



All this information, including the diagram, are from a now-defunct website:
<http://reds.linefeed.org/groups.html>
 No changes have been made to the original text except for the correction of numerous typographical errors.

The leftist groups of the United States. Each group is situated according to how left-wing and how democratic it is. The higher a group appears, the more democratic its internal politics and political theory are. The further left a group appears on this diagram, the further left it is politically.
 American Red Groups
 Association of State Green Parties: See Green Party.

Black Radical Congress: Left-wing coalition of African-American activists formed in 1998 in East St. Louis. This broad confederation seeks to increase radicalism among the impoverished Blacks of America, and denounces Black Capitalists who have become rich and abandoned their brothers and sisters. The BRC has many political tendencies, ranging from DSA's Bill Fletcher, Jr. (one of the leaders of the AFL-CIO) to the Communist Party's Jarvis Tyner and Humberto Brown. The BRC has numerous caucuses which seek to promote such left-wing goals as trade unionism, feminism, gay and youth rights, and (specifically) an end to the racist incarceration of Mumia Abu-Jamal. BRC national headquarters is located in New York. Though still in its organizational infancy, the Black Radical Congress is direly needed in a world which has not seen wide-spread black radicalism for decades. Unfortunately, the dispersed nature of the BRC leadership has made it hard to organize anything "even a national convention."

Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism: This group was formed after the Soviet coup of 1991 by Manning Marable, Carl Boice, Leslie Cagan, Charlene Mitchell, Angela Davis, Pete Seeger and numerous others who were expelled from (or left) the Communist Party for supporting Mikhail Gorbachev and the pro-democracy faction of the Russian government. Free of the CPUSA, the CCDS founders hoped to unite the divided American Left, and received support from a number of well-known leftists, including Noam Chomsky. However, this dream soon ran into the

classic problem of sectarianism, and CCDS floundered. Over the years, the political alignment of CCDS shifted dramatically, from its infancy in Reform Communism to become a democratic socialist organization, not very different from DSA or the Socialist Party USA. However, without a clear vision of where the organization was going (i.e., merge with another group or strengthen their own) CCDS's originally strong organization has begun to disintegrate within the last few years. Some of their members, inspired by the CP's new leader, Sam Webb, returned to the CP. Others joined Nader and the Green Party and forgot about CCDS. Further, CCDS's main office in New York was damaged in the September 11th attack. CCDS will be holding its tenth anniversary convention in July, 2002, in San Francisco. Hopefully, CCDS will be able to re-establish itself as an active left group in America.

Communist Labor Party: See League of Revolutionaries for a New America.

Communist Party USA: Formed in Chicago 1919 as two Leninist splinters from the Socialist Party of America: the Communist Party of America (CPA) and the Communist Labor Party (CLP). Both groups had supported Vladimir Lenin, the Bolsheviks and the new Soviet Union, but were different demographically (the CPA was mostly composed of immigrants and the native-born CLP was led by journalist John Reed). Lenin's Communist International ("Comintern") forced these two groups to merge in order to become the official American section of the Comintern. The CPA and CLP merged in 1922 to become the United Communist Party and later the Workers (Communist) Party (WCP). The party went "underground" for the next few years during the 1920's Red Square the raids of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Communist William Z. Foster ran for President on the Workers (Communist) Party ticket twice during the 1920's. In 1928, following Leon Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet CP, his supporters in the US (led by the party's first chairman, James P. Cannon) were similarly expelled; subsequently, they formed the Communist League. In 1929, the newly Stalinist WCP changed its name to the Communist Party USA, and William Foster became the national chairman in 1932. However, he was placed into the background of Earl Browder when he became CP-USA General Secretary in 1936.

Early during World War II, the CP-USA opposed American intervention against the Nazis (mainly because of the Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact) and ran campaigns against Franklin Roosevelt. By 1941, when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, the CP-USA called for the US to enter the war and took part in a "Popular Front" with the Democrats. Browder's CP-USA was renamed the "Communist Political Association" (CPA) and dissolved into the Democratic Party. After the war, the Popular Front came to an end as Earl Browder was expelled and the CPA returned to the Communist Party. Under the leadership of the returning Foster and Eugene Dennis, the CP entered the campaign of former Vice-President Henry Wallace's Progressive Party. During the 1950's, the McCarthy hearings and such laws as the Smith Act led to the indictment of many Communist leaders – including Eugene Dennis, Gus Hall, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and others.

Besides government crackdowns, the CP-USA also suffered from revelations put forward by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956 (confirming the evils of Stalin in Russia), caused the further decline of the American party. Following the split between Khrushchev and Mao Zedong ("Sino-Soviet split"), the CP-USA sided with the Soviets, causing a number of pro-Chinese members to leave the party and forming the Progressive Labor Party. During the New Left of the 1960's, the CP experienced substantial growth due to publicity such as the imprisonment of black activist (and CP member) Angela Davis. Gus Hall became general secretary and continued to keep the CP highly pro-Moscow; in turn, the Soviet CP secretly funded CP-USA activities.

