

# The 2004 US election: the case for a socialist alternative

A public conference sponsored by the World Socialist Web Site and the Socialist Equality Party

17 February 2004

The *World Socialist Web Site* and the Socialist Equality Party will hold a public conference on March 13-14, 2004 in Ann Arbor, Michigan to discuss the critical political issues that the 2004 US election poses before working people in the United States and internationally.

This election campaign is unfolding under conditions of a deep crisis of the entire American political system, characterized by the continuing war in Iraq, and—in the US itself—deepening social inequality, an assault on jobs and social conditions and sweeping attacks on democratic rights. It raises before working people the most vital questions of political strategy.

In the run-up to November, the argument is being made that the fight against the Republican administration of George W. Bush can only be waged by supporting the Democratic Party. This is a perspective that ignores the lessons of history, which demonstrate conclusively that the interests of the working class cannot be defended through the Democratic Party. It also overlooks the fact that the financial and corporate elite in America rule through a two-party system, assuring themselves dominance and the defense of their interests whether the Democrats or Republicans control the White House.

The March 13-14 conference has been called to initiate a thoroughgoing discussion on these critical issues and to make the case for the launching of an independent, socialist campaign, in opposition to the two principal parties of big business.

The conference will examine:

- \* The relationship between globalization, the historical crisis of world capitalism, and the eruption of

American militarism;

- \* The history of the Democratic Party and the role of the two-party system;

- \* The failure of liberal reformism in the United States;

- \* The political consequences of the subordination of the American labor movement to the Democrats and the two-party system;

- \* The socialist program and the fight for working class power.

Speakers at the conference will include: Bill Van Auken, the Socialist Equality Party candidate for president; Jim Lawrence, the SEP's vice-presidential candidate; and David North, chairman of the *World Socialist Web Site* Editorial Board. There will also be speakers from outside the United States.

This conference is vitally necessary. While hundreds of millions of dollars are being squandered in the election campaigns of the Democratic and Republican candidates, there is no serious or honest discussion of the social and political crisis gripping the country.

We urge all supporters and readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* to register for the March 13-14 conference in Ann Arbor and come to participate in such a discussion.

## Conference Registration:

Registration fee: \$15 payable before the conference  
Click here to register online

To register and pay via mail, please print out and fill in our PDF registration form, and post it to the specified address with your check or money order.

## Times and Venue:

Saturday, March 13, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Michigan Union,  
Anderson Room

Sunday, March 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Michigan Union,  
Pendleton Room

(The Michigan Union is located at 530 S. State St.)

[Click here for a map to the venue:](#)

**Accommodation:**



To contact the WSWs and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**