

SPREADING THE WEALTH: A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO THE SWEDISH SOCIALIST MODEL: WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT DOES, AND WHY AMERICA DESPERATELY NEEDS IT¹

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I. INTRODUCTION

“Democratic socialism” is a term that is often derided in America.³ Just hearing the word “socialism” brings images of the former Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, or of North Korea under

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³ Okla Elliot, *What does Sanders mean by ‘democratic socialism’?*, The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/presidential-campaign/271652-what-does-sanders-mean-by-democratic-socialism> (last updated Mar. 4, 2016).

Kim Jong-un.⁴ These harsh images, however, are only two examples of what socialism can be. The word socialism is defined as a social system in which the means of producing and distributing goods are collectively owned.⁵ The whole community exercises political power in this system.⁶ As long as the government employing socialism listens to the will of the people and institutes programs that are beneficial, it can, and does, work.⁷

One of the best examples of democratic socialism can be found in Sweden.⁸ Sweden is one of the largest countries in Europe that uses a

⁴ Juliet Lapidus, *The Undemocratic People's Republic of Korea, Why do the most totalitarian countries always have the most democratic-sounding names?*, The Slate, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/explainer/2009/04/the_undemocratic_peoples_republic_of_korea.html, (Apr. 1, 2009).

⁵ *Socialism*, THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY 785 (4TH ed. 2001).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Tom Elliot, Sanders: *America Needs to Look to Denmark to See How 'Democratic Socialism' Works*, *The Corner*, National Review, <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/425525/sanders-america-needs-look-denmark-see-how-democratic-socialism-works-tom-s-elliott>, (Oct. 13, 2015).

⁸ Klaus Misgeld et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 40 (Klaus Misgeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

democratic socialist system.⁹ Despite the fears Americans have of socialism, Sweden is home to some of the happiest people in the world. According to a survey of 156 countries and their level of life contentment, Sweden ranked tenth in overall happiness.¹⁰ Coincidentally, the top four spots go to countries that use this type of system: Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.¹¹ In comparison, Americans ranked thirteen.¹² How could this be? A country based on socialist ideals could not possibly have happier citizens than the ones found in America. This must mean the fears that Americans have of socialism are unfounded. The Swedish people benefit from a wide range of socialist programs, which, if instituted in America, would be very popular.¹³

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Katia Hetter, *Where are the world's happiest countries?*, <http://cnn.com/2016/03/16/travel/world's-happiest-countries-united-nations/> (last updated Mar. 21, 2016).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Mike Medow, *Sweden's Social Welfare System Up Close*, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, <http://www.gmfus.org/blog/2013/12/18/swedens-social-welfare-system-close>, (Dec. 18, 2013).

The goal of this Article is, first, to delineate what democratic socialism is, and, next, to discuss the history of the Swedish Social Democratic Party (“SAP”), what their model is, and how it works. Once a thorough explication of democratic socialism has been achieved, this Article will then illustrate examples of its use in America. It will explore the various ways in which America has already benefited from democratic socialism, and how Americans can move from capitalism and toward a model such as this. Section II provides a historical background and Section III describes the Swedish Socialist Model. Section IV gives examples of American socialism. Section V then questions whether America is a true democracy, and Section VI describes restoring American democracy. Advocacy for moving towards the Swedish socialist model is presented in Section VII; and Section VIII concludes by calling for the start of a political publicization of socialist intervention in American politics. In the end, two main points will become clear: 1) democratic socialism works,

and 2) democratic socialism has been, and continues to be, an American ideal.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the early 1880s, Sweden was a class system with a high concentration of money within a tiny group of wealthy families.¹⁴ There existed a small middle class and a mass of peasants living in the countryside.¹⁵ Poverty was widespread.¹⁶ In this environment, the Swedish Social Democratic Labor Party (“SAP”) was formed in 1889.¹⁷ In the beginning, the party was formed on two goals, universal suffrage and the eight-hour workday.¹⁸ By 1911, the SAP was becoming an important political force in Sweden, but was still incapable of achieving its own political goals.¹⁹ The SAP achieved this power in 1932 during an economic

¹⁴ Klaus Misgeld et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 40 (Klaus Misgeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.* at xvii.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *Id.*

depression.²⁰ The depression became the SAP's central theme of that election year.²¹ The SAP proposed an economic plan for combating the crisis. It focused on extensive employment relief programs and state unemployment insurance.²² The plans that the SAP formed helped the party to win its first major victory, which allowed them to create their own form of government.²³

The post-World War II period in Sweden was very prosperous.²⁴ This prosperity was facilitated by favorable economic cycles.²⁵ Sweden produced paper, wood, steel, and ships because the war did not affect the country's production.²⁶ During this time, the SAP created a number of political reforms, which eventually became the cornerstone of the party's policy of social welfare.²⁷ The most important of these policies were the universal child

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.* at xvii.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.* at xxv.

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.*

allowance,²⁸ universal health insurance,²⁹ and the national supplemental pension.³⁰

During the 1970s, the SAP proposed additional reforms, which were aimed at increasing both equality and industrial democracy.³¹ The law on employment protection was created, which guaranteed wage earners protection against unwarranted dismissal; and the law on co-determination gave trade unions the opportunity to participate in important decisions in companies.³²

The SAP's proposal to create a wage earners' fund was the most significant.³³ This transferred a portion of a company's net income to a government-controlled pool that, via the purchase of stocks, would place wage earner representatives

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ See Adam Clymer, Robert Pear, and Robin Toner, *The Health Care Debate: What Went Wrong? How the Health Care Campaign Collapsed--A special report. For Health Care, Times Was a Killer*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (AUG. 29, 1994), <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/29/us/health-care-debate-what-went-wrong-health-care-campaign-collapsed-special-report.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.* at xxvii.

³² *Id.* at xxv.

³³ *Id.* at xxvii.

on company boards.³⁴ The goal was to transfer power into the hands of wage earners.³⁵ Naturally, capitalistic-minded politicians, as well as big corporations, were against this proposal.³⁶ They fought it for years.³⁷ The Riksdag originally approved the proposal in the 1980s, and created five investment funds.³⁸

Giving that kind of dominance to workers in American companies seems unimaginable. If the United States Congress were to propose similar laws, politicians on both sides of the aisle would be against it.³⁹ They would state that the rights of the corporations were being violated, and that the economy would collapse—ignoring that successful companies in Sweden have been contributing to this

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ Jessica Williams, *Inside Sweden's Social Democratic Social Party*, Mundus International, <https://mundus-international.com/inside-swedens-social-democratic-party/>, (Jun 7, 2015).

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ Klaus Misgeld et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 40 (Klaus Misgeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

³⁹ John Sides, *How the United States built a welfare state for the wealthy*, The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/02/12/how-the-united-states-built-a-welfare-state-for-the-wealthy/?utm_term=.b1f506ef5bd8, (Feb. 12, 2016).

type of fund for years.⁴⁰ The rise of the SAP in Sweden can be attributed to many factors with four factors as the most important: 1) the Swedish collectivist attitude; 2) working class economic uniformity; 3) lack of religion; and 4) the SAP's accord/accommodation policy.

The first factor in the SAP's success, Sweden's collectivist attitude, was fully realized during the depression of the 1930s.⁴¹ It got its start, however, in the agrarian societies of the 1880s.⁴² During this time, poverty was widespread.⁴³ As a survival tactic, the agrarian societies began a tradition of collective self-organization.⁴⁴ This shift gave them a feeling of independence in relation to the ruling class.⁴⁵ These communities established labor communes, which began exhibiting socialist behaviors.⁴⁶ They established libraries, produced

⁴⁰ Klaus Misgeld et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 40 (Klaus Misgeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

⁴¹ *Id.* at 4.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ *Id.* at 7.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.*

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 102.

plays, and even organized bazaars.⁴⁷ They focused on their members' well-being.⁴⁸ They raised funds, in the form of charitable donations, for their members when they became ill or unemployed.⁴⁹ Eventually, these groups began providing formal education to members and their families, as well.⁵⁰ These lessons mostly consisted of economics and science lessons, but eventually moved onto more diverse subjects.⁵¹

At first, these labor communes were not favorably viewed.⁵² Many faced resistance from the church, police, and other authorities.⁵³ These communes continued to organize, despite these troubles.⁵⁴ Over time, these communes became more accepted, which allowed entire generations of Swedish citizens to be brought-up with this collectivist mentality. The early SAP evolved out of

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 104.

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 126.

⁴⁹ *Id.* at 103.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 104.

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.* at 103.

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ *Id.*

these communes.⁵⁵ The SAP understood the importance of this collectivist mindset and wanted to further strengthen it.⁵⁶ Therefore, they began requiring an annual membership fee.⁵⁷ By charging a fee, members felt actively involved in the party's decisions.⁵⁸ By 1905, membership fees had become the party's main source of income.⁵⁹ During election years, however, this income was not sufficient, so the party turned to fund-raising.⁶⁰ Eventually, the Riksdag saw the importance of political parties and approved the introduction of a national subsidy to fund political parties.⁶¹ This change allowed the parties to stop accepting donations from powerful financiers, such as corporations.⁶² At the time, all political parties were being criticized for this practice.⁶³ This decision

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 105.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.* at 108.

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ *Id.* at 113.

⁶² *Id.* at 115.

⁶³ *Id.*

took the political power away from the corporations and gave it to the people.

In America, the opposite is seen. Large corporate donors dominate the political landscape. This was the central issue in *Citizens United v. FEC*,⁶⁴ which dealt with the regulation of campaign spending by organizations. In *Citizens*, the conservative non-profit organization Citizens United wanted to air a film critical of Hillary Rodham Clinton and to advertise the film during television broadcasts shortly before the 2008 Democratic primary election in which Clinton was running for U.S. President.⁶⁵ This broadcasting was in direct violation of a federal statute prohibiting certain electioneering communications near an election.⁶⁶ The court found the provisions of the law that prohibited corporations and unions from making such electioneering communications to conflict with the U.S. Constitution.⁶⁷ The United States Supreme Court held, in a 5-4 decision, that

⁶⁴ *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010).

