# Final campaign meeting for Niles Niemuth reviews experiences from campaigning

**Our reporters**
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About 50 workers and students gathered at the University of Michigan on Monday night for the final campaign meeting of Niles Niemuth, the Socialist Equality Party's candidate for Michigan's 12th Congressional District. After six months of campaigning, the meeting reviewed the experiences of members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party, from petitioning to get Niles on the ballot, to holding a series of meetings throughout the district and bringing a genuine socialist perspective to the international working class.

With applause from the audience, Niles began by thanking all those who had supported his campaign: "Through a very ambitious campaign we have won a significant hearing for genuine socialism in the working class in southeast Michigan. We've met thousands of people, gathering more than 6,000 signatures in two months this summer to get on the ballot, handing out thousands of flyers and putting up countless posters, and raising thousands of dollars from donors all across the country."

Niles reviewed the political context of the US midterm elections, and on what basis the SEP had decided to intervene by running Niles as its candidate. He explained that the elections were being held under conditions of escalating political crisis, with Trump doubling down on his efforts to build a fascistic movement in the United States. These efforts have already had deadly consequences in the mass shooting at a Jewish synagogue in Pittsburgh that killed 11 people.

At the same time, Niles explained that the Democratic Party is no less dangerous for the working class. "The Democrats are going out of their way to adapt themselves at every stage to the Trump administration, while the media downplays the significance of Trump's actions and the dangers they present," Niles said.

"Whatever rhetoric, and however the seats of the Senate and House of Representatives are allocated, the basic factors that drive American politics will persist," stated Niles. His report explained that the ruling class would continue to pursue a ruthless imperialist strategy to maintain the global position of the American ruling class through military force. Staggering levels of social inequality—which cannot be changed through any election—would continue. The crisis of democratic forms of rule would accelerate, whether it be through murderous violence at the US-Mexico border, as favored by Trump, or the censoring of the Internet and social media, as pursued by the Democrats.

Niles explained that the way forward was a conscious break with the Democrats and Republicans and joining the fight for socialism: "Whatever happens tomorrow, the basic task is the same: Joining and building the SEP, its sister parties in the International Committee of the Fourth International and its youth movement, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality."

A lively question and answer session followed Niles' remarks. Several campaigners spoke about their positive experiences campaigning for Niles in areas of Downriver Detroit, which has suffered from decades of deindustrialization and is slandered as backward and racist by the Democratic Party. A common theme in the remarks was the objective interest in socialism and an eagerness among workers and young people to discuss politics on a serious basis. Contrary to the media and the Democratic Party establishment, socialism was not a dirty word in America.

Reporters with the WSWS interviewed workers and youth who attended the meeting. Dylan, a line cook, spoke about what attracted him to Niles' campaign. "For me the main thing is internationalism. I appreciate that the SEP was so explicit in stating this principle. This is a big difference that I saw here compared to other groups that call themselves socialists. I have studied the Russian Revolution a bit, and I have never liked liberal politics. It

doesn't speak for the working class."

Dylan recently returned from a trip to Mexico and spoke about conditions facing the international working class: "I have been organizing against war and militarization for a long time. If you look at the policy itself, it is nothing but destructive. It leads to the criminalization of the working class, mass incarceration, and attacks on democratic rights. In the south of Mexico, there is drought that has been caused by climate change. People could formerly survive with two rainy seasons, and now they only get one. The ruling class is not willing or able to give up fossil fuels, and the way that those industries are operating is destroying people's lives. In Central America, the US has made a deliberate effort to murder those who were defending people's rights."

Van, a young worker, told our reporters: "I am new to this party. I like you because I think you care about society and equality. I think this meeting dealt with big questions. Questions that deal with the whole of the world. The government now cannot solve any of the problems of the education system or support for young people. Niles said socialism could stop these wars. It stood out to me when he spoke about equality, that society's resources would be used according to the interest of the working class. And power would be in the hands of the working class. It makes sense to me."

Christopher, a student at the University of Michigan, reflected on why he chose to attend the meeting. "Capitalism organically creates support for socialism. What the ruling parties attempt to do is subdue revolutionary spirit and action through demagogy," he said. "The role of the ruling class internationally is to impose on the masses of working people. There are companies in which billionaires control production and wealth, it's contradictory. The workers, for example in Google or Amazon, should be benefiting. We need resources immediately to address healthcare and education. Socialism is the only vanguard."