

Closing remarks from SEP national secretary Joseph Kishore

Joseph Kishore
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The WSWS is publishing the speeches delivered by leading members of the ICFI and contributors to the WSWS at the online rally held October 25 to welcome the relaunching of the WSWS that began with the postings of October 2, 2020. Joseph Kishore is the national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party (US) and the SEP's candidate for president. He gave the closing remarks to the rally.

I am very pleased to be able to speak at this rally welcoming the relaunch of the *World Socialist Web Site*, the political organ of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution.

The speeches today, from throughout the world, gave expression to conceptions at the center of the WSWS: the fight to unify the working class internationally. Speakers from 10 countries advanced a unified perspective, rooted in the character of the epoch and the crisis of world capitalism. These speeches have given a partial outline of the immense record and power of the site.

We have outlined a fight that bases the development of a socialist movement on the lessons of history. We have reiterated the unrelenting opposition of the Trotskyist movement to war, and the destruction of democratic rights. We call for rooting working-class politics in an opposition to the bourgeois politics of the upper middle class.

As other speakers have explained, the coronavirus pandemic is enormously accelerating the contradictions of world capitalism. It is exposing the reality of class rule, the consequences of the subordination of social, economic and political life to the interest of an oligarchy. It is radicalizing masses of workers and youth throughout the world and creating conditions for revolutionary upheavals.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the United States, the center of world finance and the cockpit of world imperialism.

We are just now over one week away from the final day of voting in the US election. Whatever happens on November 3 and after, this is an election from which there is no going back, no return to the status quo.

It is an undeniable fact that the president of the United States, Donald Trump, is utilizing the election to develop a fascistic movement based on extreme nationalism, anti-socialism and authoritarianism. As we have said, he is not running for president; he is running for *führer*.

In his effort to stay in power regardless of the vote, Trump is counting on a base of support within sections of the financial

oligarchy, far-right organizations and a fascistic network operating within the police, military and state apparatus. In recent weeks, fascistic plots have been exposed targeting the governors of Michigan, Virginia, and, most recently, Ohio.

The Democrats and the media act as if everything will return to normal if only Trump is removed. Trump, however, is not a demon from hell. He is a product of American capitalism.

To understand what is happening in the United States, it is necessary to study the archives of the *World Socialist Web Site*. In its 22 years of continuous publication, the WSWS has exhaustively documented the evolution of the crisis of American democracy.

This crisis, the WSWS has explained, is rooted in the long-term decline of American capitalism and the efforts of the ruling class to offset this decline through militarist violence and social counter-revolution.

It is now two decades since the theft of the 2000 election. The WSWS explained as the theft was being organized, that the decision by the Supreme Court in *Bush v. Gore*, and the refusal of the Democratic Party to do anything to stop the anti-democratic coup to install Bush in power, demonstrated that there did not exist a significant constituency for democratic rights in the American ruling class.

It is 19 years since the initiation of the “war on terror” under Bush. The September 11 terrorist attacks were used as a pretext to wage war first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq. The war of aggression against Iraq, launched on the basis of lies, was, the WSWS wrote in March 2003, “a devastating failure of American democracy.”

The war was accompanied by the adoption of torture as official policy, the construction of CIA black sites throughout the world, and domestic spying on a scale unprecedented in history.

The WSWS analyzed the role of Obama, the so-called “candidate of hope and change,” in overseeing what was up to that point the largest transfer of wealth from the working class to the rich in world history.

Eight years of unending war, social reaction and attacks on democratic rights created the conditions for the election of Trump.

The victory of Trump, the WSWS explained in November 2016, “is a political earthquake that has exposed before the entire world the terminal crisis of American democracy. Such is the degeneration of bourgeois rule that it has elevated an obscene charlatan and billionaire demagogue to the highest office in the land.”

Four years later, American democracy is at death's door.

The pandemic is revealing all that is rotten, diseased and reactionary in American society. At every stage of this pandemic, the interests of public health and lives have been subordinated to the interests of profit. The ruling class downplayed the threat posed by the coronavirus. Then it utilized the crisis to engineer a bailout of Wall Street even greater than in 2008.

