions should be based on written laws and precedents. While allowing the electorate to hold judges accountable may be commendable and has merits. We may prefer that to the federal system where judges are appointed for life with a nomination of the President and confirmation of the US Senate. Lifelong appointments deny democratic accountability.

Several states have opted for a system in which a panel of public officials or people appointed by public officials to examine the professional credentials and interview potential candidates. The committee then recommends the most qualified to be selected by the governor and/or the legislature. The judge after being selected sits in the judicial seat for a period of time (usually 6 months or a year). After which the Judges faces the electorate who can vote for retention or can remove the judge. Rather than life-long appointments, the judge may have to periodically face a vote of approval. Any changes like this will require a constitutional amendment.

Wisconsinites deserve a judiciary that can read and respects the rule of law! It is time for change! DS

Picnic Time

This year the annual picnic will be a little different. First instead of holding the picnic outdoors in a park, the picnic will be in doors. This removes the fear that is always present that a thunderstorm will destroy the event. Another factor is the continued decline in park maintenance by Milwaukee County.

However, the chance to mix and discuss stuff with each other remains. The Wisconsin Injured Workers will provide some delicious Mexican food to go along with provisions supplied by individual picnickers. There will be sodas and bottled water. We hope to have a speaker to inform and motivate.

The event will be held on August 17 between 1 pm and 5 pm. It will be held in the basement of Our Saviors' Lutheran Church 3022 W. Wisconsin (enter from W. Wells St.).

The church has a policy prohibiting smoking, drinking alcohol and using Styrofoam cups or tableware.

More details will be announced later. **Mark your calendars!** As usual free and open to the public!

SP-Wisconsin Meeting: Saturday, July 6 at 1:30 p.m. at the Eastside Library, 2320 N. Cramer St., Milwaukee

Socialist Party of Wisconsin

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