

Vote Socialist Action!

Jeff Mackler for president; Karen Schraufnagel for VP

Photos by Tony Savino / Socialist Action



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- Jeff Mackler interview
- Campaign statement — **Anti-racist protesters challenge killer police: Black lives matter!**

A MILITANT SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN!

By THE EDITORS

Working people around the world are facing strong social, economic, and environmental crises. That's true even in the richest country in history, the United States. The cause of these crises can be traced to a single source—a social system ruled by exploiting employers and ruthless bankers. In the U.S., this tiny minority rules through a two-party political monopoly, subverting real democracy.

Socialist Action fights for reforms of this system on the road to our ultimate goal—to replace capitalism with a socialist society in which the majority truly rules. That's how we can assure a peaceful, ecologically sustainable, just, and prosperous world.

To advance this message, we are running Jeff Mackler for U.S. president and Karen Schraufnagel for vice president. Below is a summary of the main planks of the Socialist Action Platform.

Urgent action to stop climate change!

The greatest crisis yet faced by humanity has been created by the global capitalist economy based on fossil fuels. The half-measures agreed to in the Paris Climate Treaty last year are insufficient to stop global warming short of catastrophe for future generations. • We would declare a Climate Emergency and begin a massive crash program to achieve needed conversion to 100 percent clean renewable energy sources—such as solar, wind, tidal. This effort requires a democratically planned massive restructuring of our economy.

- We would also launch a new Climate Emergen-

cy public sector by socializing the energy, transportation, and finance sectors of the economy. This new sector would develop an achievable plan for conversion by scientists, engineers, and data management professionals—and implemented in the workplace by management elected by the workers, who know how to get work done.

- We would leave no worker behind in this new economy. Certainly, many present jobs tied to fossil fuels would be eliminated. But there would be many more new jobs created as we switch to a cleaner, sustainable economy. We would guarantee a Just Transition to provide those losing jobs with retraining and relocation assistance, while maintaining their living standards until they find suitable new employment.

End the wars! Bring U.S. forces home now!

We live in a time of perpetual war—and with a real threat of nuclear annihilation, whether intentional or by miscalculation. Wars such as those in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria have been waged as part of the geopolitical strategy of corporate America. “Regime change” imposed by U.S. military power and proxies leaves only “failed states” and is a recruiting tool for those seeking revenge in America and Europe. And these “failed states” have generated 65 million desperate refugees looking mainly in vain for some safe place to relocate. “Regime change” is the job of the people



of those countries—not the U.S. military.

American workers have no interest in wars that serve only our bosses. The principle applies: “working-class solidarity has no borders.” As we divert the enormous sums spent on war to better use, we will share the “peace dividend” with those who have been victimized by wars of intervention. As the great pioneer American socialist Eugene V. Debs said at the time of the First World War—“For

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Interview with Jeff Mackler

Socialist Action presidential candidate

By NICK BAKER

We are seeing a renewed interest in socialism today. The campaign of Bernie Sanders, who claims to be a “democratic socialist” to mask his 98-percent Democratic Party-line voting record, has given publicity to the word “socialist,” and many young Sanders supporters call themselves socialists. The Sanders candidacy is no accident. His “democratic socialist” and anti-establishment-sounding “political revolution” rhetoric is aimed at shepherding the growing hatred of tens of millions back into the safe channels of capitalist elections and the rule of the one percent.

Due to this evidence of the possibilities available to socialists right now, Socialist Action has decided to run a presidential candidate, Jeff Mackler, to build support for working-class, independent, socialist politics. I sat down with Jeff Mackler to talk about the campaign, key issues in the election, and the increased interest in socialist ideas.

I asked Mackler why he had entered the U.S. presidential race, despite having no chance of winning. “Elections in capitalist America are the billionaire’s game,” he responded. “Working people have no horse in this race. We have no billionaire candidates, corporate funders, or corporate media behind us. We control no aspect of the rigged electoral charade. But socialist election campaigns can win in another sense. We can use the occasion when interest in politics is at a high point to advance the struggles of the vast majority (the 99 percent) who today struggle against the inherent evils of capitalism.

“Socialist Action is a party of and for every struggle that aims to organize capitalist’s victims independently of and against the policies of the ruling rich. We strive to be part of and help lead the independent, democratic, mass-action united-front mobilizations that are aimed at increasing working-class self-organization, consciousness, confidence, and unity.

