

The SEP launches its campaign for a socialist alternative in 2024 to Biden and Trump, the corporate candidates of war and dictatorship!

David North
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David North, the national chairman of the Socialist Equality Party (US), announced today the selection of Joseph Kishore and Jerry White as the SEP's candidates in the 2024 presidential election campaign. The campaign website can be accessed at socialism2024.org. As part of its coverage of the 2024 US elections, the World Socialist Web Site is posting as today's Perspective the text of North's announcement.

On behalf of the Socialist Equality Party, I am honored to announce that the SEP will stand candidates in the 2024 presidential elections.

Joe Kishore, the national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party, will be our candidate for president.

Jerry White, the labor editor of the *World Socialist Web Site*, has been selected as the SEP's vice presidential candidate.

Both Joe Kishore and Jerry White have long and distinguished records as fighters for socialism and the interests of the working class.

Joe, who is 44 years old, has been active in the socialist movement for a quarter century. He has been national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party since 2008, and has played a central role in the development of its political program and the building of the SEP. He represented the Socialist Equality Party as its presidential candidate in 2020.

Jerry, who is 64 years old, joined the Workers League—the predecessor organization of the Socialist Equality Party—45 years ago. During these many years, Jerry—dating back to the historic PATCO strike of 1981—has, as a revolutionary journalist, covered and intervened in countless struggles of the working class. He has also represented the Socialist Equality Party in earlier national elections, most recently as its presidential candidate in 2016.

The Socialist Equality Party is intervening in this election to raise the political consciousness of the working class, to develop its understanding that no solution can be found to any of the problems confronting working people except through the ending of the capitalist system and its replacement with socialism, and that this great historical task can only be achieved by adopting a global strategy aimed at the mobilization of the power of the American and international working class in a unified struggle against the world capitalist system.

The program of the Socialist Equality Party is not a utopian scheme. It is a necessity. Mankind confronts an existential crisis. The capitalist system is historically obsolete. It is not only incapable of improving the conditions of life for the vast majority of the world's population. It is leading humanity to a catastrophe. The alternative that confronts mankind is socialism or capitalist barbarism.

What is the reality of capitalism in 2024?

Not since 1945, the end of World War II, has the danger of a cataclysmic Third World War loomed so large. In fact, the conflict now underway in Europe and the Middle East, and those that are spreading throughout the Sahel region in Africa and the Transcaucasus in Central

Asia, are the opening rounds of a rapidly developing global war.

The war in Ukraine, which the Biden administration deliberately provoked two years ago with the aim of weakening Russia and tightening the grip of American imperialism and its NATO allies over Eurasia, in preparation for the coming showdown with China, threatens to escalate into a nuclear conflict. Germany is once again on the warpath. The NATO powers have repeatedly stated that they will not be deterred from pursuing the war by the threat of a nuclear exchange. The deliberate use of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons—which was rejected for decades as synonymous with madness—is now being “normalized” as a legitimate component of imperialist geopolitical strategy.

As the war rages in Ukraine, the fascistic Israeli regime—with the full support of the White House and allied governments in Europe—continues its murderous campaign against the people of Gaza. The death toll is approaching 30,000. Two-thousand-pound bombs, supplied by the Biden administration, are being dropped indiscriminately on a defenseless population. Even as hundreds of women and children are being killed every day, the Biden administration refuses to demand a cease fire. Genocide is being “normalized.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has now entered its fifth year. Well over 1 million Americans have died after being infected. On a global scale, it has been estimated that the total number of excess deaths caused by the pandemic now exceeds 28 million. Countless millions are being infected multiple times and, even if spared a fatal outcome, endure the misery and debilitation of Long COVID. Every capitalist government has dismantled the most minimal measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

Even the use of masks is being opposed and, in some cases, threatened with criminal sanctions. The slogan of the ruling elites, initially proclaimed by former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, is, “Let the bodies pile high.” Opposing the implementation of well-known and effective public health measures to stop the transmission of the virus, it continues to spread and mutate, infecting millions of people each day. Mass death and debilitation is being normalized.

The criminal indifference of capitalist governments to the lives of the world's population is duplicated in their attitude toward the survival of the planet. No amount of information confirming the disastrous consequences of global warming will compel the ruling class to adopt policies that scientists insist are urgently required to avoid planetary suicide.

The reactionary social essence of the capitalist system is the absolute subordination of the needs of human society to the drive for massive profits and the concentration of staggering levels of wealth in the bank accounts of the financial-corporate oligarchs who rule society.

The French novelist Balzac, who observed with a critical eye the rise of the capitalist class in the early 19th century, noted, “Behind every great

fortune lies a great crime.” But the brilliant writer could hardly have imagined the extent to which his aphorism would be confirmed by the astronomical sums controlled by the present-day oligarchs. The “great fortunes” to which Balzac referred amounted to several millions. Those of the modern corporate-financial oligarchs are measured in the tens and hundreds of billions.

