

# Big Labor's Socialist Agenda



By Cliff Kincaid

The phrase, "Workers of the world unite," is right from the Communist Manifesto. As we celebrate Labor Day, it's important to remember how the communists historically tried to tap into the anger and discontent of American workers. Herbert Romerstein, who worked for the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the House Internal Security Committee and the House Intelligence Committee, documented communist manipulation of the organized labor movement in a report for my group America's Survival, Inc.

How successful have the communists been?

In today's America, their main vehicle is the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), a Marxist organization that draws heavily from the ideas of the late Italian Communist Party theoretician Antonio Gramsci and refers to its members as "comrades." DSA, which describes itself as the largest socialist organization in the United States, [says](#) it has "rapidly grown from 6,000 to almost 100,000 members" and "helped elect 155 DSA-endorsed candidates," often by "running open socialists on the Democratic Party ballot line."

The most prominent member of the DSA is Bronx Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, best known as AOC, who is [described](#) as DSA's "foremost socialist superstar." In 2019, the group [says](#) they "coordinated" an "organization-wide vote on endorsing Bernie for President."

Former President Barack Hussein Obama's socialist backing goes back at least to 1996, when he received the endorsement of the Chicago branch of the Democratic Socialists of America for an

Illinois state senate seat. Former AFL-CIO boss John Sweeney was a member of Democratic Socialists of America

Back in 2011, I grilled a top official of the 12.5-million-member AFL-CIO, Karen Nussbaum, about her participation in an illegal 1970 trip to Communist Cuba organized by Weather Underground terrorist Bernardine Dohrn. The exchange was [captured](#) on tape.

Since Castro and his communist successors have outlawed independent labor unions in Cuba, as well as freedom in general, Nussbaum's fascination with the communist system on the island is a relevant line of inquiry for those concerned about the dangers of socialism and totalitarianism here and the current direction of the AFL-CIO.

I asked [Karen Nussbaum](#), the founding director of Working America, the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO, about her visit to Cuba after speaking at a panel at a "progressive" public policy conference in Washington, D.C. She was apparently stunned by the fact that someone had uncovered an aspect of her background that has been carefully omitted from her official biography. She refused to answer and walked away.

But according to [one account](#) of her trip, she declared that she "learned about revolution in Cuba" and praised Castro for providing "free health and educational care to every person in society..." She also declared, "I was part of the Black Panther Support Committee" and said she was a member of the "Draft resistance movement" opposing the Vietnam War.

Nussbaum founded the organization, [9 to 5: The National Association of Women Office Workers](#), which led to Jane Fonda, also known as "Hanoi Jane" because of her support of the Communist Vietnamese, making the film "[9 to 5](#)." Fonda's [website](#) discusses her relationship with Nussbaum and her husband, a former official of a group called Citizen Action who became a public relations executive in such firms

as Fenton Communications. Citizen Action was implicated in a fundraising [scandal](#) in 1997 and was forced to close.

At the time I attempted to question Nussbaum about her Cuba trip, she had just completed a speech on a panel at the "America's Future Now!" conference which honored her boss, then-AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, as one of several "Progressive Champions." Another award winner was Rep. Barbara Lee, herself a frequent visitor to Cuba and apologist for the Castro regime.

DSA member Sweeney, who passed away earlier this year, was succeeded by Richard Trumka, who died on August 5. Trumka was replaced by [Liz Shuler](#), who had been serving as AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer.

Open socialists [regard](#) Shuler as a colorless career trade union bureaucrat and preferred [Sara Nelson](#), the International President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO. She addressed the Democratic Socialists of America convention in 2019 and 2021.

Though Marxist in orientation, the Democratic Party abandoned the workers who were once considered to be their main constituency.

AFL-CIO organizers understand this. Indeed, a panelist on the subject of "A New and Enduring Progressive Majority?," Nussbaum talked about her efforts to get conservative union members to vote for "progressive" candidates. She indicated this is a struggle since many union members have conservative social views, own guns, and go to church often.