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ *Id.*

⁶⁷ *Id.*

freedom of the press prohibited the government from restricting independent political expenditures by non-profit corporations. These principles were extended to “for-profit” corporations as well.⁶⁸ The case’s outcome gave corporations unlimited political spending power in the United States.⁶⁹

The second factor was the economic uniformity of the Swedish working class.⁷⁰ This uniformity allowed the Swedish to see themselves as more equal.⁷¹ For example, the unskilled workers’ wages in Sweden were 80% of those of the skilled workers.⁷² In comparison, American unskilled workers made about 50% of what the skilled workers were receiving in the years following

⁶⁸ John Dunbar, *The ‘Citizens united’ decision and why it matters, Non-profits or political parties?*, <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2012/10/18/11527/citizens-united-decision-and-why-it-matters> (last updated Mar. 14, 2016).

⁶⁹ Chris Cillizza, *How Citizens United changed politics, in 7 charts*, The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/01/21/how-citizens-united-changed-politics-in-6-charts/?utm_term=.7e5cc2ce2f49, (Jan. 22 2014).

⁷⁰ Migeld, Klaus et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY: A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 9 (Klaus Migeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

⁷¹ *Id.*

⁷² *Id.*

World War II.⁷³ These economic conditions allowed the Swedish labor movement to establish itself as one of the strongest in the world.⁷⁴

The third factor in the SAP's success was their country's lack of religion. Sweden is a highly secular nation; the Swedish see little connection between religiosity and happiness.⁷⁵ There are many reasons for Sweden's pervasive indifference towards religion. However, the two most important reasons are Lutheranism (Sweden's most practiced denomination of Christianity), and the rise of the SAP itself.⁷⁶ Lutheranism, particularly in its Swedish form, has generally had a highly educated clergy, with a highly intellectualized and rational theology.⁷⁷ With the rise of SAP values in the society, in a relatively short period of time, this educated clergy gave up their reactionary positions on social issues, and came to accept participatory

⁷³ *Id.* at 7.

⁷⁴ *Id.* at 9.

⁷⁵ SWEDEN SVERIDGE, [http:// https://sweden.se/society/10-fundamentals-of-religion-in-sweden/](http://https://sweden.se/society/10-fundamentals-of-religion-in-sweden/) (2013-2016).

⁷⁶ Eric Saamanen, *How Sweden became so secular*, (Apr. 19, 2010), Atheist Nexus, <http://atheistnexus.org/profiles/blogs/how-sweden-became-so-secular> (last updated 2017).

⁷⁷ *Id.*

democracy in the Church and society.⁷⁸ Unlike Christianity in America, Lutheranism was humanitarianism posing as Christianity. In a sense, the Church itself had become more secular.⁷⁹ This more inclusive version of Christianity fit well with the SAP's philosophy. Since its inception in 1889, SAP leaders held distrust for blind religious devotion.⁸⁰ Once the SAP became the dominant political party, they were free to shape their educational system as they saw fit,⁸¹ focusing only on science and evidence based curricula.⁸² This educational system, along with a more secular church, helped to create the secular nation Sweden now enjoys.⁸³

This mentality allowed the government to focus their attention on class issues.⁸⁴ The decisions they made were based on logic and science, instead of

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ *Id.*

⁸¹ Eric Saamanen, *How Sweden became so secular*, (Apr. 19, 2010), Atheist Nexus, <http://atheistnexus.org/profiles/blogs/how-sweden-became-so-secular> (last updated 2017).

⁸² *Id.*

⁸³ *Id.*

⁸⁴ SWEDEN SVERIDGE, [http:// https://sweden.se/society/10-fundamentals-of-religion-in-sweden/](http://https://sweden.se/society/10-fundamentals-of-religion-in-sweden/) (2013-2016).

religious beliefs.⁸⁵ It is hard to imagine American politicians adopting this way of thinking, even though the founders intended a separation of church and state.⁸⁶ American's regularly hear politicians, such as Ted Cruz, Mike Huckabee, and George W. Bush, constantly quoting religious scripture and invoking God when it comes to their policymaking.

The fourth, and final, factor in the SAP's success is their accord/accommodation policy. The accord/accommodation policy calls for overall cooperation.⁸⁷ Another term for it would be the "open door policy."⁸⁸ Isolation and polarization would be its opposite.⁸⁹ Accord/accommodation is not oriented toward creating agreement between existing views, but toward pursuing goals so that it is possible for others to accept them, and cooperate

⁸⁵ *Id.*

⁸⁶ The Anti-Defamation League, *Did the Founding Fathers Support the Separation of Church and State?*, UNDERGOD.PROCON, <http://http://undergod.procon.org/view.answers.php?questionID=001358> (last updated Nov. 6, 2013).

⁸⁷ Migeld, Klaus et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY: A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN 16* (Klaus Misgeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

⁸⁸ *Id.*

⁸⁹ *Id.*

or join with them.⁹⁰ It is not an expression of goodwill, but rather a philosophy and a strategy for power.⁹¹ This became a main theme for the SAP, according to party leader Albin Hansson when he stated: “Cooperation can be sought from both the left and the right. It is only a matter of keeping the possibilities open.”⁹²

American politicians do not work this way. Cooperation between the two parties is almost never the goal.⁹³ The Democrats and the Republicans are constantly fighting. They refuse to listen to each other’s positions, and they dogmatically hold to their own, even if it leads to governmental shutdown.⁹⁴ This has happened eighteen times in span of almost forty years, most recently in October of 2013, when they fought over the Affordable Care Act.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ *Id.*

⁹¹ *Id.* at 19.

⁹² *Id.* at 19.

⁹³ Michael Coblenz, *The two-party system is destroying America*, The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/267222-the-two-party-system-is-destroying-america>, (Jan. 28, 2016).

⁹⁴ *Id.*

⁹⁵ Tom Murse, *Government Shutdown History, Duration and Year of Government Shutdowns*,

Before the SAP was created, the Swedish citizens tended to look at the Riksdag as a repressive instrument only serving the ruling class.⁹⁶ However, once the SAP proved its worth to the people, it became the powerful force that it is today. The SAP earned the trust of its citizens by showing that government could be used as a tool for the benefit of society.⁹⁷

III. THE SWEDISH SOCIALIST MODEL

The SAP model of government focuses on the needs of the people. There are many aspects of this system that could be examined. This Article examines only its five most important themes: (1) integrative democracy, (2) society as the “people’s home,” (3) preventative social policy, (4) social control of the market economy, and (5) the welfare state. The first, integrative democracy, is the SAP’s

<http://uspolitics.about.com/od/thefederalbudget/a/Government-Shutdowns-In-The-Past.htm> (last updated Nov. 28, 2015).

⁹⁶ Migeld, Klaus et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY: A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 125 (Klaus Migeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

⁹⁷ *Id.*

focus on democratic decision-making.⁹⁸ Above all else, democratic decision-making is the party's objective.⁹⁹ The SAP regards democratic decision-making as the highest standard of legitimacy.¹⁰⁰ They believe that rulers must act on behalf of the citizens' interests, and not their own.¹⁰¹ From its inception, the SAP has focused on creating a state in which workers, and then employees in general, could participate on equal terms in the organization and governance of society.¹⁰² All voices are to be equal and heard. Political life, social order, and economic organization are governed by this principle.¹⁰³ Early Party Leader Rickard Sandler stated this about equality:

The main cause of those faults which disfigure present-day civilization is the private capitalistic mode of production which places rights of ownership in the hands of a minority, dooms the majority dependence, and

⁹⁸ *Id.* at 410.

⁹⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰⁰ *Id.*

¹⁰¹ *Id.* at 419.

¹⁰² *Id.* at 410.

¹⁰³ *Id.*

makes the opposition between workers and capitalists the determining characteristic of today's society. This class struggle will not cease until society is so transformed that capitalist exploitation has totally ceased, the class society has fallen and mass poverty has been abolished. These things can only happen through the abolishment of private capitalist rights to ownership of the means of production, and the latter's coming under the control of society, and by replacing the present unplanned production of goods with a socialist production, planned according to the real needs of society in order to increase the standards of welfare.¹⁰⁴

This idea of equality ties nicely with the SAP's second theme, the idea of society as the "people's home."¹⁰⁵ Early Party Leader Albin Hansson created what became known as the "people's home" model.¹⁰⁶ This model meant that the social democratic state should be like a home, a family, in which solidarity is natural and mutual help

¹⁰⁴ *Id.* at 133.

¹⁰⁵ *Id.* at 42.

¹⁰⁶ *Id.*

instinctive.¹⁰⁷ This model helped to inspire national solidarity.¹⁰⁸ This model also created the attitude of building broad political coalitions.¹⁰⁹ The people's home model helped foster feelings of unity throughout Sweden.¹¹⁰ Using the "home" analogy was an easy way to help people understand their idea of what society should be.¹¹¹ In the home, no one looks down upon anyone else; everyone in the family gets equal treatment; all family members are fully supported; and no one tries to gain advantage at another's expense.¹¹² Belief in the "people's home" meant that it was the SAP's duty to establish guarantees for the well-being of its citizens.¹¹³ Thus, the SAP has created policies, which compared to the programs found in the United States, sound almost impossible.¹¹⁴ For example,

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*

¹⁰⁸ *Id.*

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

¹¹⁰ *Id.* at 42.

¹¹¹ *Id.* at 45.

¹¹² *Id.*

¹¹³ *Id.*

¹¹⁴ Jonathan Cohn, *I'm insanely Jealous of Sweden's Work-Family Policies. You Should Be, Too*, New Republic, <https://newrepublic.com/article/118294/us-should-copy-sweden-and-denmarks-work-family-policies>, (Jun. 22. 2014).

they provide universal healthcare, free tuition for education through college, paid maternal/paternal leave, five weeks' paid vacation, and free day care, to name a few.¹¹⁵

The home analogy correlates with the third theme, preventative policies. The SAP believes in putting social programs into place to prevent future adverse effects on society.¹¹⁶ The SAP believes that children must become productive adults if society is to prosper.¹¹⁷ This is why the SAP invests in children's welfare and the welfare of their families.¹¹⁸ The hope is that by spending the money now, the investment in these children and their families will be returned by their productivity later.¹¹⁹ The money that the SAP spends on healthcare and education is not seen as a burden, but as a necessity.¹²⁰ They believe human resources are society's greatest assets, and, by implementing

¹¹⁵ *Id.* at 43.

¹¹⁶ Migeld, Klaus et al., *CREATING SOCIAL DEMOCRACY: A CENTURY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY IN SWEDEN* 105 (Klaus Migeld et al. eds., Penn. State Uni. trans., 1992 (1988)).