“We aim to be an integral part of organizing the vast majority against the one percent—not only against the one percent in the abstract, but against all their institutions of power. Socialism, as opposed to its adulterated conception put forward by Bernie Sanders, is truly a revolutionary project as well as a necessity.

“The real socialist revolution in the U.S., and everywhere else in the world, will usher in for the first time in human history a society in which the vast majority who create the nation’s and the world’s wealth will democratically rule in their own name, through their own institutions, and in their own interests, as opposed to the private profit corporate anti-human interests of the present ruling elite.”

I asked Mackler why he believed that the electoral system was rigged. “Capitalist elections are in the exclusive purview of the billionaire rich. Their twin parties—the Republicans and the Democrats—and their

local, state, and national electoral and judicial institutions devise, interpret, and enforce their exclusionary election laws. Their corporate propaganda media effectively exclude coverage of all views but their own. At best, and at great cost, socialists are able to achieve ‘legal’ ballot status in but a handful of states—and even here, no matter the seriousness of our campaign efforts, we are consciously excluded from coverage.

“Having said this, however—and with full knowledge that the elections are rigged—Socialist Action’s campaign does intend to win in a very real sense. That is, we are asking our campaign supporters to check out our Facebook page, website (www.socialistaction.org), and other social media outlets, and meet us in the streets where people unite to fight back. We want to win these thousands to our socialist campaign.”

I asked what Socialist Action’s key campaign objectives are. Mackler responded, “First and foremost, we want to educate and help organize radicalizing people to definitively break from the twin parties of capitalism and all of its candidates.

“We believe that the evils that people across the globe are becoming keenly aware of are inherent in the capitalist system itself. These include endless wars; government-promoted racism, sexism, and homophobia; mass deportations and demonization of immigrants; all-pervasive government surveillance in the name of ‘national security’; the imposition of massive across-the-board austerity measures against working people and youth; and the irreversible consequences of fossil fuel-induced global warming. This system threatens all life on earth. Its madness daily poses the existential threat of burning the planet until it becomes uninhabitable or nuclear wars that murder billions in almost an instant and reduce the planet to a state of radioactive oblivion.”

Mackler continued, “Today capitalism and its purveyors have gone to great lengths to camouflage and disorient their growing numbers of critics. The Democratic Party, ever fostering the illusion that the system can be effectively reformed, has always been capitalism’s first line of defense. It is complimented by a host of other firewalls against the emergence of independent expressions of working-class organization, including the present parasitic pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy.

“Selecting the least offensive of the millionaire and billionaire candidates that the ruling rich periodically offer us during the election season,” Mackler insisted, “is both a utopian pipedream and a critical impediment to principled working-class politics.”

“Socialist Action’s campaign is aimed at today’s new fighters against injustice: at the youth who have learned from experience that their prospects are bleak in the capitalist framework, at the demeaned and exploited immigrant workers, at those who are inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement’s wide-ranging

Jeff Mackler for president!

(Photo) Jeff Mackler has spent a lifetime fighting for the working class and social justice. He is a veteran opponent of U.S. wars and interventions, and a leading environmental and social justice activist. He is a founder of the Northern California Climate Mobilization, and has played a major role in organizing Bay Area climate change protests.

A former teachers union leader, Mackler was the organizer and longtime elected officer of the AFT and CTA locals in Hayward, Calif. He is the director of the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, and the author and editor of 24 books and pamphlets on labor and social history, politics, and economics. In 2006, Mackler was Socialist Action’s candidate in California for the U.S. Senate.

rejection of U.S. racism and its institutionalized system of police murder; at the millions who are rapidly coming to understand that the fossil-fuel corporate magnates, like all others, subordinate the future of humanity to their private profits.

“Our campaign is aimed at working people who want to revitalize and democratize the trade unions and expand union power to the 90 percent of workers who are without unions today. It is aimed at fostering the construction of a class-struggle left wing in the unions, a militant fightback current that seeks to organize the majority to fight in the political and economic arenas to challenge the bosses’ parties on all fronts.

“In this context we are advocates of independent working-class political action based on a reinvigorated, fighting, and democratic trade-union movement in alliance with all the oppressed and exploited—that is, for a labor party that compliments and enhances labor’s power in the economic arena with its own instrument in the political arena.”