The CP stopped running candidates for President in the 1988 race, choosing instead to enter a new Popular Front with the left Democratic Party challenger, the Reverend Jesse Jackson. In 1989-1991, the CP faced the destruction of the Soviet Bloc. The CP-USA supported the Soviet CP's coup against Mikhail Gorbachev – causing the departure of some 2,000 pro-Gorbachev members to form Committees of Correspondence. The CP continued to shrink after the end of the USSR, and stopped fielding candidates in any races and instead endorsing the Democrat in any election. Since Gus Hall's retirement around 1999, the new general secretary is Sam Webb. The new Webb leadership is working to open up the organization, including allowing dual membership with Committees of Correspondence. Though experiencing a new growth, the CP-USA still supports a number of unfortunate views, such as calling the current Chinese government "socialist" in their journals and backing the thugs of the Colombian FARC. The Communist Party publishes a newspaper (People's Weekly World) and a magazine (Political Affairs).

Democratic Socialists of America: Confederation of socialists formed in 1983 when a splinter group of the Socialist Party (Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, DSOC) merged with the SDS splinter New American Movement (NAM). DSA has many celebrity members, including feminist Gloria Steinem, actor Ed Asner, black activist Cornel West, and libertarian socialist Noam Chomsky. It is also the chief American member group of the Socialist International, which includes the British Labour Party and the French Parti Socialiste. Until just recently, the main aim of DSA was to convert the Democratic Party into a social democratic organization. However, since the Democratic Party has been taken over by centrists such as Bill Clinton and Al Gore, many DSA members are finding it harder and harder to support this political party. Three DSA members are currently in the United States Congress: Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Danny Davis (D-IL), and Major Owens (D-NY). At one point, DSA had a fourth Congressman, Ron Dellums (D-CA) prior to his retirement in 1997. Also, the current president of the labor federation AFL-CIO, John Sweeney, is also a DSA member. DSA publishes a journal, Democratic Left, and has numerous commissions on specific issues, as well as a youth wing (YDS). Though it is still the largest socialist organization in the US, DSA has been diminishing in size recently. Following the November 2001 DSA National Convention, many members hope to find a new direction and regain membership.

Freedom Road Socialist Organization: Like Solidarity, the group known as Freedom Road was an organization formed by the unification of three smaller groups in 1985 — the Proletarian Unity League, Revolutionary Workers Headquarters, and the Organization for Revolutionary Unity. Though coming from the Maoist tradition, the FRSO began to look more critically at the role of Mao in his later years and the government he left behind. Like Solidarity, Freedom Road also began calling for "Left Refoundation" beyond their traditional segment on the far left — desiring to create a "revolutionary socialist" organization. In 1988, the Amilcar Cabral - Paul Robeson Collective fused with Freedom Road, and in 1994, they merged with a larger organization — the Socialist Organizing Network. Beyond revolutionary socialism, the FRSO also supported the right of oppressed ethnicities (especially Blacks and Hispanics) to self-determination. Freedom Road became very active, and consequently gained the support of such people as noted Black unionist Bill Fletcher, Jr., of the AFL-CIO. But by fighting sectarianism and "diluting" their Stalinist ideology, critics began to arise. This authoritarian faction (composed of the Chicago and Minnesota branches) still called the Soviet Bloc "socialist" when the rest of the organization refused to. In 1999, the pro-Soviet and Stalinist faction broke off to form Freedom Road Socialist Organization (Fight Back) — and affiliated with the hard-line Belgian Party of Labour (PTB). The mainline Freedom Road has continued to grow despite Fight Back's opposition, and has discussed refoundation with revolutionary socialist groups as diverse as Solidarity and League of Revolutionaries for a New America (LRNA). FRSO publishes a good journal, Freedom Road Magazine.

Freedom Socialist Party: The founders of the FSP were originally the Seattle branch of the Socialist Workers Party. This branch opposed many of the opportunistic and un-democratic methods of the SWP, including uncritically supporting Elijah Muhammed and Malcolm X, whose goals (in the FSP's opinion) would merely separate the American working class. This dissident branch left the SWP following the 1966 national convention, which was fought over the SWP's characterization of the left-wing of the anti-Vietnam War movement as "Stalinist." The FSP sought to help blacks through "revolutionary integration," (an idea later adopted by the Spartacist League) which would not divide the working class in the manner that Black nationalism would. The FSP grew beyond Seattle, and eventually made all the way to Canada and Australia. Strongly feminist, internationalist, and anti-racist, the FSP combines traditional Trotskyist ideals with more modern left-wing causes, including environmentalism, human rights, and gay liberation. The FSP has recently attempted to join the Trotskyist Fourth International (USFI). Strongly anti-sectarian, the FSP often helps other socialist groups get on the ballot, most recently helping the Socialist Party get on the 2000 ballot in Washington; in turn, the Socialist Party of Oregon is helping the FSP gain ballot access in Oregon. Further showing willingness to work with others, the FSP supported the Socialist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and others during the 2000 elections. Current national secretary is Henry Noble. The FSP publishes a quarterly journal, The Freedom Socialist. The FSP is one of the most active far-left organizations in the Pacific Northwest.