¹¹⁷ *Id.*

¹¹⁸ *Id.* at 413.

¹¹⁹ *Id.*

¹²⁰ *Id.*

preventative policies, they believe that these resources will not be wasted.¹²¹

This mentality is truly foreign in American political culture. Money spent on child development and family welfare is looked at as the individual's responsibility.¹²² The protest against welfare, of any kind, is based on the stereotype that welfare recipients are lazy and would rather not work.¹²³ This belief is not based on empirical evidence, but rather, emotionally-charged biases.¹²⁴ Rather than create a more equal society of tax-paying citizens, by providing assistance early in an individual's life, the American political culture continues to create an even larger wealth gap by denying individuals any safety net whatsoever.¹²⁵ This people-first mentality

¹²¹ *Id.*

¹²² Danica Johnson, *7 Common Myths About People on Welfare*, (Nov. 26, 2014), EVERYDAY FEMINISM, <http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/11/common-myths-people-welfare/>.

¹²³ *Id.*

¹²⁴ May Leung, *The Case against Economic Inequality*, (Jan. 21, 2015), SEVENPILLARSINSTITUTE.ORG, <http://sevenpillarsinstitute.org/case-studies/causes-economic-inequality>.

¹²⁵ *Id.*

has benefited the Swedish corporate world.¹²⁶ Swedish companies invest more in capital to fully develop their workforce.¹²⁷ They see this spending as a necessity rather than as a burden.¹²⁸ This model is largely credited for the success of companies like IKEA and Ericsson.¹²⁹

The SAP's fourth theme is their social control of the market. In Sweden, the SAP constantly adjusts policies within the market.¹³⁰ The SAP believes that the market must be allowed to change and evolve.¹³¹ They recognize that regulations on the market are needed and are beneficial.¹³² The SAP equalized market conditions.¹³³ They did this by

¹²⁶ *Id.*

¹²⁷ The Swedish Way, *The Learning Work Place*, www.esf.se/Documents/Press/.../the%20learning%20workplace%5B1%5D.pdf, (2011).

¹²⁸ *Id.* at 413.

¹²⁹ Sophie Kleeman, 10 International Companies Kicking America's Ass at Treating Employees Like Human Beings, *Mic*, <https://mic.com/articles/124674/10-international-companies-kicking-america-s-ass-at-treating-employees-like-human-beings#.U1zeNR509>, (Sep. 1, 2015).

¹³⁰ *Id.* at 416.

¹³¹ *Id.*

¹³² *Id.*

¹³³ *Id.*

using solidaristic wage policies¹³⁴, progressive taxation, and social welfare programs.¹³⁵ They used the market to fulfill essential human needs.¹³⁶ Next, they introduced “framework legislation” into the market.¹³⁷ These laws were aimed at supporting the business and its workers.¹³⁸ An example was job-training programs. The SAP subsidized the cost of labor mobility so that it fell upon society rather than upon the individual worker.¹³⁹ This market control is why corporations in Sweden are rarely seen to capture regulatory agencies for their own benefits.¹⁴⁰ That type of corporate behavior is not completely eliminated, but is greatly reduced.¹⁴¹ Unfortunately, that sort of behavior has become

¹³⁴ *The traditional bargaining strategy of the Swedish trade union movement, which sought to establish uniform rates of pay for each occupation and the narrowing of wage differentials* (Oxford Reference).

¹³⁵ *Id.* at 416

¹³⁶ *Id.*

¹³⁷ *Id.*

¹³⁸ *Id.*

¹³⁹ *Id.*

¹⁴⁰ *Id.* at 418.

¹⁴¹ *Id.*

standard operating procedure for corporations in the United States.¹⁴²

Allowing this type of control over the American market would benefit its society. However, American politicians would see it as a hindrance, and the corporations would see it as a threat to their bottom line.¹⁴³ American politicians believe that when government starts controlling corporations, personal freedoms become restricted.¹⁴⁴ Politicians in Sweden have made those same arguments.¹⁴⁵ Party Leader Tage Erlander countered such arguments by stating: “It is a mistake to believe that people’s freedoms are diminished because they decide to carry out collectively what they are incapable of doing individually.”¹⁴⁶ He believed that, instead of taking away freedoms, providing

¹⁴² *Id.*

¹⁴³ Thomas Frank, *Republicans: We don't need no regulation, The problem with the financial crisis wasn't that big business was too free from governance-it was the opposite. Or so the republican party, which is pulling off a remarkable confidence trick that could yet swing this year's presidential election*, *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/06/republicans-no-business-regulation>, (Jan. 6, 2012).

¹⁴⁴ *Id.*

¹⁴⁵ *Id.* at 419.

¹⁴⁶ *Id.*

health insurance freed society from the high cost of healthcare, providing pensions freed society from an impoverished old age, providing housing freed society from slum conditions, and providing full employment freed society from the risk of unemployment.¹⁴⁷

The SAP's final major theme is the belief in the welfare state. In Sweden, they have embraced the often-derogatory term "welfare state," and have even forged what they call the "middle way".¹⁴⁸ This middle way is the focus on the strengthening of their middle class by creating a welfare state.¹⁴⁹ Early in the 1920s, the party was already providing accident insurance, universal health insurance, and universal people's pension.¹⁵⁰ At first, these benefits were modest.¹⁵¹ The SAP made this compromise towards fiscal efficiency as an appeal to their political rivals.¹⁵² The welfare state was only meant to provide a basic minimum, not to encourage

¹⁴⁷ *Id.*

¹⁴⁸ *Id.* at 35.

¹⁴⁹ *Id.*

¹⁵⁰ *Id.* at 45.

¹⁵¹ *Id.*

¹⁵² *Id.*

negative work incentives.¹⁵³ “Full employment” remains important to the Swedish conception of the welfare state.¹⁵⁴ The SAP believes that employment is critical to a person’s welfare and sense of belonging.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the SAP focuses more on job placement programs and job training for the unemployed, rather than paying unemployment compensation. The benefit to this strategy is that it generates tax revenues rather than requiring their expenditure.¹⁵⁶

The incorporation of the welfare state eventually became an avenue of upward mobility for the working class.¹⁵⁷ This allowed a strong middle class to emerge by the 1960s.¹⁵⁸ This focus on the Swedish welfare state not only helped improve living conditions over time, but also helped to equalize the distribution of wealth across the social class.¹⁵⁹ The SAP has found that strengthening the

¹⁵³ *Id.*

¹⁵⁴ *Id.* at 423.

¹⁵⁵ *Id.*

¹⁵⁶ *Id.*

¹⁵⁷ *Id.* at 45.

¹⁵⁸ *Id.*

¹⁵⁹ *Id.* at 51.

middle class has been one of the most effective means of aiding poverty.¹⁶⁰

Despite the prosperity that Sweden has enjoyed, a conservative movement against social democracy has grown, not only within Sweden, but across Europe. For years, social democracy has been an inspiration to progressive and left-leaning politicians around the world.¹⁶¹ However, the current push against this form of government is highlighting that no form of government is universally accepted, even one as successful as social democracy. Since the 1990s, dissatisfaction with the “Swedish model” has been growing.¹⁶² This dissent has led to some of lowest voter numbers in support of the SAP since the 1930s.¹⁶³ Conservative politicians have further weakened support for the SAP with popular tax cuts and

¹⁶⁰ *Id.*

¹⁶¹ Mark Rowlinson, *Reflections on the Labour Movement and Social Democracy*, Institut Broadbent Institute, http://www.broadbentinstitute.ca/56292/reflections_on_the_labour_movement_and_social_democracy, (Sep. 4, 2017).

¹⁶² Nathalie Rothschild, *Social Democracy is Dying-Even in Sweden*, (Sep. 21, 2010), <http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/9599#.V7YrfGVCSM>.

¹⁶³ *Id.*

stricter rules concerning sickness benefits.¹⁶⁴ These conservative parties worked hard at assuring the public that they are *not* the conservatives they used to be.¹⁶⁵ Previous parties have tried to dismantle the welfare state; however, these newer conservatives have run on the promise that, instead of getting rid of the welfare state, they will better it.¹⁶⁶ These new tax benefits have lowered the quality of public programs, which has caused the well-off middle class to opt-out of those programs by seeking private options.¹⁶⁷ This gradual weakening of the welfare state has played into the conservatives' message that the SAP is inefficient, and needs to be replaced.¹⁶⁸

The slow decline of the welfare state over the years has eroded the SAP's support.¹⁶⁹ However, the biggest player in the decline of social

¹⁶⁴ *Id.*

¹⁶⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶⁶ *Id.*

¹⁶⁷ Phil Gasper & Tyler Zimmer, *Socialism? You Mean Like in Sweden?* (Nov. 24, 2015), <https://socialistworker.org/2015/11/24/you-mean-socialism-like-in-sweden>.

¹⁶⁸ *Id.*

¹⁶⁹ Carmen M. Cusack, "*Cuba Nos Une*": *Ending the Cuban Adjustment Act*, 11 J. L. & SOC. DEVIANCE 1 (2016).

democracy has been the rise of anti-immigrant rhetoric by Eurocentric politicians.¹⁷⁰ For many years, one of the main political issues across Europe has been large-scale immigration from non-Western, largely Muslim cultures.¹⁷¹ With the global rise of “Islamic terrorism”¹⁷² from groups like Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (“ISIS”), this anti-immigrant sentiment has gained popularity.¹⁷³

In 1975, Sweden’s integration policy entitled all permanent residents, including immigrants, to the same rights as Swedish citizens.¹⁷⁴ The SAP’s idea of multiculturalism has now left a lot of Swedish citizens feeling unprotected against the perceived

¹⁷⁰ Richard Milne, *Danish Election Hastens Demise of Scandinavia’s Social Democracy* (Jun. 21, 2015), <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7ab31dec-168e-11e5-b07f-00144feabdc0.html#axzz4Hj0bkrf>.

¹⁷¹ Alfred Pfaller, *European Social Democracy-In Need of Renewal, Nine Country Cases & Seven Policy Proposals* (Dec. 2009), <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/06867.pdf>.

¹⁷² John Moore, *The evolution of Islamic terrorism and overview*, FRONTLINE, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html> (last updated 2017).

