

Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) is the largest socialist organization in the United States. We believe that the economy and society should be run democratically to meet the needs of the many, not the few.



The Quad-City Worker



A better world is possible. Join us!

How to Get Involved:

- 1. Become a DSA member at dsausa.org/join
- 2. Come out to our actions and meetings
- 3. Follow us for updates at quadcitiesdsa.org

Disclaimer: The views in this publication are not necessarily representative of QCDSA's democratically-decided positions (except where noted), but represent the diversity of thought of our membership.

A quarterly publication of the
Quad Cities Democratic Socialists of America

Spring 2025

Issue No. 4

Statement on the Milan Bottoms Development

A statement from the Steering Committee of QCDSA

For the last few months, Nature's Treatment of Illinois (NTI) has been attempting to buy a plot of land owned by the city of Rock Island, IL to build a cannabis dispensary and truck stop on a 10-acre site located adjacent to the Milan Bottoms. The Milan Bottoms includes over 3,500 acres of wetlands that sits at the intersection of the Mississippi and Rock Rivers and is host to a variety of endangered species. Many residents and environmentalist groups, such as the Sierra Club Eagle View Group, have raised serious concerns about the conservation of these wetlands and the risks of pollution generated from the development.

In response to these concerns, the city has started the process of creating a conservation easement in the tax increment financing (TIF) district that has recently expanded to include the development site, part of the wetlands, and Bally's Casino. The city has also formed a task force to address the wetlands and has stated they wish to use TIF funds for conservation purposes. It was only from the result of public outcry that they have been moved to act. However, the city has not formally and specifically committed to using TIF funds for wetlands conservation. We therefore see these actions as an attempt at appeasement: without concrete details, these are promises the city can conveniently break, and we hope further details come shortly.

City officials have spent an immense amount of effort in a public relations campaign to paint opponents of the project as unreasonable and blocking progress. Mayor Mike Thoms hosted a press conference on March 21st, 2025 to specifically address the development, and the city's official social media regularly dismisses these concerns as false. City officials are painting this development as an obvious public good even though the deal is not fully approved, going so far as to attempt to limit public comment in city council meetings from five to three minutes, as was attempted and was thankfully tabled at the April 14th city council meeting.

Altogether, city officials have repeatedly demonstrated that they are willing to move fast and act urgently for only one purpose: the accumulation of capital. When RIPD officer Brett Taylor murdered Jakarta Jackson in January 2025, the city stayed silent despite weekly protests from Jakarta's family demanding justice. Officer Taylor remains on the force and no proposals have been brought forward to seriously modify police policy or the department's funding. The city has the power right now to constrain the power of the police, but their energy continues to remain on expanding business development.

The U.S. Will Target Socialists

by Bennett T

The United States intends to target socialists for political persecution.

It will investigate them inappropriately, it will charge them spuriously, it will revoke their legal protections, and it will remove them from the United States.

The administration has already sent surveys to researchers and organizations overseas who receive federal funding, and this questionnaire includes questions that note, "Taxpayer dollars must not fund dependency, socialism, corrupt regimes that oppose free enterprise, or intervene in internal matters of another sovereign nation."

The government has already gone further than that. Ed Martin, the interim attorney general for Washington, DC, has threatened to use the power of his office to target critics of Elon Musk, DOGE, and Tesla.

Elsewhere, Mahmoud Khalil, a green card holder, has been detained without due process, apparently for his role in pro-Palestine protests.

Rumeysa Öztürk was detained without due process for writing a pro-Palestine op-ed piece in the Tufts student newspaper while she was in the United States on a student visa.

Marco Rubio has revoked hundreds of student visas and has bragged that he will continue to revoke visas of those "whose presence...ha[s] potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for our country."

Moreover, the United States government has deported individuals, in explicit violation of court orders and without appropriate due process, to a mega-prison operated by the authoritarian regime of Nayib Bukele in El Salvador.

Taken as a whole, this demonstrates that the federal government is willing to go far beyond its legal limits in targeting those who express opinions contrary to the administration, and the inevitable endpoint will be the federal government embracing McCarthyism 2.0 with a new focus on removing people from United States soil and detaining them internationally.

However, there is no salvation in division; there is only survival in solidarity.

Victory comes not from denial in the face of the forces arrayed against us; victory comes when the workers of the world cast off their chains.

Now more than ever, it is important to join in supporting and defending your community.



National leaders say it will be different
It will be different if you just donate to this campaign
And wait

For the next election cycle ushers in a new figurehead to save us from
the lowest of lows
a promise, broken before it's said. The ballad of a politician.