Mackler concluded, “Whenever working people independently organize to advance their own interests—in mass mobilizations in the streets, in trade-union struggles at the point of production, on picket lines, and at public meetings and rallies—we are part of the struggle.

“But we harbor no illusions in the nature of the beast. It must be replaced in all its fundamentals by the massive and concerted actions of the vast majority. That’s the real meaning of the social and political revolution that serious socialists fight for every day and seek to bring into being in a new world, where the horrors of the present social order are forever ended.” ■

The 2016 socialist platform

1) Abolish the U.S. war machine now!

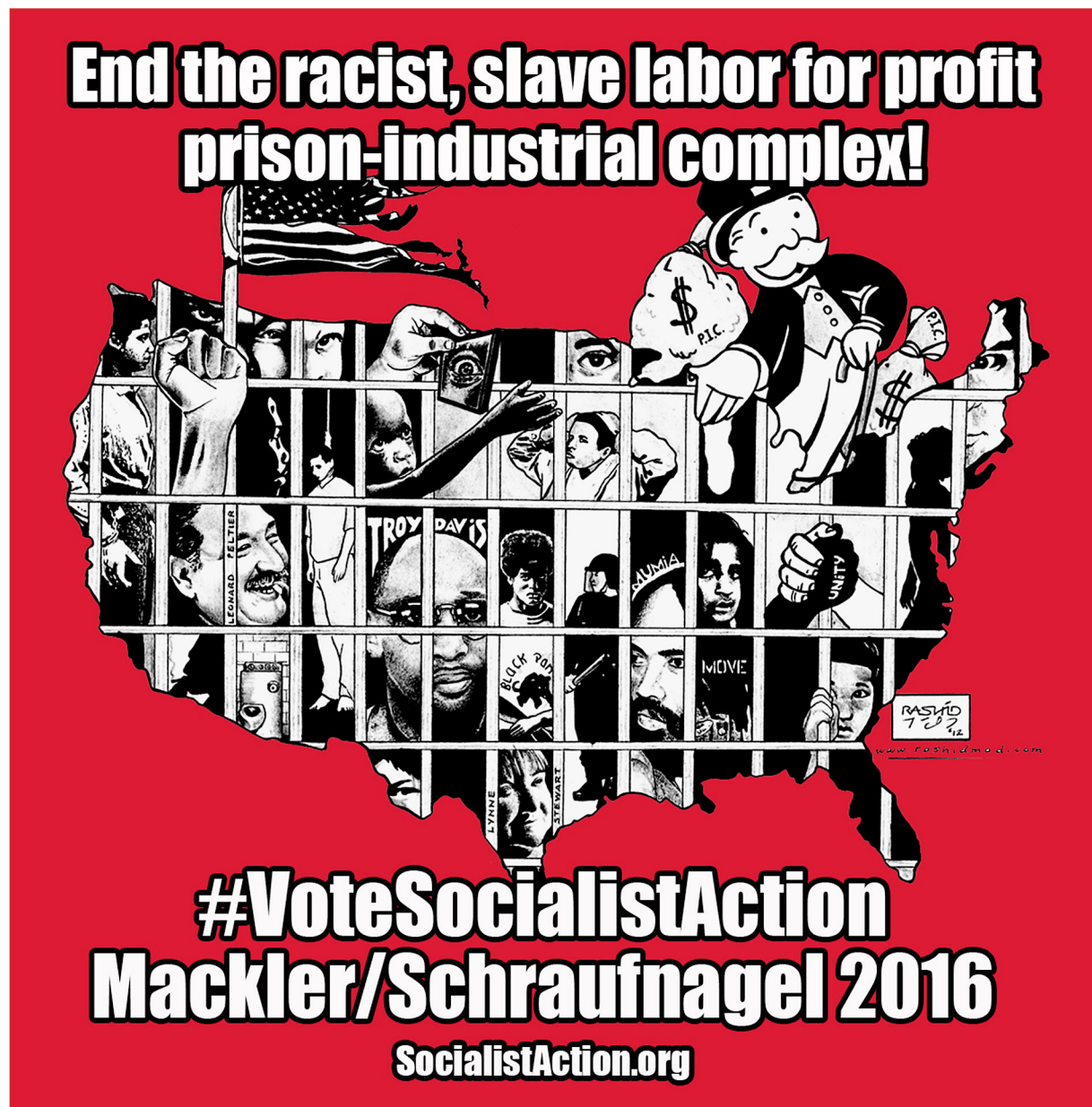
- Bring all troops home now! Close all U.S. foreign and domestic military bases. End all military spending now—not a penny for war!
- U.S. out of the Middle East!
- No to U.S. overt and covert wars, drone wars, oil wars, privatized death squad wars, sanction and embargo wars or wars for the re-colonization of Africa.
- Abolish NATO and all other imperialist military alliances!
- Self-determination for all oppressed nations and peoples.
- Self-determination for Puerto Rico. No to imperialist-imposed austerity in Puerto Rico. Abolish Puerto Rico's debt to U.S. banks and speculating hedge funds.
- Self-determination for Palestine! End all U.S. aid to apartheid Israel. For a democratic, secular Palestine with the right of all Palestinian refugees to return. Solidarity with Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns.
- U.S. hands off the Cuban Revolution.

