

Where We Stand: Supplementary Audio/Video

1. Overall Summary of ISO WWS:

[*Who We Are, Where We Stand, and What We Do*](#)



What kind of organization is the ISO? What are its basic politics, what are its activities, and what are its goals? How does it view the Democratic Party? How does it view unions, Black Lives Matter, and the fight for abortion rights? How does it figure out its perspectives? If you are new to the ISO and are looking to get involved, this is the meeting you'll want to attend to get all your questions answered.

2. Worker's Power:

[*What do Socialists Say About Unions?*](#)



Since industrial capitalism began, workers reacted to their conditions by combining to resist the bosses. As Marx wrote, "Combination always has a double aim, that of stopping competition among the workers, so that they can carry on general competition with the capitalist." Unions are the first line of defense for workers and a means to increase their sense of solidarity, but because they fight the effects of the system rather than the system itself, unions also produce a layer of officials who, by dint of habit, become concerned more with the survival of the institution than the defense of the workers, and, in order to preserve the union, tend toward a preference for negotiation over conflict. This talk will discuss the importance, but also the limits, of unions, and what role socialists can play in them to make them better collective fighting organizations of the working class.

3. Revolution:

[*Reform or Revolution*](#)



Bernie Sanders' campaign has brought the ideas of socialism

back into the political mainstream. But how can we win it—especially given the stranglehold of the U.S. two-party system?

4. Internationalism:

[*What Do Socialists Say About Nationalism and National Liberation?*](#)



We live in an economically globalized society that is divided into competing national states each attempting to increase its economic, political, and military reach. Each ruling class appeals to nationalism and patriotism to justify repression at home and/or war abroad. But nations are not equal; some are powerful and dominate other nations, whereas others are dominated and oppressed by the stronger states like the United States. As Marxists, we make a distinction between the nationalism of the oppressor and the nationalism of the oppressed, understanding that the fullest internationalism of the world working class cannot be achieved simply by calling for internationalism, but must involve supporting the right of oppressed nations to self-determination.

5. Full Equality & Liberation:

[*Marxism, Exploitation, and Oppression*](#)



A frequent criticism of Marxists is that we are economic reductionists who fail to take seriously the dynamics of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. But revolutionary Marxism sees exploitation and oppression as linked and fighting oppression as precondition for building class unity. As Lenin once wrote, a real socialist must be a "tribune of the people" capable of responding to all forms of tyranny and oppression. Since the 2016 primaries some liberals and leftists, however, have falsely counter posed economic populism to

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championing the rights of women and minorities—as evidenced for example by Bernie Sanders’ willingness to support anti-choice Democrats. A new generation of activists is making the connections between economic justice and justice for women, Blacks, and other oppressed people. Any movement that fails to link these issues, based on the argument that unity can be built by emphasizing “economic” questions and ignoring or setting aside issues of oppression, is stepping in the wrong direction.

6. The Revolutionary Party:

[*Why We Need a Revolutionary Party*](#)



Capitalism could not survive if it weren’t able to convince most people—through its control of education and cultural institutions—to accept it. But when that fails, they have strong institutions in the form of police, soldiers, and courts, to ensure the status quo. Changing society therefore involves both changing minds and challenging the power of the ruling class. The working class needs its own party, not only to count its own forces and educate itself, but also to gather enough strength to win. What kind of party must it be? It must be more than a party that seeks electoral office—it must be a party that participates in all the myriad partial struggles against the system, bringing into its ranks the best, most conscious fighting elements to lead a challenge against capitalism as a whole.

[*Why We Need a Revolutionary Party \[Video\]*](#)

