

“There is going to be a civil war in this country”

## SEP presidential candidate Jerry White campaigns at Detroit auto factory

A WSWS reporting team  
26 August 2016

Socialist Equality Party presidential candidate Jerry White took his campaign to a Detroit-area auto factory Thursday to speak to workers about the critical issues raised by the 2016 election, including the mounting threat of war, the growth of social inequality and attacks on democratic rights.

White received a warm response from workers. Many expressed disgust with the choice between the fascistic billionaire Donald Trump and the multi-millionaire stooge of Wall Street and warmonger Hillary Clinton. White explained that the SEP was the only genuine voice of working people in the election campaign, advancing a program aimed at uniting workers internationally to break the stranglehold of the financial aristocracy over society.

Detroit was long an industrial center and home to a militant and combative workforce. After decades of deindustrialization, the city has borne the brunt of a counteroffensive by big business after the financial crash of 2008, aimed at stripping workers of the gains made in an earlier period. This includes Obama’s 2009 forced bankruptcy and restructuring of General Motors and Chrysler and the 2013-14 bankruptcy reorganization of the city of Detroit.

The Socialist Equality Party and the *World Socialist Web Site Autoworker Newsletter* are well-known to autoworkers in the Detroit area. In 2015 the newsletter was at the center of a rebellion by autoworkers against the drive by the United Auto Workers to ram through a sellout agreement at the Detroit automakers. Thousands of autoworkers read and circulated the newsletter and hundreds attended online conference calls to organize opposition to the sellout.

SEP candidate White and an SEP campaign team

encountered immense hostility to the establishment candidates Trump and Clinton while campaigning at the Fiat Chrysler Warren Truck plant just north of Detroit. The factory employs a highly diverse workforce including black, white and immigrant workers as well as a large number of young people.

SEP campaign team members distributed the latest WSWS *Autoworker Newsletter* and information about an upcoming campaign meeting on Sept 22 at Wayne State University.

A broad range of workers expressed their disgust with Clinton and Trump, some with words that are unprintable. Typical were the remarks of one worker who said, “There is no choice in the election. I am very concerned about war, but they are not talking about that.”

Another said, “It’s a joke. There are two people we don’t like and don’t want to vote for. What we will have is a sham president. I would rather not vote at all for four years than vote for them.”

Juanita, a Fiat Chrysler worker with five years stopped to speak at length to White. “I don’t want to vote for someone who has never worked or had to earn a paycheck.

“I have two kids, but from what I am making here it is still not enough. I never heard that Donald Trump had to work or punch a clock somewhere, or Hillary Clinton.

“I would never vote for Clinton, just because she is a woman doesn’t make her a good candidate. You still have to prove that you are for me. I don’t trust her as far as I can throw her.”

White replied, “Everyone knows that Trump and the Republicans are for the rich. The Democrats are also

for the rich, but they are a bit more sophisticated. They say, 'Look, I am the same skin color or gender as you, therefore you should vote for me.' Obama was elected on the basis that he was the first black president, but he represented the bankers on Wall Street just like the Republicans."

Juanita added, "At the end of the day it can't be boiled down to gender or skin color. It has to be what's on paper, what are you going to do for the people that are struggling."

White replied, "In our view, the issue is class. The working class creates all of the wealth in society but we have no control over the wealth we create, that's why the neighborhoods have collapsed and they are hiking the prices for things like EpiPens, and they are making it impossible for people to live."

Juanita agreed, "I am a diabetic. It is not right."

Another worker told the SEP candidate, "I agree that Trump and Clinton are for the rich, but what can we do?"

White responded, "Both candidates speak for the banks and big business. The SEP is fighting to build an independent and socialist party of the working class to lead the fight against the threat of war and all the attacks working people are facing. If you agree with this struggle you should sign up and join our campaign."

A significant number of workers indicated they had supported the campaign of self-professed democratic socialist Bernie Sanders in the Democratic presidential primary. Sanders won the Democratic Party primary in Michigan, aided by the votes of large numbers of autoworkers.

When asked what he thought about Clinton and Trump, a young worker said, "I feel the Bern," referring to the Sanders campaign.

White explained that the Sanders campaign was a fraud, using left-sounding talk with the aim of corralling workers behind the Democratic Party and Clinton, a warmonger and stooge of big business.

The young worker agreed, "He betrayed us. It was fraudulent the way Sanders supported Clinton."

"Yes," said White. "But the conclusion workers need to draw is the need to break with the Democrats and Republicans and build an independent party of the working class. The working class creates all the wealth in society. That wealth must be placed under the

democratic ownership of the working class to meet human needs not private profit. That is genuine socialism and that is what the SEP and my campaign fight for."

When White explained that the SEP fought for the working class to seize the ill-gotten gains of the super-rich and nationalize the auto industry under the control of the working class, a worker replied, "They won't let us take their wealth without a fight."

White replied, "The slaveholders didn't want to give up their property either. It took a Civil War in this country in the 1860s to end slavery."

Nodding in agreement, the worker added, "I think its going to come down to that all over again."



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