As a result of the trillions of dollars funneled into the markets, with the bipartisan support of both the Democrats and Republicans, bank profits have soared along with the wealth of the oligarchs.

On the other hand, the vast majority of the population face an unprecedented social and economic crisis. There are ten million fewer people employed than in January. The number of people in the US living in poverty has risen by about six million from June to September of this year. Mass layoffs are accelerating.

The ruling class, having given trillions to itself, is opposed to any efforts to contain the virus. "We're not going to control the pandemic," White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows declared this weekend. By which he really means that the ruling class will do nothing to protect the people, and indeed will actively work to ensure that people are infected. The massive sums handed out to the banks must be paid through the sweat, blood—and lives—of workers and their families.

Far-right organizations are being mobilized in order to implement and enforce a homicidal policy of the ruling elites. The slogan raised by the fascists is: "No constraints on the spread of the virus!"

How corrupt and degraded is American politics! On the one hand, one has a party that is making an appeal to fascists. On the other hand, are the Democrats, who do everything they can to cover-up what is happening, to chloroform the population, to keep all opposition within the framework of the state.

The Democrats, speaking for sections of Wall Street and the military, go on about "Russian interference," as if the threat to American democracy came from without, and not from the financial oligarchy within.

A Biden administration, if it comes to power, would be committed immediately to an expansion of war in the Middle East and a more aggressive policy against Russia. It would, in fact, only strengthen the power of the military and intelligence agencies over political life in the United States, while creating the conditions for the further growth of fascistic movements.

It is an extraordinary fact that amidst the open assault on democracy and incitement of fascistic violence by Trump, the Democrats have spent most of the past year attacking and repudiating the democratic heritage of the American Revolution and Civil War.

As for Bernie Sanders, what has become of his "political revolution?" Sanders has cast aside his insincere rhetoric about opposing the "billionaire class" and is now the chief booster of Biden, the scion of Wall Street. Sanders is even claiming that this arch reactionary will be "the most progressive president since FDR."

Meanwhile, everything is done to exclude any genuine opposition. In these elections, courts upheld requirements that the

Socialist Equality Party, just to get on the ballot, had to gather tens of thousands of signatures—in the midst of a deadly pandemic. Such is the state of American "democracy!"

The working class, in the United States and throughout the world, must follow not the electoral map, but the logic of the class struggle.

Workers must intervene on the basis of a program that meets their needs, including a massive reallocation of wealth from the rich, the seizure of all the ill-gotten gains of the billionaires, and the transformation of the gigantic banks and corporations into public utilities, run on the basis of social need and not private profit.

The fight against fascism, dictatorship, world war, environmental degradation and unprecedented levels of social inequality, must be connected to the conquest of power by the working class and the establishment of socialism, in the United States and around the world.

This is the perspective that the Socialist Equality Party, my running mate Norissa Santa Cruz and I are advancing in our election campaign.

To forge a path to the future, the working class requires a detailed knowledge of its own history, the history of the struggle for socialism, embodied in the Fourth International and the Trotskyist movement. Workers must be able to establish connections to and learn from the experiences of workers throughout the world.

Workers and youth need to be trained to oppose all those—from Corbyn and Sanders, to Syriza, Podemos or the Pink Tide in Latin America—who seek to subordinate their struggles to capitalism. They must be trained to analyze politics in class terms, to generalize from their own experiences to an understanding of the social system as a whole.

They must have access to the analysis, cultural commentary, scientific knowledge and theoretical writings that will prepare them for the immense tasks ahead.

The essential framework and scaffolding of this movement is the *World Socialist Web Site*. In its 22 years of publication, the WSWS has established an enormous political foundation.

The relaunching of the WSWS provides the framework for bringing this foundation more directly into the present.

The future development of the WSWS, and its transformation into what it must become—the leadership of millions of people in a global struggle for socialism—is the task that lies before us, and I would urge all those listening to this rally to make the decision to become an active part of this struggle.



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