¹⁷³ *Id.*

¹⁷⁴ Devin Joshi & Neha Navlakha, *Social Democracy in Sweden*, 45, *ECON. & POL. WEEKLY* 73, 78 (2010), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25764156>.

threat of the growing Muslim communities within Sweden's borders.¹⁷⁵ This has resulted in higher levels of discrimination against these communities.¹⁷⁶ Many immigrants are now finding it harder to enter the labor market.¹⁷⁷ Studies have shown unemployment rates within immigrant communities to be as high as 30%.¹⁷⁸ Immigrant unemployment further weakens the welfare state because, instead of contributing to the tax system, these communities are largely dependent on its tax-driven welfare benefits.¹⁷⁹

Despite Europe's waning support for social democracy, if Americans were to adopt this form of government, a great portion of its society would be lifted from poverty.¹⁸⁰ The problems plaguing American society today, such as high unemployment, homelessness, and wage stagnation would be drastically reduced if Americans were to

¹⁷⁵ *Id.* at 119.

¹⁷⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷⁷ *Id.* at 120.

¹⁷⁸ *Id.*

¹⁷⁹ *Id.*

¹⁸⁰ Harry Holzer, Reducing poverty the democratic way, Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/reducing-poverty-the-democratic-way/>, (Feb. 29, 2016).

implement this system.¹⁸¹ If Americans looked past their fear of democratic socialism, turned away from capitalism, and embraced the Swedish model, American society would finally experience the economic freedoms, which the citizens of Sweden take for, granted.¹⁸²

IV. EXAMPLES OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM

Americans are constantly taught that the United States was founded under capitalist ideals and that any form of socialism would undermine it.¹⁸³ The more the country moves toward socialism, the farther from the founding principles the nation will allegedly go.¹⁸⁴ However, this could not be further from the truth.

American politicians use the word socialism as an insult. They constantly talk about the dangers of

¹⁸¹ *Id.*

¹⁸² *Id.*

¹⁸³ JOHN NICHOLS, THE 'S' WORD, A SHORT HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN TRADITION...SOCIALISM 4 (Verso 2nd ed. 2015) (2011).

¹⁸⁴ John Hawkins, 5 ways socialism destroys societies, Townhall, <https://townhall.com/columnists/johnhawkins/2014/02/25/5-ways-socialism-destroys-societies-n1800086>, (Feb. 25, 2014).

socialism despite their lack of knowledge of what socialism really is.¹⁸⁵ Fox News constantly runs stories about President Barack Obama's alleged socialist takeover of America.¹⁸⁶ This type of fear-mongering in America is not new. Even President Harry S. Truman was accused of being a socialist for proposing an anti-lynching law, which addressed the unlawful killing of African Americans in the south in 1948.¹⁸⁷ If a politician proposes a change to the status quo, the standard insult is to label them a socialist.¹⁸⁸ Despite this propaganda, America has always had a history of socialist and social-democratic thinking.¹⁸⁹ America is not socialist nation, but the belief that socialism

¹⁸⁵ Lixing Sun, *How America hates socialism without knowing why, Why are socialist programs so unpopular today?*, Economics, <http://economics.com/america-hates-socialism-without-knowing/>, (Jun. 16, 2016).

¹⁸⁶ FOX NATION, *Obama admits he's a Socialist* (May 19, 2013) <http://nation.foxnews.com/obama/2013/05/19/obama-admits-he-s-socialist>.

¹⁸⁷ John Nichols, *THE 'S' WORD: A SHORT HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN TRADITION . . . SOCIALISM 12* (Verso 2nd ed. 2015) (2011).

¹⁸⁸ Pietro Pisciotta, *All is not what it seems when it comes to socialism, Is socialism really that bad? Maybe not.*, *The Odyssey*, <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/seems-comes-socialism>, (Apr. 5, 2016).

¹⁸⁹ John Nichols, *THE 'S' WORD: A SHORT HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN TRADITION . . . SOCIALISM 12* (Verso 2nd ed. 2015) (2011).

has never been used throughout its history is false. From the framers and founders through the current day, America has constantly been shaped by socialist ideals and activism.¹⁹⁰

One of these founders was Thomas Paine. Thomas Paine was instrumental in America's victory against the British during the Revolutionary War.¹⁹¹ Paine believed in socialist ideals before the idea of socialism was created.¹⁹² Thomas Paine wrote many books, including *The Rights of Man*, outlining his idea of a socialist society.¹⁹³ In it, he discussed budgets for social security, child welfare programs, public housing, and earned income credits.¹⁹⁴ Above all, Paine believed in social justice.¹⁹⁵ He explained that those with property owed a debt to society, a debt that should be collected and then redistributed to those lacking property.¹⁹⁶ These ideas were hardly popular at the

¹⁹⁰ *Id.* at xi.

¹⁹¹ *Id.* at 46.

¹⁹² *Id.*

¹⁹³ *Id.*

¹⁹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁹⁵ *Id.* at 56.

¹⁹⁶ *Id.*

time, and are certainly not popular now.¹⁹⁷ However, one of America's most famous founders, Benjamin Franklin, said about this socialist: "You, Thomas Paine, are more responsible than any living person on this continent for the creation of what are called the United States of America."¹⁹⁸

America's sixteenth president, Abraham Lincoln, is often regarded as one of America's greatest presidents.¹⁹⁹ Most Americans do not realize that he was heavily influenced by socialist ideals.²⁰⁰ Lincoln considered Thomas Paine as one of his many heroes.²⁰¹ He also quoted Karl Marx²⁰² in many of his writings and speeches.²⁰³ During Lincoln's first inaugural address, he stated: "Capital

¹⁹⁷ Stephen Littau, *Thomas Paine: More Harm Than Good? Life, Liberty, Property, Defending Individual Freedom and Liberty, One Post at a Time.*, The Liberty Papers, <http://www.thelibertypapers.org/2007/02/13/thomas-paine-more-harm-than-good/>, (Feb. 13, 2007).

¹⁹⁸ *Id.* at 49.

¹⁹⁹ Robert Merry, America's Greatest President: Abraham Lincoln, The National Interest, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/americas-greatest-president-abraham-lincoln-12957>, (May 24, 2015).

²⁰⁰ *Id.* at 64.

²⁰¹ *Id.*

²⁰² Steven Kreis, *Lectures on Modern European Intellectual History, Karl Marx 1818-1883*, THE HISTORY GUIDE, <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/marx.HTML> (last updated Jan. 30, 2008).

²⁰³ *Id.*

is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.”²⁰⁴ This is one of the core beliefs discussed in the *Communist Manifesto* written by Karl Marx, who is considered the founder of the socialist movement.²⁰⁵ Lincoln was likely well versed in Marx’s ideas because he constantly read the *New York Tribune*.²⁰⁶ This was the foremost left-leaning paper at the time.²⁰⁷ Karl Marx was also a featured article writer for the *New York Tribune*.²⁰⁸ Lincoln was such a fan of this paper that he even referred to the editor, Horace Greeley, as “friend Greeley.”²⁰⁹ Lincoln’s ties to Marx did not end with the *New York Tribune*. He also became good friends with some of Marx’s closest associates after they escaped Europe as political refugees.²¹⁰ These included Joseph Weydemeyer and August

²⁰⁴ *Id.*

²⁰⁵ *Id.*

²⁰⁶ *Id.* at 65.

²⁰⁷ *Id.*

²⁰⁸ *Id.* at 64.

²⁰⁹ *Id.* at 65.

²¹⁰ *Id.* at 91.

Willich.²¹¹ He even commissioned them as officers in the Union Army during the Civil War.²¹² Two noted socialists helped preserve the Union during the American Civil War. Their belief in socialist ideals led them to join Abraham Lincoln's Republican party because it was seen, by politicians in the south, as a legitimate threat to slave owners and their allies.²¹³

Throughout Lincoln's presidency, he routinely sought counsel from socialists.²¹⁴ Lincoln was so closely associated with socialists that when he won re-election in 1864, Karl Marx wrote him a letter of congratulation, which Marx said in his own words, "Lincoln so courteously answered."²¹⁵ The socialist counsel Lincoln received can also be seen in some of the policies he enacted, such as his desire to free the slaves, but also in the creation of the Homestead Act of 1862, which promised, "Land for the

²¹¹ *Id.* at 73.

²¹² *Id.* at 74.

²¹³ Donny Schraffenberger, *Karl Marx and the American Civil War*, INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVIEW, (Issue 80), <http://isreview.org/issue/80/karl-marx-and-american-civil-war>.

²¹⁴ *Id.* at 91.

²¹⁵ *Id.* at 96.

landless.”²¹⁶ This Act allowed any adult citizen to claim a 160-acre parcel of land in the public domain for free.²¹⁷ If asked, Abraham Lincoln would never have called himself a socialist.²¹⁸ However, America’s sixteenth president, who epitomizes the American ideal, kept an inner circle of socialist friends, constantly wrote speeches influenced by Karl Marx’s writings, and led an administration influenced by socialism. In fact, socialism was such a major theme of Lincoln’s presidency that history can safely say he was a socialist-sympathizer.²¹⁹

Following this trail of American socialism leads to the election of 1932. This was considered a realigning moment in U.S. politics.²²⁰ The country started moving from limited federal and state involvement in economic affairs, and embraced a more human and democratic approach to

²¹⁶ *Id.* at 91.

²¹⁷ *Id.*

²¹⁸ *Id.*

²¹⁹ John Nichols, *Reading Karl Marx with Abraham Lincoln, Utopian Socialists, German Communists, and other Republicans*, International Socialist Review, <http://isreview.org/issue/79/reading-karl-marx-abraham-lincoln>, (Dec. 1, 2016).

²²⁰ *Id.* at 117.

government.²²¹ The great depression had consumed the country. It was in this political landscape that America elected its thirty-second president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. FDR was the first president fully to embrace the socialist model.²²² Coincidentally, he was also the only president to win an election four terms in row. It seems one of America's most socialist president was also its most electable.

FDR won a landslide campaign by securing 57.4% of the popular vote.²²³ Compare that with one of America's most right-leaning presidents, George W. Bush, who actually lost the popular vote to runner-up Al Gore in 2000.²²⁴ FDR understood the will of the people.²²⁵ More than one million Americans, almost 3% of the electorate, cast ballots for presidential candidates who promised socialist

²²¹ *Id.*

²²² *Id.* at 118.