Capitalism leaves two options
Delusion or despair?
Fabricating the false dichotomy to crush the many
Down
Down
Down
Under its weight

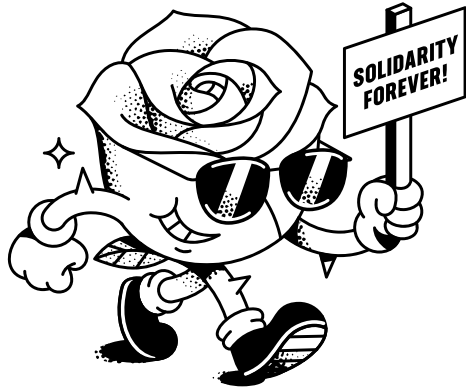
But your deepest being remembers.
the Home of community calls us to a better path
Not hope
But the knowledge, the certainty, that there is no other way
Than to carve out our purpose, meaning, to brave a life worth living,

Mutual care, love, solidarity is the socialist's choice tonic
Providing the tenacity to trudge through, knowing

To suffer is to endure
To grieve is to live
To despair in the dark is to be human

So we gather and share, we muster a cry
It's time to write again
to conjure the words to harness the collective experience
It's time to be honest, live truthfully
It's time to check on comrades and dearest of friends

Exist as much as we can while we can



As socialists, we believe that Rock Island workers deserve more. While this deal is hoping to create \$2 million annually in cannabis tax sales, there is no solid indication that these funds will be spent on improving housing, public works, recreation, and so on: it is all too likely the funds will immediately be funneled into "balancing the budget." The city could be doing more to directly benefit working families, but instead, far too often energy and resources are directed to helping business owners and landlords. From the massive outcry over the development of this dispensary, to the police killing of Jakarta Jackson, we understand why residents were so fed up with years of neglect and empty promises that they voted out Mayor Thoms in April. While it remains to be seen what the actions of Mayor-elect Ashley Harris and the new city council will be, we hope they turn a new page in Rock Island's history and enact meaningful programs to help working people, not to continue to line the pockets of the moneyed elite.

We urge every resident who is opposed to this development to contact their alderperson and tell them to vote NO on the project. You can find your alderperson and how to contact them here on the city's website: rigov.org.

In solidarity,
Quad Cities DSA Steering Committee



Review: On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder

by B Maloney

Politics permeate every aspect of our lives. While discussions may arise about distinguishing human issues from political ones, it is evident that human issues are becoming increasingly politicized. How can we protect ourselves from the overwhelming and divisive attacks on human issues? *On Tyranny* offers insights into the resistance needed to navigate the current political climate by reflecting on historical precedents.

We often hear that history repeats itself; however, this should be viewed as an opportunity to correct courses and strive for better outcomes or new directions. This book identifies the tactics through which fascism (tyranny, authoritarianism) has been historically implemented in a straightforward manner and explains strategies to combat it.

Collective Grieving Under Late Stage

Capitalism

by Rachel M

For me, the most powerful and poignant points conveyed in this book are contained within the following quotes: "Do not obey in advance." and "If lawyers had followed the norm of no execution without trial, if doctors had accepted the rule of no surgery without consent, if businessmen had endorsed the prohibition of slavery, if bureaucrats had refused to handle paperwork involving murder, then the Nazi regime would have found it much more difficult to carry out the atrocities by which we remember it."

Most individuals are naturally risk-averse, instinctively conditioned by society to comply with authority and not critically reflect upon their circumstances. You may find yourself compromising your opinions, values, or actions to avoid causing disruption. This book encourages readers to contemplate how entire communities betrayed their neighbors to gain favor with political powers, and how those political powers ultimately oppressed and exploited everyone—not just non-conformists. Without community support, extreme political power cannot prevail. Do not assist, instead resist - stand firm, express your dissent, and others will follow suit.

I found this book to be a thought-provoking read that provided insightful guidance and historical context. I recommend it to anyone struggling with the current political climate or seeking ways to make a personal difference. It is well worth taking the time to absorb its important lessons and challenge yourself to examine how your thoughts and actions shape the future.



Toiling to survive and a long day of labor deadens the best parts of We.
Are there instructions? A guide map?
How do we document the end of an empire nourished by blood, built on
brazen exploitation... the thought of writing with sincerity only elicits
fatigue

Fatigue that reverberates, penetrating far into the joints
Threatening finger bones—snap—shatter

Weaving words an old solace, now too vulnerable, too sensual, and real.
Creativity—matching language to meaning—now a chore?

What more can be recorded? These are the wastelands. This is the end
times,
when exclamations of, "In this economy?!" don't cover the half of it.

The Knight of Infinite Resignation has failed... Fear & Trembling batters
rotted beams
Loaded by greed well past capacity, the tower groans and gives warning
Of the inevitably - gravity or breeze - the tower crumbling down
falling,
falling

as the structure of capitalism lurches & sways, ground shifting beneath
your feet

Next vertigo
Then dissociation
Your cloak of protection is to scoff and call it Sound & Fury
Try to pretend, temporarily while you can
close your eyes

Easier to invalidate, gaslight the Self
saying, "Things will go on as before! We'll have our reward."
"Eyes down. Chin up!"
"You'll surely win the prize..."
"Work for retirement."
"a weekend of rest"

Working to exchange the fruits of a life's labor
Lost - stripped away
To be sold back for the small price of a soul?

No!