



Autumn / Winter 2014 -15

U.S. Friends of the Soviet People BULLETIN

P. O. Box 140434, Staten Island, NY 140434-0434

(718) 979-6563 * us.soviet.friendship@gmail.com

www.usfriendsofthesovietpeople.org

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Angelo D'Angelo

Retiree Chapter
United Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO*
USFSP National Office

Vice-Chair: George Gruenthal

Editorial Board, Northstar Compass

Secretary: Fiona Fairchild

Disability advocate
Southern California Branch, USFSP

Joseph F. Hancock: Treasurer

So. Cal. Branch USFSP
American Federation of Musicians, Local 47*

Bulletin Editor: Martin Marshall

Southern Branch, USFSP

Jessica Coco

Tri-state Branch, USFSP

Traian Cainaru

Buffalo NY Branch, USFSP

Lee Gloster

Indiana Trade Unionist*
Mid West Branch, USFSP

Juan Pablo Guevara

Southern California Branch, USFSP
Dean Gunderson
Twin Cities Branch, USFSP

Ephraim Haile

Eritrian Community & Development Ctr.*
Massachusetts Branch, USFSP

Alex Krasheninnikow

Jewish-American Workmen's Chorus*

Mehrab Kenari

Buffalo NY Branch, USFSP

Kevin Keating

Soviet Film Project*
Tri-state Branch, USFSP

Michael Martinez

National Committee to Free the Cuban 5*
So. Cal. Branch USFSP

Kelly McConnell

Southern California Branch, USFSP

Logan A. Nix

San Marcos, TX. Branch, USFSP
Stephen L. Paulmier
Hawaiian Friends of the soviet People

Martin Sawma

Buffalo, NY Branch, USFSP

Jasper Washa

Oklahoma Branch, USFSP

*Organizations listed for identification purposes only

CALENDAR

NOV. 16 from 2 – 5 pm

USFSP Tri-State Branch

Manhattan Theatre Club

311 W. 43rd Street, 8th Floor

(Studio 4)

Between 8th & 9th Avenue

in Manhattan



Prof. Grover Furr

will speak about his

new book, Bloodlies:

The Evidence that every

Accusation against

Joseph Stalin and the

Soviet Union in Timothy

Snyder's Bloodlands is False

WE WILL ALSO BE

CELEBRATING THE 97TH

ANNIVERSARY OF THE

OCTOBER REVOLUTION

RSVP: (718) 979-6563

USFSP Buffalo NY Branch

FILM SERIES

Discussion, Popcorn, Soft Drinks, Juice

LOCATION: EL BUEN AMIGO

(MY GOOD FRIEND)

114 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, NY 14201-1420

WHEN? The 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month (no shows in December)

TIME: 7:00pm Till "The End"

(Free Parking in the area during the show)

SCHEDULE:

Nov. 11th, 2014 "The Great Dictator"

Nov. 23rd, 2014 "Reds"

Jan. 13th, 2015 "Ten Days that Shook the World"

Jan. 27th, 2015 "Mission to Moscow"

Feb. 10, 2015 "Volga-Volga"

Feb. 24th, 2015 "Why We Fight" Part I

Mar. 10th, 2015 (Part II)

March 24th, 2015 (Part III)

April 14th, 2015 (Part IV)

April 28th, 2015 (Part V)

May 12th 2015 (Part VI)

May 26th 2015 (Part VII)

**Patriotic anti-fascist film series directed by Hollywood director Frank Capra*

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 chose their paths toward socialism.

Do Publicly Owned, Planned Economies Work?

By Stephen Gowans

<http://gowans.wordpress.com/2012/12/>

Part II

What Soviet public ownership and planning did for ordinary citizens of the USSR

The benefits of the Soviet economic system were found in the elimination of the ills of capitalism—an end to unemployment, inflation, depressions and recessions, and extremes of wealth and poverty; an end to exploitation, *which is to say, the practice of living off the labour of others*; and the provision of a wide array of free and virtually free public services.

Among the most important accomplishments of the Soviet economy was the abolition of unemployment. Not only did the Soviet Union provide jobs for all, work was considered a social obligation, of such importance that it was enshrined in the constitution. The 1936 constitution stipulated that "citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with quantity and quality." On the other hand, making a living through means other than work was prohibited. Hence, deriving an income from rent, profits, speculation or the black market – social parasitism – was illegal (Szymanski, 1984). Finding a job was easy, because labour was typically in short supply. Consequently, employees had a high degree of bargaining power on the job, with obvious benefits in job security, and management paying close attention to employee satisfaction (Kotz, 2003).

Article 41 of the 1977 constitution capped the workweek at 41 hours. Workers on night shift worked seven hours but received full (eight-hour) shift pay. Workers employed at dangerous jobs (e.g., mining) or where sustained alertness was critical (e.g. physicians) worked six or seven-hour shifts, but received fulltime pay. Overtime work was prohibited except under special circumstances (Szymanski, 1984).

From the 1960s, employees received an average of one month of vacation (Keeran and Kenny, 2004; Szymanski, 1984) which could be taken at subsidized resorts (Kotz, 2003).

All Soviet citizens were provided a retirement income, men at the age of 60, and women at the age of 55 (Lerouge, 2010). The right to a pension (as well as disability benefits) was guaranteed by the Soviet constitution (Article 43, 1977), rather than being revocable and subject to the momentary whims of politicians, as is the case in capitalist countries.