²²³ *Id.*

²²⁴ Brooks Jackson, *The Florida Recount of 2000* (Jan. 22, 2008) <http://www.factcheck.org/2008/01/the-florida-recount-of-2000/>.

²²⁵ John Nichols, *The 'S' Word, A Short History of an American Tradition . . . Socialism* 119 (Verso 2d ed. 2015) (2011).

programs.²²⁶ Candidates like, Verne Reynolds and Norman Thomas, both members of the Socialist Labor Party of America.²²⁷ FDR constantly read election statistics, so he understood that these socialist policies were very popular with the people.²²⁸ Once FDR took office he sought advice from Thomas and Henry Rosner.²²⁹ Thomas and Henry were socialists who frequently contributed to *The Nation* magazine, a socialist publication at the time.²³⁰ FDR also hired two socialists to his administration, Harold Ickes and Paul Douglas.²³¹ With this socialist counsel, FDR instituted his “New Deal”.²³² FDR’s New Deal created social security, unemployment compensation, jobs programs, and agricultural assistance.²³³ These ideas were borrowed from the socialist platform.²³⁴

²²⁶ *Id.*

²²⁷ *Id.*

²²⁸ *Id.* at 120.

²²⁹ *Id.*

²³⁰ *Id.*

²³¹ *Id.*

²³² *Id.*

²³³ *Id.* at 120.

²³⁴ *Id.*

FDR's new deal was further buttressed by the work of his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt.²³⁵ Unlike, previous First Lady's, Eleanor took an active role in the administration.²³⁶ She was well-versed in politics and firmly believed in the reform movement.²³⁷ As First Lady, she provided immediate aid and relief to citizens who were homeless, hungry, or unemployed.²³⁸ Eleanor's strong belief in the socialist ideals of the time was why she became the voice for the fair treatment of women, African Americans, and the youth.²³⁹ Unlike previous first ladies, Eleanor extensively traveled nationally and internationally.²⁴⁰ Eleanor wrote newspaper columns, magazine articles, books, and even hosted a radio show.²⁴¹ At every opportunity, she tried to advance her ideals of

²³⁵ Patricia Krider, *The national first ladies library, Eleanor Roosevelt*,

<http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33>.

²³⁶ *Id.*

²³⁷ *Id.*

²³⁸ *Id.*

²³⁹ *Id.*

²⁴⁰ Patricia Krider, *The national first ladies library, Eleanor Roosevelt*,

<http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33>.

²⁴¹ *Id.*

equality and social justice.²⁴² She was even an outspoken critic of the Roosevelt administration's decision to intern Japanese Americans into relocation camps during war.²⁴³ She not only vocally opposed the internment by making speeches against the camps, but she eventually enlisted the help of the Attorney General to legally fight the policy with the president.²⁴⁴ Despite the controversy of internment camps, FDR's socialist policies, along with Eleanor's support, made the Roosevelt administration so popular with the people that FDR was re-elected with 61% of the popular vote.²⁴⁵ Once again, history has shown that socialism works, and, when used correctly, is very popular with the American people.

While FDR's New Deal got all the credit for socialist ideals at the national level, millions of Americans continued to vote in the 1930s and 1940s

²⁴² *Id.*

²⁴³ *Id.*

²⁴⁴ *Id.*

²⁴⁵ John Nichols, *The 'S' Word, A Short History of an American Tradition . . . Socialism* 119 (Verso 2d ed. 2015) (2011).

for socialist politicians at the state level.²⁴⁶ For example, Fiorello La Guardia, who ran with the full support of the American Socialist Party, was elected as Mayor of New York in 1934.²⁴⁷ La Guardia followed FDR's example and hired many prominent socialists to his staff.²⁴⁸ Another state-level politician elected on the socialist platform was Daniel Webster Hoan, who won the mayoral race in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1916.²⁴⁹ According to Hoan, the best impact that a socialist could make was at the municipal level.²⁵⁰ Once elected, he immediately worked to develop municipal programs to feed the poor and provide them with housing.²⁵¹ Under Hoan's leadership, *Time* magazine described Milwaukee as "perhaps the best governed city in the United States."²⁵²

This discussion leads to one of the most important examples of socialism's effect in

²⁴⁶ *Id.* at 124.

²⁴⁷ *Id.*

²⁴⁸ *Id.*

²⁴⁹ *Id.* at 125.

²⁵⁰ *Id.*

²⁵¹ *Id.* at 126.

²⁵² *Id.*

America, the fight for freedom of speech.²⁵³ Despite the First Amendment of the Constitution stating that “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press,”²⁵⁴ laws were passed, which did just that. President Woodrow Wilson’s administration actively engaged in government censorship.²⁵⁵ Wilson’s administration constantly suppressed domestic dissent.²⁵⁶ His decision to enter into World War I was very unpopular.²⁵⁷ In response, his administration passed the Espionage Act of 1917.²⁵⁸ This Act criminalized expressing views or conveying information that could be construed by the government as a threat to the war effort.²⁵⁹ Censoring opposition to the war was the law’s true intent.²⁶⁰ Journalists were arrested all over the country for writing anything

²⁵³ *Id.* at 142.

²⁵⁴ U.S Const., Amend. I, Bill of Rights.

²⁵⁵ John Nichols, *The ‘S’ Word, A Short History of an American Tradition . . . Socialism* 119 (Verso 2d ed. 2015) (2011).

²⁵⁶ *Id.*

²⁵⁷ *Id.*

²⁵⁸ *Id.*

²⁵⁹ *Id.* at 145. See Carmen M. Cusack, *In Opposition of Cultural Institutionalization of Speech Following U.S. Intervention into Foreign Governments*, 19 BARRY L. REV. 297-311 (2014).

²⁶⁰ *Id.* at 146.

negative about the war or Wilson's administration.²⁶¹ Punishments ranged from two years upwards to twenty years.²⁶² *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1920 stated: "What appeared to be an excess of radicalism . . . was certainly met with an excess of suppression."²⁶³

The oppressive tactics used by the Wilson administration to quell free speech are strikingly similar to the tactics used by former Soviet²⁶⁴ states today.²⁶⁵ Despite, their claims towards democracy, countries like Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan frequently jail and harass their journalists.²⁶⁶ It is not uncommon for journalists in these countries to become victims of false smear campaigns as well.²⁶⁷ Victor Berger, Founding Member of the Social Democratic Party of America

²⁶¹ *Id.*

²⁶² *Id.* at 147.

²⁶³ *Id.* at 148.

²⁶⁴ Richard E. Pipes, *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Historical state of Eurasia*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union>.

²⁶⁵ Emily Thompson, *Media Freedom in the Former Soviet Union*, Fair Observer, (Apr. 17, 2013), <https://www.fairobserver.com/region/europe/media-freedom-former-soviet-union/>.

²⁶⁶ *Id.*

²⁶⁷ *Id.*

and Editor to *The Nation*, quickly became the target of this type of oppression.²⁶⁸ As Editor, Berger was cited for twenty-six overt acts of delivering public speeches or publishing newspaper articles that were deemed against the war effort.²⁶⁹ Despite his conviction, Berger was so popular with the people that they elected him to a seat in Congress.²⁷⁰ He was not allowed to sit, however, due to his conviction.²⁷¹ It was not until the next president, Warren G. Harding, took office that Berger's indictment was dismissed.²⁷² This dismissal allowed Berger finally to sit in Congress, when he was elected for a third time.²⁷³ While in office, Berger campaigned for free speech and a free press, and proposed that "Congress put teeth into the [F]irst [A]mendment."²⁷⁴ His work ensured that state sponsored censorship would always be a violation of the Constitution.

²⁶⁸ *Id.* at 150.

²⁶⁹ *Id.* at 158.

²⁷⁰ *Id.*

²⁷¹ *Id.* at 165.

²⁷² *Id.* at 170.

²⁷³ *Id.*

²⁷⁴ *Id.*

It is hard to believe that modern news stations like Fox News owe their ability openly to criticize the president to a socialist. If Woodrow Wilson had won in his fight against free speech, such news stations would not exist today. Instead of criticizing socialism, Fox News should be thanking it. Freedom of speech and freedom of press may have been given to America by its founders, but it was a socialist politician, who ensured that it could never be taken.

V. IS AMERICA A TRUE DEMOCRACY?

A true democracy will take every one of its citizens into account when making decisions. The following is best definition of a democracy:

A society where, based on a belief in the inherent equality of all, all society's members are entitled individually and collectively to determine their own destinies, subject to principle of equitable sharing that requires all the benefits and detriments of social life to be

fairly distributed among society's members.²⁷⁵

American society falls short of this definition. Money is the true political voice in this country.²⁷⁶ Those with the most money make the most significant decisions.²⁷⁷ This is an oligarchy.²⁷⁸ An oligarchy can never be a democracy. An oligarchy is a government in which a small group exercises control.²⁷⁹ Oftentimes, that control is for corrupt and selfish purposes.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁵ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING, DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 10 (Lexington Books, 2014).

²⁷⁶ Lee Drutman, *How Corporate Lobbyists Conquered American Democracy, Business didn't always have so much power in Washington*, The Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/>, (Apr. 20, 2015).

²⁷⁷ *Id.*

²⁷⁸ Cheryl Chumley, *America is an Oligarchy, not a democracy or republic, university study finds*, The Washington Times, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/apr/21/americas-oligarchy-not-democracy-or-republic-unive/>, (Apr. 21, 2014).

²⁷⁹ *Oligarchy*, THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY 591 (4TH ed. 2001). CARMEN M. CUSACK, *ILLCIT SEX WITHIN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM* (2017) (discussing how the American government has been usurped by some oligarchs).

²⁸⁰ CUSACK, *ILLCIT SEX WITHIN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM*.