The most basic indication of the progressive or reactionary character of a society is whether it is becoming more equal or more unequal. By this standard, the reactionary character of American and global capitalist society is beyond debate. Social inequality has reached levels that are beyond anything that has existed in at least a century.

The richest 1 percent of the world’s population now owns almost half the world’s wealth, while the poorest 50 percent own just three-quarters of 1 percent. Eighty-one billionaires have more wealth than half of the global population. The richest 1 percent raked in 38 percent of all additional wealth accumulated since the mid-1990s, while the bottom 50 percent received just 2 percent.

The United States has the highest concentration of billionaires in the world, whose collective wealth grew to \$5.2 trillion in 2023. This vast concentration of wealth and the corresponding degree of social inequality is totally incompatible with democracy.

There is much talk in the media about the threat to American democracy. President Biden declares that he is all that stands, or should I say totters, in the way of a dictatorship headed by Trump. If that is truly the case, then democracy is certainly doomed.

But the fight against dictatorship and fascism can only succeed to the extent that its causes are understood.

Trump—who emerged from the smelly sewers of the New York and New Jersey real estate and casino industries—only personifies the criminality of American capitalism.

Democracy cannot survive alongside of massive social inequality. The capitalist oligarchs turn today toward authoritarianism and fascism—as they did in Germany in the 1930s—to defend their wealth against the rising tide of social discontent and class struggle. This is not only an American phenomenon. It is taking place all over the world. The strike wave that swept across the United States in 2023 was part of an international movement.

This global upsurge will continue and grow stronger in the course of 2024.

Neither of the two major capitalist parties—the Democrats and Republicans —have anything to offer the working class but impoverishment, political repression and war. The attempted coup of January 6, 2021 was not an isolated episode. Indeed, it had more the character of a dress rehearsal. American democracy is on its last legs. It cannot survive on the basis of capitalism.

Therefore, the Socialist Equality Party will advance a program that calls for the end of the corporate-financial dictatorship, the establishment of democratically controlled public ownership over the financial-corporate conglomerates, and the dissolution of the vast military-industrial complex.

The SEP will advocate a comprehensive and far-reaching redistribution of wealth from the super-rich to the broad mass of the population.

The SEP will also fight against the vicious chauvinism of the capitalist parties. We will denounce and expose the brutal treatment of immigrants from Latin America, and uphold the fundamental democratic right of all working people to live in dignity wherever they choose.

The Socialist Equality Party will explain that the implementation of this program will require the transfer of political power to the working class.

The United States election is a world event. What happens in the US affects every country in the world. Given the global impact of the US elections, every person in the world should have the right to cast a ballot in November.

The Socialist Equality Party is intervening in the 2024 presidential

election because the critical character of the present crisis requires the development of a class conscious, socialist movement of the working class.

The economic, political and social crisis of the capitalist system will intensify throughout 2024. In turn, the global resistance of the working class will grow more determined and politically conscious. In this process, the SEP and its co-thinkers in the parties affiliated with the International Committee of the Fourth International will play an increasingly decisive role.

The Socialist Equality Party is not a mere vote-catching organization, shouting demagogic slogans, mouthing platitudes, and adapting its program to the lowest common denominator. We leave that to the political charlatans of the pseudo-left organizations that hope to achieve minor and inconsequential reforms with the permission of and in alliance with the Democratic Party. Moreover, the Socialist Equality Party does not chop and dice the population into different conflicting personal identities—such as ethnicity, race, gender and sexual preference—each fighting for a more personally favorable redistribution of wealth within the framework of capitalism.

The program of the Socialist Equality Party is based on the recognition that the fundamental conflict in society is between classes.

The SEP is a party of history. Its theoretical, political and practical work is based on a vast experience of revolutionary struggle, spanning more than a century. Our traditions are rooted in the international principles and program of Marxist socialism, as it has been defended and developed by the Trotskyist movement, which was founded in 1923, in opposition to Stalinism, social democracy, reactionary nationalism and countless varieties of middle-class politics.

The Socialist Equality Party recognizes the global scale of the capitalist crisis and immense tasks that confront a movement that seeks to change the world. But we derive confidence and optimism not only from the fact that the extraordinary advances in science and technology make fully possible the rational and progressive reorganization of the world economy in the interests of mankind, but also from the fact that there does exist a social force that is sufficiently powerful to carry out the revolutionary transformation of the world—the American and international working class.

The SEP will conduct its campaign on an international scale, to explain to workers the necessity for a unified world-wide struggle against capitalism’s descent into barbarism.

But its success, the success of our campaign, depends on your support and participation in the election campaign of the Socialist Equality Party. Help us place Joseph Kishore and Jerry White on the ballot in as many states as possible. We urge workers and youth—indeed, all those who recognize that capitalism has arrived at a dead end—to join this fight. Step forward for the working class. Contribute financially and participate actively in our campaign. Build SEP campaign committees in your factories, work places, schools and neighborhoods.

The fight against poverty, repression and World War III is the fight for World Socialism!



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