



U.S. FRIENDS OF SOVIET PEOPLE



BULLETIN

AUTUMN 2008

P. O. Box 140434 • Staten Island, NY 10314-0434 (718) 667-4740
Northstar Compass web-site: <http://www.northstarcompass.org>.

Acting Director/Treasurer:

Dr. Angelo D=Angelo
Delegate, United Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO*

Secretary:

George Gruenthal
Political writer

Alex Krashenninnikow

Jewish-American Workmen's Chorus,
Philadelphia, PA

Stephen L. Paulmier

Co-editor AThe Hammer@*

Ed Wlody

President B Richmond County
American Veterans Association*

* Organizations listed for
identification purposes only.

Autumn Membership Meeting Sunday Dec.14, 2008

Members: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

New Officers, Board Members, Chapters

(Please send in your dues with the form on back or bring them to the meeting)

Public Meeting: 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Report back on International Council Conference in Toronto in October
Panel Discussion – The Significance of Obama's Electoral Victory

**Solidarity Center 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor
New York, NY**

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL MEETS IN CANADA

From October 10-12, an important Conference of the International Council for Friendship and Solidarity with Soviet People was held in Friendship House, Toronto, Canada. There were over 30 delegates from 9 countries: Canada, U.S., Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, India, Chile, Turkey and Switzerland. Once again, the Canadian authorities denied visas to several delegates, from Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, India and Senegal. Some progressive recent Soviet immigrants to Canada participated, as did some trade union leaders.

Main topics of the Conference were the improvement of Northstar Compass and the holding of the Third World Congress. Northstar Compass is now put out in four languages, English, French, Spanish and Russian. The delegates of the Soviet Society for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Vladimir Chechentsev and Maria Donchenko, spoke of the need to expand the circulation of the Russian edition, and to build branches of the Society in other former Soviet republics. Eduardo Artes, Editor of the Spanish edition of NSC and Chair of the Communist Party (Proletarian Action) of Chile, spoke of the way his party makes use of the Spanish edition. They print 2,000 copies every 2 months and their party

members have the responsibility to use it as part of their own political work, to show what socialism was and what it will be again – Back to the Future!

Progress has been made on improving the NSC web-site. Marina, one of the recent Soviet immigrants, volunteered to create a .pdf file with the complete English edition of NSC for the web. Anyone who wants to receive the full issue each month should send a message to webmaster@northstarcompass.org with the word "Subscribe" in the subject line.

There were reports from delegates about the situation in their countries. Zbigniew Wiktor spoke of the devastation that capitalism has brought to



Poland, where there are 300,000 homeless people. Jan Minar of the Czech Republic spoke about the fight of the people against U.S. military bases in their country, which the Czechs overwhelmingly oppose. Ray of the Revolutionary Organization of Labor, USA, spoke of the importance of a Communist International, which could guide the struggles of the workers of all countries, the way the Third International did. However, it is beyond the scope of the International Council to form such an International. Instead the Council can increase unity on an anti-imperialist level.

One major issue of controversy was the discussion of the recent war in the Caucasus. The delegates unanimously condemned Georgia for its recent attack on South Ossetia and Abkhazia, instigated by U.S. imperialism. The controversy was about whether Russia was just responding in self-defense or whether it was pursuing its own imperialist interests. Moreover, discussion continued about whether capitalist Russia is now

basically a neo-colonial country or an imperialist power in its own right, albeit a weak one? Different views on this question have been printed in recent issues of NSC.

Finally, the location of the Third World Congress was discussed. The Soviet Society said it could hold the Congress in Moscow, but the International Council would have to pay the expenses. After the Conference, Eduardo Artes's party, the PC(AP), proposed to hold the Congress in Santiago, Chile. Also, Michael Opperskalski, a vice-chair of the Executive Board from Germany, offered to host it in Berlin. A final decision as to location and time will have to be made by the Executive Board.

For details of the Conference, see the Full Report by Recording Secretary Larisa Schirba in the October/November issue of NSC.

Credo of U.S. Friends of Soviet People

U.S. Friends of Soviet People is dedicated to supporting struggles to restore socialism in the Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. USFSP is the U.S. affiliate of the International Council for Friendship and Solidarity with Soviet People. The International Council carries on the traditions of the "Hands Off Russia Committees", that were established internationally in 1918 to help protect the young Soviet Republic from foreign intervention. The aim of all Friends of Soviet People is international co-operation in building socialism and solidarity with the anti-imperialist forces of the world who are struggling against U.S. imperialism – the main enemy of humanity.

USFSP acts as a unifying force to help consolidate and coordinate the anti-imperialist forces of the world with the ongoing movement to restore the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as socialist states. We act as a united front, but are not a forum for ideological debates. The peoples of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe themselves will choose their paths towards socialism.

We have recently heard from the media that Russian President Putin has agreed to restore the melody of the Soviet National Anthem with capitalist words. Here below is the Anthem of the Soviet Union that we remember and love.

