



“We must rapidly begin the shift from a ‘thing’-oriented society to a “person”-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered.”

Martin Luther King Jr. - Beyond Vietnam speech New York, N.Y. April 4, 1967

RECOGNIZING THE CONNECTIONS

Martin Luther King Jr. recognized that war, racism, and poverty all have roots in the economic system of capitalism.

This system — where the few who have the most wealth make the economic decisions — would have to be replaced by a more democratic political framework. He was also aware of the intertwined history of

Socialism and the civil rights movement.

In 1965, Dr. King wrote an article for *Pageant* magazine entitled, “The Bravest Man I Ever Knew,” a tribute to Socialist Party (SP) leader, Norman Thomas. King lauded Thomas’s contributions in the field of peace, civil rights, and social justice.

“During our historic March on Washington in the summer of 1963,” King wrote, “when 250,000 Negro and white Americans joined together in an outpouring of fellowship and brotherly cooperation for a world of freedom and equality, a little Negro boy listened at the Washington Monument to an eloquent orator. Turning to his father, he asked: ‘Who is that man?’ Came the inevitable answer: ‘That’s Norman Thomas; he was with us before any other white folks were.’”

SOCIALIST CONTRIBUTIONS

King realized the contribution the Socialist Party has made to black struggles over the years.

- In 1910, SP members were prime movers in the NAACP.
- During the Depression, Socialists were active in founding the multiracial Tenant-Farmers Union, at a time when multi-racial organizations were unheard of in the South.
- SP member A. Phillip Randolph scheduled the first Civil Rights March on Washington 20 years earlier. The march was called off only after the federal government made concessions in its segregation policies.
- _ Activists like SP member Walter Bermann risked their lives on the early Freedom Rides.

This is not to say that the SP has, or had, all the answers to racism. Early on, we often failed to address racism as a separate issue connected to, but distinct from, capitalism. We now realize the important need for black leadership within the black community while also working to build a multi-racial movement for peace and social justice.

THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY

Dr. King recognized the need for electoral activity independent from the Republican and Democratic parties. The possibility of an anti-war **Peace and Freedom** presidential ticket, with King for president and peace activist Benjamin Spock for vice-president, was aborted in 1968 when King was tragically felled by an assassin’s bullet.

What would a King presidency have been like? We know he would have worked hard to create “a world where black and white, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands” to create a society based on freedom and justice.

Beyond that, Dr. King would have fought to revolutionize our economic system. “If we are to achieve a real equality,” King wrote from the Selma, Alabama jail in 1965, “the U.S. will have to adopt a modified form of socialism.” King knew that political democracy is hollow without economic democracy.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY USA IS POISED TO DEMOCRATICALLY TRANSFORM OUR SOCIETY INTO THE KIND OF WORLD DR. KING ENVISIONED. WE ASK YOU TO JOIN WITH US TO ENSURE THAT THE DREAM DOES NOT DIE.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING ON JUSTICE FOR THE POOR



“I am now convinced that the simplest approach will prove the most effective — the solution to poverty is to abolish it directly by a now widely discussed measure: the guaranteed income.”

“The dispossessed of this country — the poor, the white and Negro — live in a cruelly unjust society. they must organize a revolution against that injustice, not against the lives of the persons who are their fellow citizens, but against the structures through which society is refusing to take means

which have been called for, and which are at hand, to lift the load of poverty.”

“[He] is deprived of normal education and normal social and economic opportunities. When he seeks opportunities, he is told, in effect, to lift himself up by his own bootstraps, advice which does not take into account the fact that he is barefoot.”



THE SOCIALIST PARTY strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control -- a non-racist, classless, feminist, socialist society in which people cooperate at work, at home, and in the community. **We invite you to Join us!**

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