2) Immediate conversion to 100% renewable power: sun, wind, geothermal and micro-hydro! Keep all fossil fuels in the ground!

- Guarantee jobs at top union wages for all fossil fuel workers during and after a just and rapid transition to clean and renewable energy systems.
- Rapid conversion to carbon-sequestering agro-ecological farming.
- Immediate halt to expansion of all new fossil fuel extraction and transportation projects
- 100% tax on all fossil fuel corporations. Zero profits for the polluters. Close down and dismantle the fossil fuel industry, from extraction on up.
- Dramatically expand mass transit—especially for low-wage workers. Reverse urban sprawl and unsustainable development patterns. Remediate and expand our forests, wetlands, and natural eco-systems.
- For an immediate cleanup of Native American, African American and Latino communities that have been victimized by environmental racism.
- No to nuclear weapons. Shut down all nuclear power plants now.
- U.S. reparations and zero interest loans to neo-colonial and island nations suffering from climate change due to past practices of the major industrial and imperialist nations.

3) Jobs for all at top union wages!

- Shorten the work week by 25 percent with no cut in pay, so that everyone can work and enjoy more free time. Modern technology should benefit the exploited 99 percent, not the boss class one percent.
- Create a massive public works program to provide jobs at top union wages through building homes, converting to 100% renewable power, expanding mass



public transportation, constructing hospitals, parks, schools, and other social necessities. Priority should be given to projects where they are most needed—especially in Black and Latino communities.

- Raise all pensions, Social Security benefits, unemployment and disability compensation, welfare, and veterans benefits to top union wage scales and protect them with cost-of-living escalator provisions.
- For \$15 and a union now as a first short step on the road to a much higher minimum wage to sustain a quality standard of living.

4) Quality health care, education, and housing for all as basic rights!

- Close down the profit-gouging “health-care” insurance companies and establish a single-payer system in rapid transition to a universal and free national system—that is, socialized medicine.
- Use the savings towards provision of quality health care for all and retraining insurance workers for new jobs.
- Free quality public education at all levels from the cradle to the grave. Cancel all student debt.
- Void all drug patents to cut public costs to a minimum.
- Cancel all medical debt.

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... Vote Socialist Action!

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us there is no war but the class war.”

Human and civil rights

The American working class is among the most diverse in the world. It embraces those whose ancestors were indigenous, others brought here as slaves, and immigrants from many lands. When mutually respected, these differences can make us strong. But the ruling class stirs up bigotry and suspicions to try to keep us divided and fighting among ourselves.

This also enables them to pay women, workers of color, and undocumented immigrants far less in wages. Segregated communities pay more for rent and mortgages—and even groceries. Whether in “prosperity” or recession, Black and Latino workers are last hired, first fired, always with much higher unemployment rates. Racism and sexism is profitable for bosses and merchants, and depress wages and conditions for the whole working class.

The poverty and despair among youth in depressed, segregated neighborhoods, which have been articulated by movements like Black Lives Matter must become the concern of all.

Women workers deserve equal pay for work of equivalent value. We need to fix the inequities of Social Security that leave many widowed or divorced women penniless in old age. Socialist Action supports employer-paid quality, professional child care for working mothers and public funded care

for those looking for, or unable to work. We fight against the sometimes violent attacks by the

theocratic right on women’s access to birth control.