Women were granted maternity leave from their jobs with full pay as early as 1936 and this, too, along with many other

benefits, was guaranteed in the Soviet constitution (Article 122, 1936). At the same time, the 1936 constitution made provision for a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens, while the revised 1977 constitution obligated the state to help "the family by providing and developing a broad system of childcare...by paying grants on the birth of a child, by providing children's allowances and benefits for large families" (Article 53). The Soviet Union was the first country to develop public childcare (Szymanski, 1984).

Women in the USSR were accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life (Article 122, 1936), including the equal right with men to employment, rest and leisure, social insurance and education. Among its many firsts, the USSR was the first country to legalize abortions, which were available at no cost (Sherman, 1969). It was also the first country to bring women into top government positions. An intense campaign was undertaken in Soviet Central Asia to liberate women from the misogynist oppression of conservative Islam. This produced a radical transformation of the condition of women's lives in these areas (Szymanski, 1984).

The right to housing was guaranteed under a 1977 constitutional provision (Article 44). Urban housing space, however, was cramped, about half of what it was per capita in Austria and West Germany. The reasons were inadequate building in Tsarist times, the massive destruction of housing during World War II, and Soviet emphasis on heavy industry. Prior to the October Revolution, inadequate urban housing was built for ordinary people. After the revolution, new housing was built, but the housing stock remained insufficient. Housing draws heavily on capital, which the government needed urgently for the construction of industry. In addition, Nazi invaders destroyed one-third to one-half of Soviet dwellings during the Second World War (Sherman, 1969).

City-dwellers typically lived in apartment buildings owned by the enterprise in which they worked or by the local government. Rents were dirt cheap by law, about two to three percent of the family budget, while utilities were four to five percent (Szymanski, 1984; Keeran and Kenny, 2004). This differed sharply with the United States, where rents consumed a significant share of the average family budget (Szymanski, 1984), and still do.

Food staples and other necessities were subsidized, while luxury items were sold well above their costs.

Public transportation was efficient, extensive, and practically free. Subway fare was about eight cents in the 1970s, unchanged from the 1930s (Szymanski, 1984). Nothing comparable has ever existed in capitalist countries. This is because efficient, affordable and extensive public transportation would severely limit the profit-making opportunities of automobile manufacturers, petroleum companies, and civil engineering firms. In order to safeguard their profits, these firms use their wealth, connections and influence to stymie development of extensive, efficient and inexpensive public alternatives to private transportation. Governments, which need to keep private industry happy so that it continues to provide jobs, are constrained to play along. The only way to alter this is to bring capital under public control, in order to use it to meet public policy goals set out in a consciously constructed plan.

The Soviet Union placed greater stress on healthcare than their capitalist competitors did. No other country had more physicians per capita or more hospital beds per capita than the USSR. In 1977, the Soviet Union had 35 doctors and 212 hospital beds per 10,000 compared to 18 doctors and 63 hospital beds in the United States (Szymanski, 1984). Most important, healthcare was free. That US citizens had to pay for their healthcare was considered extremely barbaric in the Soviet Union, and Soviet citizens "often questioned US tourists quite incredulously on this point" (Sherman, 1969).

Education through university was also free, and stipends were available for post-secondary students, adequate to pay for textbooks, room and board, and other expenses (Sherman, 1969; Szymanski, 1984).

Income inequality in the Soviet Union was mild compared to capitalist countries. The difference between the highest income and the average wage was equivalent to the difference between the income of a physician in the United States and an average worker, about 8 to 10 times higher (Szymanski, 1984). The elite's higher incomes afforded privileges no greater than being able to acquire a modest house and car (Kotz, 2000).

JOIN US! With a U.S. Friends of Soviet People Membership

New Application Membership Renewal

- Please send me information on how I can get involved with USFSP
- Please send me a 3-month introductory subscription to Northstar Compass for \$1
- I want to become a member of USFSP. Please enroll me as a member in the category indicated below:
- Please make checks payable to U.S. Friends of Soviet People, P. O. Box 140434, Staten Island, NY 10 314-0434

Name:	Student: \$5.00	Family: \$15.00
Address:	Senior: \$5.00	Contributing: \$25.00
City:State/Zip:	Individual: \$10.00	Patron: \$50.00
E-mail:	Phone:	Donor: \$100.00



The USFSP Soviet Film Project involves a lot of resources, and requires sustained financial support. Buy a new DVD. We have them!

Buy 1 for \$8 or 2 for \$10

NEW FILMS ON DVD

"Mission to Moscow"

"Life of Lenin"

"French Aviators Aid Their Soviet Allies"

"I Love My Land: Tribute To Soviet Women"

"American Women In the USSR"

"Viet Nam: The War Is Over, But The Struggle Continues"

Chronicles of October

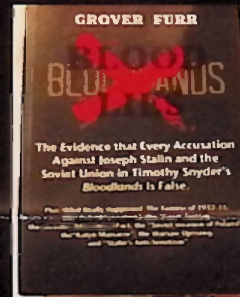
Maxim Gorky

Leningrad: 900 Days

DVD's AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT:

<http://northstarcompass.org/video.html?active=5>

New! New New! New!
From Red Star Publishers
www.redstarpublishers.org



Available for \$25 + shipping
 P. O. Box 1641 Manhattanville Sta.
 365 W. 125th Street, NYC 10027

SUPPORT Soviet film legacy!

Return the coupon below

Yes! I want to support USFSP's critical efforts to save Soviet film legacy! Add me to USFSP Mailing List: YES NO

Please find enclosed my contribution of: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other: _____ My contribution is: One-time Monthly

Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone & E-mail _____ Donation from: _____