The Supreme Court recently decided *Citizens United v. FEC*,²⁸¹ which further established this oligarchy. In the case, the Court decided that freedom of press prohibited the government from restricting independent political expenditures by non-profit corporations.²⁸² The Supreme Court extended those benefits to for-profit corporations.²⁸³ This decision transferred power from ordinary people to extremely wealthy corporations. Former President Jimmy Carter responded to *Citizens United*:

It violates the essence of what made America a great country in its political system. Now it's just an oligarchy with unlimited political bribery being the essence of getting the nominations for president of being elected president. And the same thing applies to governors, and U.S. Senators and congress members. So, now we've just seen a subversion of our political system as a payoff to major contributors, who want and expect, and sometimes get,

²⁸¹ *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010)

²⁸² *Id.*

²⁸³ *Id.*

favor for themselves after the election is over. At the present time the incumbents, Democrats and Republicans, look upon this unlimited money as a great benefit to themselves. Somebody that is already in Congress has a great deal more to sell.²⁸⁴

Citizens United gave corporations a free ticket to buy Congress.²⁸⁵ American politics will never be the same.²⁸⁶ “We the people” became “we the corporation.” One of the main questions raised was the question of corporate personhood.²⁸⁷ This is the claim that corporations were intended to enjoy fully the legal status and protections created for humans.²⁸⁸ *Citizens United* gave the right of

²⁸⁴ Eric Zuesse, *Jimmy Carter is Correct that the U.S. is No Longer a Democracy*, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eric-zuesse/jimmy-carter-is-correct-t_b_7922788.html (last updated Aug. 4, 2015).

²⁸⁵ Chris Cillizza, *How Citizens United changed politics, in 7 charts*, The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/01/21/how-citizens-united-changed-politics-in-6-charts/?utm_term=.e38b3db60003, (Jan. 22, 2014).

²⁸⁶ *Id.*

²⁸⁷ *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010)

²⁸⁸ Kent Greenfield and Adam Winkler, *The U.S. Supreme Court's Cultivation of Corporate Personhood*, The Atlantic, (Jun. 24, 2015), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/raisins-hotels-corporate-personhood-supreme-court/396773/>.

campaign contributions to corporations.²⁸⁹ Currently, corporations spend billions of dollars influencing Congress to fulfill their own wishes.²⁹⁰ Meanwhile, a substantial segment of the human population lives in poverty.²⁹¹ The average American's voice will never be heard over any of these corporations.²⁹²

While all Americans suffer the effects of poverty, African Americans and Hispanics are the most affected.²⁹³ Despite improvements over the years in racial and ethnic equality, economic inequalities are at their highest level since before the Great Depression.²⁹⁴ Even more alarming is the lack of social mobility that these groups have

²⁸⁹ *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 310 (2010).

²⁹⁰ Chris Cillizza, *How Citizens United changed politics, in 7 charts*, The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/01/21/how-citizens-united-changed-politics-in-6-charts/?utm_term=.e38b3db60003, (Jan. 22, 2014).

²⁹¹ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING, DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 69 (Lexington Books, 2014).

²⁹² Chris Cillizza, *How Citizens United changed politics, in 7 charts*, The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/01/21/how-citizens-united-changed-politics-in-6-charts/?utm_term=.e38b3db60003, (Jan. 22, 2014).

²⁹³ *Id.* Carmen M. Cusack, *Differences in Skin Tone among Hispanic Inmates in Florida's Prisons*, 5 *ETHNICITY AND RACE IN A CHANGING WORLD: A REVIEW JOURNAL* 37 (2014).

²⁹⁴ *Id.*

experienced.²⁹⁵ These economic inequalities are so entrenched in these minority groups that their ability to achieve upwards-social mobility has diminished over time.²⁹⁶ With this much income disparity in American society, it becomes obvious that the ordinary citizen, despite the guise of “we the people,” has little say when it comes to the decisions that are made each day in this country.

This inequality is anathema to democracy. If America hopes to return to a democracy, equality must be the goal.²⁹⁷ America’s current system of capitalism encourages a “winner takes all” mentality.²⁹⁸ It is this mentality that indirectly legitimizes the social economic divisions that are

²⁹⁵ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING, DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY*69 (Lexington Books, 2014).

²⁹⁶ *Id.*

²⁹⁷ Oren Waldman, *How Inequality Undermines Democracy*, E-International Relations, <http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/10/how-inequality-undermines-democracy/>, (Dec. 10, 2016).

²⁹⁸ Carmen M. Cusack, *ADR and Yama, The First Limb of Yoga Sutra*, 23 ADRJ 131 (2012) and Carmen M. Cusack, *Alternative Dispute Resolution and Niyama, The Second Limb of Yoga Sutra*, 6 IN FACTIS PAX 107 (2012) (discussing cultural relevance to zero sum strategies and expanding the pie).

apparent today.²⁹⁹ This system makes it easier to justify the huge economic divide between those who succeed and those who do not.³⁰⁰ Because socioeconomic starting points are unequal, it has become impossible for individuals to achieve their full potential.³⁰¹

Equality creates a sense of unity. When income gaps between rich and poor are allowed to increase, each side will begin to inhabit different worlds.³⁰² The wealthy tend to segregate themselves from the rest of society.³⁰³ This segregation makes the wealthy less likely to recognize the common citizenship of the people living in poverty.³⁰⁴ Even worse, because the wealthy are separated from it, they begin to believe that poverty is not even an issue that needs to be addressed.

The divide between the rich and the poor in America has never been more apparent. According

²⁹⁹ Andy Burnham et al., *THE SOCIALIST WAY, A SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN 64* (Roy Hattersley & Kevin Hickson eds., 2013).

³⁰⁰ *Id.*

³⁰¹ *Id.*

³⁰² *Id.* at 68.

³⁰³ *Id.*

³⁰⁴ *Id.*

to a Pew Research Center Report, on average, today's upper-income families are almost seven times wealthier than middle-income ones,³⁰⁵ compared to three and one-quarter times wealthier in 1984.³⁰⁶ When compared to lower-income family wealth, upper-income family wealth is 70 times larger.³⁰⁷ Until this equality is addressed, America will never be a true democracy.

VI. RESTORING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Given the direction that democratic socialism has taken in Europe, its future as a political system is not certain. Whether it will continue to decline or return to its former glory is hard to say. It is imperative to bring such a system to America, however. A recent survey found that over 77% of

³⁰⁵ Neil Irwin, *How Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump Differ on Taxes*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Aug. 12, 2016), <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/13/upshot/how-hillary-clinton-and-donald-trump-differ-on-taxes.html>.

³⁰⁶ Joaquim Moreira Salles, *The Wealth Gap Between Rich and Poor is The Widest Ever Recorded* (Dec. 18, 2014), <http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/12/18/3605137/us-wealth-gap-at-its-widest-in-decades/>.

³⁰⁷ *Id.*

Americans think the U.S. government is broken.³⁰⁸ This statistic is unsurprising; Congress has allowed the government to shut down multiple times.³⁰⁹ With this much dissatisfaction, it is hard to make the statement that this is a “government of the people, by the people, [and] for the people.”³¹⁰

The American government claims to be a democracy; however, this is not the case. If the United States followed the lessons of its founding document, the Declaration of Independence, then it would have no choice, but to become a true democracy. Two of the most important themes of the Declaration of Independence are that “all men³¹¹ are created equal,” and that the people have a right to practice democratic self-determination.³¹² This

³⁰⁸ Mark Schreiber & Elizabeth Fender, *The Will of the People and the Constitution: American Attitudes and Support* (Jan. 29, 2016), <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2016/01/the-will-of-the-people-and-the-constitution>

³⁰⁹ *Id.* at 64.

³¹⁰ Abraham Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address*, (Nov. 19, 1863), Abraham Lincoln online, <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm> (last updated 2017).

³¹¹ As applied meaning every person whether male or female.

³¹² THOMAS KLEVEN, *EQUITABLE SHARING, DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 32 (Lexington Books, 2014).

calls for a society where everyone is equally treated and has the ability to live their life as they see fit.

Currently, American politics and economy favors those with money. Capitalism, America's current political and economic system, ensures that no persons are created equal.³¹³ Only those with the most money matter; often, these are wealthy corporation persons. The average American stands no chance of having their voice heard over them. For example, on paper, everyone has the right to vote. However, if money buys access to government officials, then all anyone gets to vote on are the policies that were suggested by the corporations in the first place.³¹⁴

The blind trust towards this system is misplaced. Most Americans, liberal and conservative, prefer a more egalitarian society, like the one proposed

³¹³ Geoffrey Hodgson, How Capitalism Actually Generates More Inequality, Why extending markets or increasing competition won't reduce inequality, Evonomics, <http://evonomics.com/how-capitalism-actually-generates-more-inequality/>, (Aug. 11, 2016).

³¹⁴ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING: DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 42 (Lexington Books, 2014).

here.³¹⁵ A survey conducted by *The Atlantic* demonstrated this.³¹⁶ In this study, participants were asked to pick between two fictional countries, where one was modeled after the United States, and the second was modeled after Sweden.³¹⁷ The study focused on taxation and the distribution of societal wealth.³¹⁸ The results showed 92% of Americans actually preferred Sweden's system to the U.S. system.³¹⁹ This study highlighted that, despite what Americans are taught to say, their desires tell a different story than their beliefs.

This study pertains to one of American society's closest-held beliefs: that their country is the greatest in the world. To suggest otherwise is considered unpatriotic.³²⁰ According to a Pew Research

³¹⁵ Dan Ariely, *Americans Want to Live in a Much More Equal Country (They Just Don't Realize it)* (Aug. 2, 2012), <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/08/americans-want-to-live-in-a-much-more-equal-country-they-just-dont-realize-it/260639/>.

³¹⁶ *Id.*

³¹⁷ *Id.*

³¹⁸ *Id.*

³¹⁹ *Id.*

³²⁰ David Nose, *Is American Patriotism Getting Out of Hand? Patriotism shouldn't be hostile, divisive, and uninformed*, Psychology Today, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/our-humanity->

political typology survey, members of each political party indicated that 28% of them thought that the United States stands above all other countries in the world, while most (58%) said it is one of the greatest countries in the world, along with some others. Only 12% of Americans said there are other countries in the world “that are better than the [United States].”³²¹ This way of thinking holds the country from progress.³²² If a society believes that theirs is “the best,” then that society’s forward progress stalls.³²³ Recognizing a problem is the first step towards fixing it.³²⁴ Unfortunately, this hyper-patriotism is what keeps the United States from seeing some of its problems. Hyper-patriotism also

naturally/201503/is-american-patriotism-getting-out-hand, (Mar. 15, 2015).

³²¹ Alec Tyson, Most Americans Think the U.S. is Great, But Fewer Say It’s the Greatest, PEW RESEARCH CENTER (Jul. 2, 2014), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/02/most-americans-think-the-u-s-is-great-but-fewer-say-its-the-greatest/>.