We applaud the judicial victory allowing same-sex couples to marry if they so desire. But even that advance is facing attacks by religious bigots in public office. The same “social conservatives” have stirred up fresh targeting of transgender people with the so-called “bathroom laws.” And violence against LGBT Americans has continued, as we were reminded by the mass killing at the Pulse club in Orlando.

Socialist Action supports the popular demand for Canadian-style single-payer health care for all as a transitional reform leading to superior socialized medicine—such as won by the British Labor Party decades ago, and the even better system put in place by the Cuban Revolution.

For Fifteen Now!

There are two complementary currents in the mass movement for \$15 an hour. It began with fast food workers striking and demonstrating nationwide for “15 and a union,” an upsurge that is not only still growing but that now includes other low-wage workers—even adjunct college instructors. The other component has won numerous victories in establishing state and local minimum-wage increases progressing in stages to \$15. Socialist Action has been supportive of both approaches as a

Karen Schraufnagel for VP!



Karen Schraufnagel is a member of Socialist Action’s National Committee and organizer of its Twin Cities branch. She is a founder of Minnesotans Against Islamophobia, and is active in the anti-Zionist Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement and the animal rights, antiwar, and environmental movements.

modest down-payment toward an adequate raise.

Socialist Action is part of the historic tradition that works simultaneously for a revolutionary socialist party *and* for a party based on the foundation of our only class-based mass organizations—our unions. We think that a labor party will come about as the outgrowth of a reborn democratic, fighting union movement.

A labor party will be a giant step forward toward breaking the ruling-class political monopoly and will work toward putting a government in power that is run by and for the working class. ■

Socialist Action campaign news:

BY JEFF MACKLER: Five hundred and seventy one and counting were killed by U.S. cops this past year, an all-time high in recent decades, according to figures posted in the British *Guardian* newspaper. The majority murdered were Black, Latino, and Native American. The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement puts the average yearly

Protests challenge killer cops

figure of murdered Blacks at 313, one every 28 hours. In only a handful of these murders was a cop convicted or even charged. "Self defense" was the time-honored defense of the police. They were said to have feared for their lives when "confronted" by Black people who were almost always unarmed.

In the few instances when charges were brought against these killers, compliant racist judges and consciously hapless prosecutors conspired to convince carefully selected juries, usually stricken of Black

members, to find the killer cops innocent. This is the same scenario that is unfolding in Baltimore today, as Freddie Grey's murderers are acquitted one by one. The unspoken conclusion in all these "legal" proceedings is that the Blacks got what they deserved.

This is the rule, not the exception, in racist America. In many respects, it is not much different than in the days when lynching Blacks was unofficially sanctioned, or when vigilante slave catchers were legally assigned the role of cops to capture, kidnap, and return the slave master's "property." As in the epoch when tens of millions were sacrificed on the slave plantations, the ruling one percent today subordinates anything human to their lust for profits. Their greed is epitomized by the virtually slave-labor, prison-industrial complex.

Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Walter Scott, Kajieme Powell, Michael Brown, and now Baton Rouge's Alton Sterling and Minnesota's Philando Castile—caught on video for the whole world to see—have been added to this list of capitalism's near-daily executed victims.

These horrors have stirred a new generation into action, marching down the streets to the applause of millions. They march to mark the victims of police violence and to demand a new society. Increasing numbers of people—especially the youth—doubt that the present capitalist minority-controlled order can ever be reformed. The previously forbidden word, *socialism*, is on the lips of millions.

Today, protesters march in the hundreds and thousands, at times courageously facing lines of police in battle gear. Tomorrow, as the protesters gain in experience and political clarity, they will be the critical organizers of millions in massive actions that are capable of engaging the broad working class and of closing down the nation's factories and cities. The movement that they lead will challenge the capitalist system at its roots, and will embark on the construction of a new social order free from the inherent horrors of minority ruling-class domination.