ANTHEM OF THE SOVIET UNION

United forever in friendship and labor
A mighty republics will ever endure
The great Soviet Union will live through the ages
A dream of a people their fortress secure
Long Live our Soviet motherland built by the Peoples mighty hand
Long Live her people united and free
Strong in a friendship tried by fire Long may her crimson flag inspire
Shining in glory for all men to see
Through days dark and stormy
While great Lenin led us
Our eyes saw the bright sun of freedom of all
And Stalin, our leader with faith in the people
Inspired us to build the land that we love

ANTHEM OF THE SOVIET UNION

*Long Live our Soviet motherland built by the peoples mighty hand
 Long Live her people united and free
 Strong in a friendship tried by fire Long may her crimson flag inspire
 Shining in glory for all men to see*

We fought for the future
 Destroyed the invader
 And brought to our own land the laurels of fame
 A glory will live in the memory of nations
 And all generations will honor her name

*Long Live our Soviet motherland built by the peoples mighty hand
 Long Live her people united and free
 Strong in a friendship tried by fire Long may her crimson flag inspire
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- Send me information on how I can get involved with U.S. Friends of Soviet People
- I want to become a member of USFSP. Please enroll me as a member in one of the categories below
- Please send me a 3-month introductory sub to Northstar Compass for \$1

Name	Student: \$5.00	Contributing: \$25.00
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State Zip	Family: \$15.00	
Phone		<input type="checkbox"/> Please call me, I'd like to volunteer

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What Can We Expect from Obama's Presidency?

George Gruenthal

Excerpted from the December 2008 issue of Northstar Compass

There is no doubt that the election of Barack Hussein Obama as President of the United States is historic. As the first Black president, it is clear that no longer can Afro-Americans be told to only aim for what is "realistic" for them.

Obama's presidency will mark a change from Bush's style of unbridled unilateral wars of aggression. Bush has made the U.S. government one of the most detested ones for people all over the world, not only in the Middle East and other oppressed and dependent countries, but also among people in its "allies" in Western Europe. Bush has also become one of the most despised presidents among a large section of people in the U.S.

In the beginning of the most serious economic crisis in the U.S. (and probably in the world) since the Great Depression, and during the greatest political isolation of the U.S. government at home and abroad, the ruling class is relying on an African-American president who is coming into office under the slogan of "Change We Can Believe In." But Obama's candidacy, particularly since he won the nomination at the Democratic Party Convention in August, shows the limits of his proposed change.

First, Obama picked as his running mate Joe Biden, a Democratic Party regular who represents that party's Old Guard. In particular, Biden supported the war on Iraq at its start, and represents decades of experience serving U.S. imperialism.

Second, Obama consciously turned his back on the Afro-American people's movement. This was most clearly seen when he was forced to **twice** repudiate his former pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who put forward a form of Liberation Theology.

Third, Obama backtracked on his earlier anti-war positions. With regard to Iraq, he stated: "we must be as careful getting out of Iraq as we were careless getting in." Furthermore, he calls for sending more troops to Afghanistan and even for the need to cross over that country's border with Pakistan in "hot pursuit" of militants, following up on Bush's practice of bombing Pakistani villages.

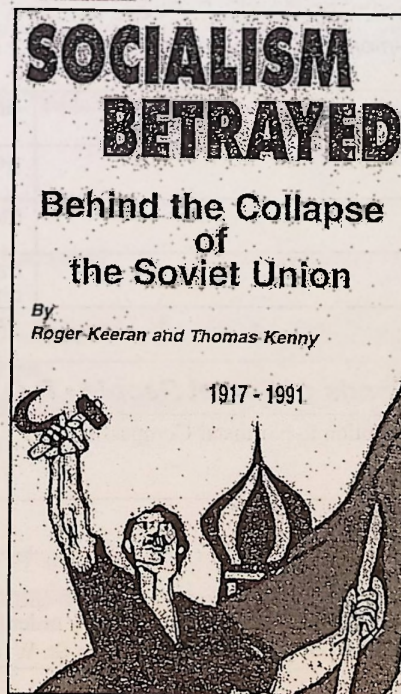
Fourth, as opposed to taking an "even-handed" position in the Middle East, Obama has pledged to continue unbridled support for the U.S.'s main client in the region, Zionist-apartheid Israel.

Fifth, as part of a bipartisan effort to rescue monopoly capitalism, Obama joined with McCain in pushing through the \$700 billion bailout of the big financial corporations, claiming that this was necessary to revive the economy. This does nothing for the millions of people who have already

lost their homes or who are currently facing foreclosures, for renters being evicted for inability to pay their rents, for those who have no money to pay for health care, or any other working people who are suffering from the capitalist crisis.

Finally, Obama's cabinet appointments to date have shown his continuation with traditional capitalist politics. His appointment of Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State provides continuity with Bill Clinton's regime. Eric Holder, despite being the first Afro-American to be appointed as Attorney General, was an attorney defending Chiquita Brands, which provided \$1.7 million to Colombian death squads who were killing trade unionists and other civilians. And Adolfo Carrion, the Bronx Borough President and possible nominee for Housing and Urban Development, is known for supporting giveaways of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to big private corporations to "develop" the Bronx.

It is no accident that Obama is being put into office now, as the U.S. is entering a severe crisis. Obama will have to preside over large-scale cutbacks in social services in a way that the ruling class thinks will be more palatable to the people than if McCain were president. Obama can say: "We would like to be able to provide affordable health care for all, but we just don't have the money now." Or "We would like to cut taxes for 95% of the people, but we cannot do that while we have a huge budget deficit." Those who think that Obama will be able to preside over a New Deal type program that provides some immediate relief to the masses of working people are being deluded.



This book is about the collapse of the Soviet Union and its meaning for the 21st century. The size of the debacle gave rise to extravagant claims by the political right. For them, the collapse meant the Cold War was over and capitalism had won. It signified "the end of history". Most people sympathetic with the Soviet project did not share this rightwing triumphalism.