³²² Mark Oppenheimer, *Flags are great for holiday celebration, but hyper-patriotism is un-American*, Los Angeles Times, <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-oppenheimer-flags-july-4-20160701-snap-story.html>, (Jul. 1, 2016).

³²³ *Id.*

³²⁴ Allison Strem, *The First Step Toward Fixing The American Divide Is Admitting We Have A Problem*, Thought Catalog, <https://thoughtcatalog.com/allison-strem/2017/09/the-first-step-toward-fixing-the-american-divide-is-admitting-we-have-a-problem/>, (2017).

ensures that America will never look towards another country for guidance.³²⁵

If Americans could abandon this narrow way of thinking, then they would finally see that 92% of them want to see this change. Apart from fundamental rights, traditions are not a constitutional right and should not be treated as such.³²⁶ Traditions can change. Traditions, which promoted the general welfare in one era of history, sometimes undermined it in another.³²⁷ Societies must adapt to the changing times rather than continue the same failed course because of tradition. If Americans embraced this change, they would finally live up to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence by embracing democratic equality.³²⁸

³²⁵ Mark Oppenheimer, *Flags are great for holiday celebration, but hyper-patriotism is un-American*, Los Angeles Times, <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-oppenheimer-flags-july-4-20160701-snap-story.html>, (Jul. 1, 2016).

³²⁶ CARMEN M. CUSACK, *CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK ON MASCULINITY, MALE AGGRESSION, AND SEXUALITY* (2015).

³²⁷ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING: DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 53-54 (Lexington Books, 2014).

³²⁸ Josiah Ober, *Are we living in a true democracy? A socratic dialogue between an American and a citizen of Athens*, Daily News, <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/living-true-democracy-article-1.3385179>, (Aug. 6, 2017).

This not only makes economic sense, but moral sense as well.³²⁹ Continuing with a political and economic system that is structured to provide an advantage to the wealthy elite, while disadvantaging the less well off, is contrary to America's professed value of democratic equality.³³⁰

VII. MOVING TOWARDS THE SWEDISH SOCIALIST MODEL

Changing from capitalism to democratic socialism will not be easy. It requires a political reposition. This reposition will not happen overnight but is long overdue. America is suffering the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.³³¹ Millions of Americans remain unemployed.³³² Many of them are homeless.³³³ This economic crisis highlights the inherent instability

³²⁹ *Id.*

³³⁰ Thomas Kleven, *EQUITABLE SHARING: DISTRIBUTING THE BENEFITS AND DETRIMENTS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY* 72 (Lexington Books, 2014).

³³¹ Richard Wolff, *Democracy at Work: A Cure for Capitalism* 2 (Haymarket Books, 2012).

³³² *Id.*

³³³ *Id.*

contained with capitalism and how, as a system, it has not been able to prevent these downturns.³³⁴

America can change course and turn from capitalism and the problems associated with it. This process would take time and would need to happen in all areas of society.³³⁵ First, American corporations need to change how they do business. Currently, corporations are run by small numbers of directors called boards.³³⁶ These boards make all the decisions.³³⁷ They have all the power over what is produced and their only goal is to make as much profit as possible. Instead, corporations could replace their boards with the workers.³³⁸ Replacing these directors with the workers who produce the product will finally democratize the corporate world.³³⁹ In this way, the workers who produce the product would make the decisions about production

³³⁴ *Id.*

³³⁵ Richard Wolff, *Democracy at Work: A Cure for Capitalism 2* (Haymarket Books, 2012).

³³⁶ *Id.* at 12.

³³⁷ *Id.*

³³⁸ *Id.*

³³⁹ *Id.* at 108.

and distribution.³⁴⁰ Power would be transferred from the wealthy minority into the hands of the majority.³⁴¹ By dissolving the corporate model, workers would finally have the directorial power to choose: 1) what combination of private and socialized property work best for the community; 2) what combination of market and planning would be best to distribute resources; and 3) what combination works best with each community in regards to decision-making between the workplace and the residents.³⁴² This form of social democracy is known as a Workers' Self Directed Enterprise ("WSDE").³⁴³

In this system, an individual must participate in the productive work of their enterprise if they wish to be a member of this new board.³⁴⁴ If they do not participate, then their ideas would still be considered, but they could not participate in the

³⁴⁰ *Id.* at 12.

³⁴¹ *Id.*

³⁴² *Id.* at 13.

³⁴³ *Id.* at 12.

³⁴⁴ *Id.*

planning of the WSDE.³⁴⁵ In this self-directed system, the workers collectively determine what the enterprise produces, how to do it, where to do it, and any related matters concerning this production.³⁴⁶ All decision would also have to be shared democratically with the surrounding communities at the local, regional, and national level.³⁴⁷ This system would be a true democracy. This system would give workers in the WSDE the power to determine their own lives.³⁴⁸

This interconnection between the WSDE and the community would have a positive effect on the environment.³⁴⁹ In a WSDE, the workers would be located near their worksite.³⁵⁰ They would have families living in the community.³⁵¹ The workers would know that every decision that they made would directly impact the lives of their own

³⁴⁵ *Id.* at 118.

³⁴⁶ *Id.*

³⁴⁷ *Id.*

³⁴⁸ *Id.*

³⁴⁹ *Id.* at 134.

³⁵⁰ *Id.*

³⁵¹ *Id.*

families.³⁵² Thus, companies would be less likely to make adverse decisions on the environment with profits in mind instead.³⁵³ Currently, board members are geographically removed from the factories and towns where their products are made.³⁵⁴ Generally, the areas surrounding factories are housed with low-income residents, most often minorities.³⁵⁵ When decisions are made with profits in mind, these communities suffer. This is due to the environmental pollutants, which are released into the surrounding towns.³⁵⁶ These pollutants put the residents at an increased risk of dying of heart disease and strokes.³⁵⁷ Often, these residents have a life expectancy of ten years less than white people living in other areas of the country.³⁵⁸ Living away from the factories allows the board members to

³⁵² *Id.*

³⁵³ *Id.*

³⁵⁴ *Id.* at 134.

³⁵⁵ Jane Kay and Cheryl Katz, "Pollution, Poverty, People of color: The factory on the hill," (Jun. 4, 2012), ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS,

<http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/2012/pollution-poverty-and-people-of-color-richmond-day-1>.

³⁵⁶ *Id.*

³⁵⁷ *Id.*

³⁵⁸ *Id.*

make decisions that could harm those environments.³⁵⁹ With this new system, the workers would have an incentive to make decisions that are helpful for that environment and not just profit driven.³⁶⁰ A system such as this would also allow for more flexibility because WSDs could adjust any aspect of their company as they saw fit, as long as it benefited society.³⁶¹

Wage disparities would also end with this system.³⁶² Workers would not likely support the income disparities currently seen in companies today because they are more closely impacted by this disparity.³⁶³ With everyone working together, there would be more of an incentive to provide everyone with a living wage.³⁶⁴ Protests against excessive compensation, like the one that took place in Dana Point, California in 2016 would likely

³⁵⁹ *Id.*

³⁶⁰ *Id.* at 134.

³⁶¹ *Id.* at 13.

³⁶² *Id.* at 135.

³⁶³ *Id.*

³⁶⁴ *Id.*

cease to exist.³⁶⁵ In that case, a hundred unionized Kaiser Permanente employees protested and sought legislation to cap executive pay to \$450,000 annually.³⁶⁶ Coincidentally, this is the same pay that the President of the United States is paid.³⁶⁷ They argued that if the President can live on that wage, then so can their executives.³⁶⁸

The survival of this new system would depend on different factors. The most important include: 1) favorable government programs; 2) the support of the people; and 3) improved childhood education. The first factor, support from the government, could come in many ways. The government could institute programs that support WSDEs, especially WSDEs that focus on bringing the unemployed back to the workforce.³⁶⁹ Bringing millions of unemployed Americans back to work would likely gain mass

³⁶⁵ Courtney Perkes, "Kaiser Workers in O.C. Protest 'Excessive Salaries' of Hospital System's Executives," THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER, (Mar. 3, 2016), <http://www.ocregister.com/2016/03/03/kaiser-workers-in-oc-protest-excessive-salaries-of-hospital-systems-executives/>.

³⁶⁶ *Id.*

³⁶⁷ *Id.*

³⁶⁸ *Id.*

³⁶⁹ *Id.* at 15.

support.³⁷⁰ FDR proved this with the success of his federal works program.³⁷¹ This change would cover the second factor of gaining the support of the people.

Subsidies, gathered from tax revenues, could be provided to WSDEs located in heavy capitalist areas. WSDEs could use these subsidies to help prevent them from being pushed-out by competing corporations.³⁷² Congress could create funds to which all WSDEs would be required to contribute. These funds could be provided to struggling WSDEs,³⁷³ especially to WSDEs that are in danger of laying-off their workers.³⁷⁴ They could use these funds to provide relocation services and job training for laid-off workers.³⁷⁵ Therefore, unemployment would drastically decrease, and such that it does not hurt the growth of the WSDEs.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁰ *Id.*

³⁷¹ *Id.*

³⁷² *Id.*

³⁷³ *Id.*

³⁷⁴ *Id.*

³⁷⁵ *Id.* at 15.

³⁷⁶ *Id.*

The final and most important factor for lasting success would be improving childhood education. Using WSDE funds to fund public schools could help. By allowing WSDEs to fund education, local governments would finally have access to the funds needed to provide a higher level of education.³⁷⁷ Most states have largely stagnant or declining funding levels.³⁷⁸ Among the states, vast disparities remain.³⁷⁹ In fourteen states, funding in 2011 was below 2007 levels, even without adjusting for inflation.³⁸⁰ President Obama's 2016 budget only showed a slight increase to many programs that have been significantly cut or entirely defunded.³⁸¹

In addition to funding, this new system allows schools to work with WSDEs to create a better curriculum that would help children succeed under

³⁷⁷ *Id.* at 125.

