



U.S. Friends of the Soviet People

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U.S. Affiliate to the International Council for Friendship & Solidarity with the Soviet People

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SLAVERY OF THE CZAR RETURNS TO UZBEKISTAN

Target often offers prices that seem too good to be true - so how do they keep their prices so low?

It turns out some of Target's products might be so cheap because they are made with slave-picked cotton from Uzbekistan and/or purchased from Daewoo International, a company that accounts for approximately 20% of all cotton processed in Uzbekistan.

Every year, during the harvest season, over a million children and adults - including teachers, nurses and doctors - are ripped out of their homes, schools and jobs, and forced to work in the cotton fields of Uzbekistan to meet daily picking quotas.

While Target has signed the pledge to not buy slave-picked Uzbek cotton, they are still doing business with Daewoo, a company that clearly profits from the exploitation of children and adults in Uzbekistan. <http://kprf.ru/international/ussr/115008.html>

Credo of U.S. Friends of the Soviet People

U.S. Friends of the Soviet People is dedicated to supporting struggles to restore socialism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. USFSP is the U.S. Affiliate to the International Council for Friendship and Solidarity with the 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 the Soviet People is international cooperation 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 unifying front, but are not a forum for ideological debates. The peoples of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe themselves will choose their paths toward socialism.



"In Praise of Communism"

It's sensible,
anyone can understand it.
It's easy.
You're not an exploiter,
so you can grasp it.
It's a good thing for you,
find out more about it.
The stupid call it stupid
and the squalid call it squalid.
It is against squalor and
against stupidity.
The exploiters call it a crime.
But we know:
It is the end of crime.
It is not madness, but
the end of madness
It is the simple thing,
So hard to achieve.

Bertolt Brecht

Nazim Hikmet



The Little Girl

It is me knocking at your door
At how many doors I've been
But no one can see me
Since the dead are invisible

I died at Hiroshima
That was ten years ago
I am a girl of seven
Dead children do not grow

First my hair caught fire
Then my eyes burnt out
I became a handful of ashes
blown away by the wind

I don't wish anything for myself
For a child who is burnt to cinders
Cannot even eat sweets

I'm knocking at your doors
Aunts and uncles, to get your signatures
So that never again children will burn
And so they can eat sweets

now has more latitude to use its muscular military to pursue its reactionary agenda around the world. Public ownership and planning hang on in Cuba and North Korea, but the United States and its allies use sanctions, diplomatic isolation and military harassment to sabotage the economies of the hold-outs (as they did the Soviet economy), so that the consequences can be falsely hung on what are alleged to be the deficiencies of public ownership and planning. They are in reality the consequences of a methodical program of low-level warfare. Encouraged to believe that the Soviet economic system had failed, many people, including both communist supporters and detractors of the Soviet Union, concluded that a system of public ownership and planning is inherently flawed. Communists abandoned communist parties for social democratic ones, or abandoned radical politics altogether. Social democrats shifted right, eschewing reform, and embracing neo-liberalism. In addition, Western governments, no longer needing to blunt the appeal of public ownership and planning, abandoned the public policy goal of full employment and declared robust public services to be no longer affordable (Kotz, 2001). At the same time, privatization in the former Soviet Union and formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe expanded the global supply of wage-labour, with predictable consequences for wage levels worldwide. The Soviet Union's defeat has ushered in a heyday for capital. For the rest of us, our throats, as Stalin warned, have been seized.

The world's largest capitalist economies have been in crisis since 2008. Some are trapped in an austerity death-spiral, some in the grips of recession, most growing slowly at best. Austerity—in reality the gutting of public services—is the prescribed pseudo-remedy. There is no end in sight. In some parts of Europe, official unemployment reaches well into the double-digits, youth unemployment higher still. In Greece, a country of 11 million, there are only 3.7 million employed (Walker

and Kakaounaki, 2012). Moreover, the crisis can in no way be traced to an outside power systematically working to bring about capitalism's demise, as the United States and its allies systematically worked to bring about the end of public ownership and planning in the USSR. Yet, free to develop without the encumbrance of an organized effort to sabotage it, capitalism is not working. Few point this out. By contrast, the Soviet model of public ownership and planning—which, from its inception was the target of a concerted effort to undermine it—never once, except during the extraordinary years of World War II, stumbled into recession, nor failed to provide full employment. Yet it is understood, including by some former supporters of the Soviet Union, to have been unworkable. Contrary to a widely held misconception, the experience of the Soviet Union did not demonstrate that an inherent weakness existed within its publicly owned, planned economy that doomed it to failure. It demonstrated, instead, the very opposite—that public ownership and planning could do what capitalism could not do: produce unremitting economic growth, full employment, an extensive array of free and nearly free public services, and a fairly egalitarian distribution of income. Moreover, it could do so year after year and continued to do so until the Soviet leadership pulled the plug. It also demonstrated that the top one percent would defend private ownership by using military, economic, and ideological means to crush a system that worked against them but worked splendidly for the bottom 99 percent (an effort that carries on today against Cuba and North Korea.) The defeat of the Soviet Union has, indeed, ushered in a period of dark reaction. The way out remains, as ever, public ownership and planning—which the Soviet experience from 1928 to 1989 demonstrates works remarkably well—and struggle against those who would discredit, degrade or destroy it.

(To be continued in next issue)

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Chronicles of October

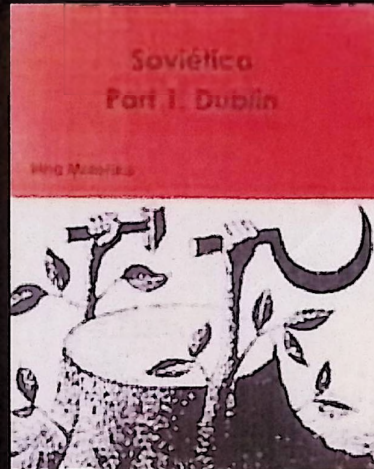
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