These workers want economic and industrial development in traditional fossil fuel industries that AOC and the Democratic Party are trying to bankrupt through the climate change hoax and green energy scams that are part of the pending \$3.5 trillion budget plan.

But now, Democrat Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia is threatening the advance of socialism in the U.S., though he [refers](#) in a Wall Street Journal column to his “Democratic colleagues” rushing to spend the \$3.5 trillion on “social-policy action.” The Democratic Party, which controls the Senate by a single vote, needs Manchin’s support.

Manchin says, “I, for one, won’t support a \$3.5 trillion bill, or anywhere near that level of additional spending, without greater clarity about why Congress chooses to ignore the serious effects inflation and debt have on existing government programs.”

AOC is not happy and has personally attacked Manchin for opposing what’s called “Bernie’s budget.”

Will Manchin, the “centrist Democrat,” stand his ground?

The AFL-CIO is backing the \$3.5 trillion bill, a blueprint for a socialist America which has already passed the House. President Liz Shuler calls it “a vital part of President Biden’s Build Back Better agenda.” The AFL-CIO’s West Virginia affiliate [endorsed](#) Manchin for the Senate.

Although Manchin seems opposed, at least for the time being, the DSA already claims credit for persuading the Senator to back the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, which rewrites U.S. labor law in favor of unionization and will fatten the wallets of Big Labor. (As Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO, Shuler made \$250,619 in 2019).

“On May Day this year,” [says](#) Maria Svart, national director of DSA, “86 chapters organized actions in support of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. We organized phone banks and made one million calls asking voters in key states to call their senators to support the act. And we helped flip two Democratic senators, Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Angus King of Maine, who had been against the act. Few other national organizations have this kind of energized and

empowered force bubbling from the ground up.”

Meanwhile, a [new film](#) starring AOC, about the “demonization” of socialism, is now being shown. Described as a feature-length documentary on the history and resurgence of socialism in America, the film is titled “The Big Scary ‘S’ Word.”

The DSA, which provided “a small grant” from the [DSA Fund](#) toward its production, has hosted a [series of events](#) inspired by the film, including one featuring the filmmaker, Yael Bridge. Socialism is not so scary anymore, they say. Indeed, the trailer features “socialist stalwart” Cornel West saying that socialism is “as American as apple pie.”

West, an honorary chair of Democratic Socialists of America, endorsed Senator Bernie Sanders for president but has declared that [Bob Avakian](#), a Maoist who runs the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), “is a long-distance runner in the freedom struggle against imperialism, racism and capitalism. His voice and witness are indispensable in our efforts to enhance the wretched of the earth.”

Like Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn, “Chairman Bob” Avakian came out of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the group that laid siege to college campuses before turning into the terrorist Weather Underground. The RCP book shop known as [Revolution Books](#) in New York City hosted a party and celebration for a 91-page [book](#) called *Constitution for the New Socialist Republic in North America*.

Avakian, author of the book, [urged](#) his supporters to vote for Joe Biden for president in 2020. A socialist America, he makes clear, “is a process and goal which, fundamentally and in the final analysis, can only be achieved on a global scale, with the advance to communism throughout the world.”

Apparently aware of the stakes, Manchin said in his Wall Street Journal column that “...some in Congress have a strange belief there is an infinite supply of money to deal with any

current or future crisis, and that spending trillions upon trillions will have no negative consequence for the future. I disagree.”

In a statement, former President Trump [calls](#) the bill the “Communist Plan to Destroy America,” adding, “It destroys our Borders and the rule of law by granting dangerous amnesty that will flood America’s beautiful cities. It will overwhelm our schools, and make our Nation less safe. It raises taxes like we have never seen, while also making many things you buy everyday more expensive (gas, groceries, and much more). And don’t forget the crazy Green New Deal. America, you are being robbed in the dark of night. It’s time to wake up!”

Chairman Bob is salivating at the prospect of a “socialist” victory.

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