³⁷⁸ Valerie Strauss, *America's School Funding Problems State by State* (Feb. 5, 2014), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/02/05/americas-school-funding-problems-state-by-state/>

³⁷⁹ *Id.*

³⁸⁰ *Id.*

³⁸¹ Allie Bidwell, *Report: Federal Education Funding Plummeting, Congress Has Cut Spending For K-12 Education by Nearly 20 Percent Since 2011 A New Report Says* (June 24, 2015), <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/data-mine/2015/06/24/report-federal-education-funding-cut-by-5-times-more-than-all-spending>

this modified version of socialized democracy.³⁸² For example, this improved curriculum might include courses that stress the importance of social welfare programs through economic planning.³⁸³ Even if these exact strategies do not get employed, something must be done. America's current education model is failing.³⁸⁴ America ranks 35th in math and 27th in science of a 64-country study.³⁸⁵ One reason is the American school system's limited focus on test scores.³⁸⁶ According to the Education Select Committee, "[a] focus with only a narrow range has negative consequences on the ability to learn other subjects."³⁸⁷ With a WSDE in place, schools would finally have the autonomy and

³⁸² RICHARD WOLFF, *DEMOCRACY AT WORK, A CURE FOR CAPITALISM* 125 (Haymarket Books, 2012).

³⁸³ *Id.*

³⁸⁴ Matthew Lynch, *18 Reasons The U.S. Education System Is Failing*, THE ADVOCATE, <http://www.theedadvocate.org/10-reasons-the-u-s-education-system-is-failing/>, (Apr. 3, 2017).

³⁸⁵ Drew Desilver, "U.S. Students Improving – Slowly – In Math and Science but Still Lagging Internationally" (Feb. 2, 2015), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/02/02/u-s-students-improving-slowly-in-math-and-science-but-still-lagging-internationally/>.

³⁸⁶ Andy Burham et al., *THE SOCIALIST WAY: SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN* 73 (Roy Hattersley & Kevin Hickson eds., 2013).

³⁸⁷ *Id.*

accountability needed to improve their performance.³⁸⁸ This system is not wishful thinking; it is already being employed and seeing success with the Mondragon Corporation in Spain.³⁸⁹ The Mondragon Corporation is Spain's seventh biggest industrial group.³⁹⁰ It was founded in 1956 and has been remarkably recession proof,³⁹¹ even with 26% unemployment, and wage stagnation throughout the country.³⁹² The Mondragon Corporation has remained stable, and has done so without widespread layoffs, which is otherwise typical in the traditional corporate world.³⁹³

No system is perfect, especially not democratic socialism. Challenges will still likely arise under this system. The challenges, however, would differ greatly from those in a capitalist system.³⁹⁴ The

³⁸⁸ *Id.*

³⁸⁹ Richard Wolff, *DEMOCRACY AT WORK: A CURE FOR CAPITALISM* 128 (Haymarket Books, 2012).

³⁹⁰ Giles Tremlett, *Mondragon: Spain's Giant Co-operative Where Times are Hard But Few Go Bust*, *THE GUARDIAN*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/07/mondragon-spains-giant-cooperative> (last updated Mar. 7, 2013).

³⁹¹ *Id.*

³⁹² *Id.*

³⁹³ *Id.*

³⁹⁴ *Id.* at 181.

conflicts between the people who produce and those who make the decisions on what to do with that production will no longer exist,³⁹⁵ making society better equipped to deal with such challenges.³⁹⁶

This system will make it easier for all voices to be heard. No one ideology would rule over the other. Politicians automatically strike down ideas that do not fit into their idea of what government should be.³⁹⁷ Democrats and Republicans alike share the blame. If this type of intellectual censorship can continue, America will never grow. Entertaining different ideologies acts as a counterbalance in keeping a level political playing field. Politicians who dismiss individuals, ideas, and ideologies take too many options off the table.³⁹⁸ Abraham Lincoln, one of America's greatest presidents, understood this best when he said:

The dogmas of the quiet past are
inadequate to the stormy present.

³⁹⁵ *Id.*

³⁹⁶ *Id.*

³⁹⁷ Michael Coblenz, *The Two-Party System Is Destroying America*, The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/267222-the-two-party-system-is-destroying-america>, (Jan. 28, 2016).

³⁹⁸ *Id.*

The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenfranchise ourselves, and then we shall save our country.³⁹⁹

The challenges facing American society are becoming increasingly difficult. Political polarization, increasing racial tensions, and the ever-increasing wage gap. However, with an acceptance of different ideologies, hard work, and a belief in equality and a better tomorrow, a new world can be created starting today.

VIII. STARTING THE POLITICAL PUBLICIZATION OF SOCIALIST INTERVENTION IN AMERICAN POLITICS

As stated earlier, adopting democratic socialism in America would take nothing short of a revision to the current system, which is nearly impossible. A reformist ideal would have to start at the grassroots level. Grassroots communities are a way to get

³⁹⁹ John Nichols, *THE 'S' WORD: A SHORT HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN TRADITION . . . SOCIALISM* 99 (Verso 2nd ed. 2015) (2011).

actionable success, even with limited budgets and resources.⁴⁰⁰ America's 45th President, Barack Obama, understood the transformative power of grassroots movements when he stated: "Change won't come from the top, I would say. Change will come from a mobilized grassroots."⁴⁰¹ However, antisocialist sentiment is so prevalent in American society today that a grassroots movement to create democratic socialism would have to follow some rules in order to ensure its success.

First, the organization must tell a story. Politicians will often start their campaigns talking about specific goals.⁴⁰² However, people are more drawn to stories.⁴⁰³ Even the best activists cannot move the masses if they do not have a coherent story to tell.⁴⁰⁴ This can be accomplished by sharing

⁴⁰⁰ Anne Driscoll, "5 Tips for Sparking a Grassroots Movement Online" (Aug. 26, 2011), <http://mashable.com/2011/08/26/grassroots-online-tips/#JxEBSIkzXOqp>.

⁴⁰¹ Katy Steinmetz, "Test How Well You Know Some of the Most Famous Obama Quotes" (Nov. 14, 2013), <http://swampland.time.com/2013/11/14/test-how-well-you-know-some-of-the-most-famous-obama-quotes/>.

⁴⁰² *Id.* at 262.

⁴⁰³ *Id.*

⁴⁰⁴ Sara Robinson, "6 People You Need to Start A Revolution" (Apr. 12, 2012).

stories of real people and their struggles. For example, as part of Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential strategy in 2016, at a rally in New York, she told her mother's story.⁴⁰⁵ She spoke of how her mother Dorothy inspired her to become an advocate for women and children because of the hardships that she faced.⁴⁰⁶ One story was how one of her mother's elementary teachers noticed that Dorothy was too poor to buy milk during lunch, so she would buy two cartoons and offer the second to Dorothy because she couldn't drink them both.⁴⁰⁷ Hillary's plan was to use her mother's story to gain support with the struggling middle class.⁴⁰⁸ She hoped that, despite her success in life, she could relate to their hardships.⁴⁰⁹ Using stories such as these to build an emotional connection with an

http://www.alternet.org/story/154968/6_people_you_need_to_start_a_revolution.

⁴⁰⁵ Amy Chozick, "Hillary Clinton Embraces Her Mother's Emotional Tale," *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, (Jun. 12, 2015), <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/13/us/politics/story-of-hillary-clintons-mother-forms-emotional-core-of-campaign.html>.

⁴⁰⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁰⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁰⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁰⁹ *Id.*

audience is much more efficient than a 40-page proposal of political goals.⁴¹⁰

Second, they must use every tool at their disposal to share their message.⁴¹¹ Membership must exist, and members must organize press conferences and volunteer activity, and use direct mail and social media.⁴¹² When using social media, they must not become too dependent on the technology.⁴¹³ Some organizations tend to think that social media is the only form of communication relevant today.⁴¹⁴ Groups with an online presence must connect their online activity with their offline activity to ensure that they are working in tandem with each other.⁴¹⁵

Third, they must constantly ask for members.⁴¹⁶ One of the biggest reasons why grassroots

⁴¹⁰ *Id.* at 262.

⁴¹¹ Joe Garecht, “5 Secrets of Successful Grassroots Organizations” (2015), <http://www.localvictory.com/grassroots/grassroots-organizations.html>.

⁴¹² *Id.*

⁴¹³ Walter Mosley and Rae Gomes, “10 Things to Start a Movement” (May 17, 2011), <https://www.thenation.com/article/ten-things-start-movement/>.

⁴¹⁴ *Id.*

⁴¹⁵ *Id.*

⁴¹⁶ *Id.* at 268.

movements fail is because they become insular cliques.⁴¹⁷ Members become victims of in-fighting; they become jealous of their roles; and do not want to see those roles diminished by new potential rivals.⁴¹⁸ This mentality unfortunately goes against the what a grassroots movement is created to do, which is to grow.

Fourth, with its newly acquired members, the movement must amplify its message.⁴¹⁹ This is where social media plays its most important role within a grassroots movement. Groups can use social media to build a campaign hub where all activities can be broadcast.⁴²⁰ This allows each member of the organization to stay in contact with the others, and amplify their message to a much greater audience.⁴²¹

Fifth, the organization must empower each of its volunteers. They must make clear their expectations

⁴¹⁷ *Id.*

⁴¹⁸ *Id.*

⁴¹⁹ *Id.* at 262.

⁴²⁰ *Id.*

⁴²¹ *Id.*

on what it means to join to every new recruit.⁴²² They must constantly share how they have played a part in the group's success, and share that success with the public whenever possible.⁴²³

Finally, the grassroots organization must "create a brand."⁴²⁴ The most successful grassroots organizations are always recognized by their brand.⁴²⁵ Brands are created with logos, eloquent spokespeople, and consistency.⁴²⁶ This applies to campaign-run grassroots movements as well. Most notable was President Obama's grassroots movement, which created his famous brand of "hope and change."⁴²⁷

Keeping the momentum in the movement will be very important, especially in the beginning. The importance of low-commitment activities cannot be overstated. Activities such as liking and sharing pictures on social media are low commitment.

⁴²² *Id.*

⁴²³ *Id.*

⁴²⁴ *Id.* at 268.

⁴²⁵ *Id.*

⁴²⁶ *Id.*

⁴²⁷ Jack Holmes, "President Obama, the "Hope and Change" Guy, Criticizes Slogans" (Nov. 3, 2015), <http://www.esquire.com/news-politics/news/a39393/president-obama-sloganeering/>

Riskier activities, such as engaging in thoughtful debate with non-supporters are important. Higher commitment activities, such as writing academic papers and articles, like this one, carries weight in any grassroots movement.⁴²⁸ A grassroots fight for democratic socialism in America is a fight, which can be won. No matter how hard the fight gets, ultimately the most important thing that its members must realize is that each successful activity, no matter how little or great, will help push the scales towards their success.

⁴²⁸ *Id.* at 262.