The Socialist Action 2016 Campaign joins the protesters in the streets in demanding: Jail killer cops! Police out of the Black community! No to racial profiling! End stop and frisk! Black lives matter! ■



Tony Savino / Socialist Action

... Campaign platform

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- End all home foreclosures. Establish and expand rent-control to combat the mass-displacement of poor and oppressed communities through gentrification.
- Massive government funding to repair, modernize, and build homes – starting where need is greatest.
- 5) End the racist, slave labor for profit prison-industrial complex!**
 - End the racist school-to-prison pipeline. Build schools, not jails.
 - Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Oscar Lopez Rivera, and all political prisoners.
 - Abolish the racist and classist death penalty. Rapidly empty the prisons while immediately organizing quality, humane rehabilitation facilities to rebuild ruined lives.
 - Prosecute and jail killer cops
 - De-criminalize all drugs. Take the profit out of drug trafficking. End the racist "war on drugs." Massive investment in restorative justice, mental health, and drug treatment services.
 - End "zero tolerance" school policies. Cops out of the schools!
 - Abolish racist "moneyball" extortion schemes including defendant-funded court proceedings, mandatory court surcharges, fines and fees.
 - Abolish all racist exclusionary election laws.
 - For Black and Latino-organized control of Black and Latino communities. Police out of Black and Latino neighborhoods!
 - Reparations for African-American, Puerto-Rican, and Mexican-American communities in compensation for wealth stolen over centuries.
- 6) Immediate amnesty, legalization and equal rights for all immigrants. End the racist, Islamophobic "War on Terror!"**
 - End all deportations now! Repeal all anti-immigrant legislation. Close down ICE.
 - Demilitarize and open the borders.
 - No to the surveillance, persecution, demonization and government-orchestrated frame-up trials in Muslim communities in the U.S. and worldwide.
- 7) Abolish all racist, sexist, and homophobic discriminatory laws and practices!**

- Equal pay for equal work.
- Affirmative action with quotas to remedy past discrimination and prevent future discrimination.

- To assure economic independence for women, government-financed, free 24-hour child-care centers and maternity leave with full pay. Guarantee the right of every mother to raise a healthy child.
- End violence against women and the LG-BTQI community.
- Repeal the Hyde Amendment. Free unrestricted abortion on demand. Reproductive justice now. End coercive contraception projects targeting low income women and women in prison. End the criminalization of pregnant women.
- Free Purvi Patel.
- Ban workplace and housing discrimination and adoption restrictions based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- Outlaw discrimination by businesses or employees based on sexual preference or gender identity. Repeal all local, state and federal discriminatory laws against LGBTQI people.
- Quality safe housing for youth and workers facing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- 8) Defend civil liberties! Abolish the "national security" state!**
 - End all government surveillance. Abolish the National Security Administration and all other secret and repressive government spy agencies. Stop the persecution of all whistle blowers like Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden!
 - Repeal the Patriot Act and all other anti-democratic legislation. End all restrictions on the right to organize, assemble, and protest.
- 9) For a democratically-planned socialist economy in which the banks, basic industries and all natural resources are the collective property of working people—the 99%—and democratically operated for human betterment not the individual profits of the 1%.**
 - Tax the rich and their corporations, not working people! End corporate bailouts! [Note: \$32 trillion in corporate bailouts was granted to corporate America in the

How to get involved!

If you would like to learn more about the Socialist Action campaign, to meet the candidates, or to help get out the word, go to:

- www.socialistaction.org
- <https://www.facebook.com/VoteSA2016>
- socialistaction@lmi.net

Socialist Action National Office:
P.O. Box 10328, Oakland, CA 94610

years immediately following the 2008 economic crash.]

- Close all tax loopholes for the rich. Nationalize all illegally "offshored" corporate profits.
- For a steeply graduated progressive income tax!
- 100% tax on all incomes over \$300,000. Zero percent tax on all incomes under \$50,000.
- Low interest, long-term government loans to protect small farmers gouged by banks and food trusts.
- End all military and military-related spending: Use the money saved towards a massive public works program and to fulfill the demands above.
- 10) For working-class political action independent of and against the twin parties of capitalism**
 - For a united, democratic and fighting labor movement that champions the economic, social and political interests of all working people. Organize the unorganized 90 percent! Repeal Taft Hartley and all other anti-union legislation.
 - For a Labor Party based on a revitalized, democratic, and expanded labor movement allied with the oppressed and exploited.
 - Open the corporate books for union inspection!
 - For a workers government and a fully democratic society of, by and for working people and the oppressed! Abolish capitalism! For socialism! ■