Green Party: Founded in July 2001 by the Association of State Green Parties (ASGP) and some supporters of the Greens USA, hoping to establish a strong, unified Green Party in the US following the success of Green candidate Ralph Nader in 2000 (2.75% in the presidential election). This new GP has formed a National Committee and is seeking recognition from the Federal Elections Commission. However, the Green Party of the US mainly follows the center-left (social democratic) pragmatism of the ASGP, disregarding the more radical views of the Greens USA. It is hard to tell

whether this GP will increase its voting percentage in the 2004 Presidential election, but it is hoping to field a number of candidates in the 2002 elections. See the number of votes the Greens have received in Presidential elections.

Greens USA: Environmental organization founded in August of 1991 after much effort to create a success story like the German and French Green parties. For ten years, the G-USA was known as the "Green Party USA." However, in 1996, a moderate GP-USA faction, frustrated that the party's radical politics were not winning converts, formed the Association of State Green Parties (ASGP). After an angry battle for power, the ASGP won, pulling in much more support than the older GP-USA. In the end, the ASGP let the GP-USA join them, but only after they took the "Party" out of their name. To the dismay of many, the "Greens USA" now serve only as the left wing of the new Green Party. They publish a journal, *Synthesis & Regeneration*. See the number of votes the Greens have received in Presidential elections.

Industrial Workers of the World: The IWW was a radical trade union formed in 1905 by radical Syndicalists and other leftists who opposed the pro-capitalist, conservative policies of the American Federation of Labor. "The Wobblies," as the IWW members were called, included many members of the Socialist Party of America, the Socialist Labor Party, and many other radical left-wing groups. During the 1910's, the IWW was of great influence in terms of the rights of American workers. Many well-known people, including John Reed (the only American ever to be buried in the Kremlin), Mother Jones, Bill Haywood, Joe Hill, and others turned to the "One Big Union" idea of the IWW, hoping that all of the world's labor could unite and stand up against their capitalist oppressors. After the government intervened in IWW activity in 1917, the IWW's influence quickly fell off. The IWW also became Anarcho-Syndicalist, driving many away from it (including one of its founders, Eugene Debs). The IWW today is more a support group for radical workers than an actual labor union. The only way this organization could succeed at reinvigorating itself is if it works to organize the segments of the working class the AFL-CIO is unwilling to touch — a mission members seem to be starting to realize.

International Socialist Organization: Formed in 1977 by supporters of British theorist Tony Cliff who had instigated a split in Hal Draper's International Socialists. The new ISO, led by Cal and Barbara Wilson, quickly affiliated with the British Socialist Workers Party and its International Socialist Tendency, as well as publishing a newspaper (*Socialist Worker*). As the American wing of the SWP/UK, the ISO shared its mother party's views that Soviet Communism was "state capitalism" diverging from Draper's ideas of bureaucratic collectivism. In the early 1980's, the Wilsons were removed from the leadership of the ISO and replaced when Ahmed Shawki (a British SWP member) came to the US; the SWP/UK hoped to keep a shorter leash on the ISO this way. ISO member Joel Greier travelled to Canada and met with student activists in the New Democratic Party and subsequently formed a sister group in Canada, the International Socialists. Under Shawki's command, the small ISO group grew by organizing on university campuses. They talked less and less frequently about Leninism, while more and more organizing around liberal hot topics. While claiming to have between 800-1000 members, the ISO goes through a high rate of member turnovers (i.e., people joining and leaving the group quickly). This is because they demand every member be a cadre (activist) — selling ISO papers, organizing and funding ISO events, and subordinating themselves to the rather undemocratic "regime" of Ahmed Shawki. In 2000, the ISO picked up a large number of new members by working and supporting the campaign of the Green Party's Ralph Nader. In 2001, after a battle between Shawki and the leaders of the SWP/UK, the ISO was expelled from the International Socialist Tendency. A small group of ISO members broke off to form a new American section of the IST; this group calls itself Left Turn. Subsequently, the ISO has begun to establish new international relations, especially with the Australian Democratic Socialist Party. Besides publishing *Socialist Worker*, the ISO also publishes a good magazine, *International Socialist Review*. Unfortunately, the ISO regime has a stranglehold on internal debate, and puts forward whimsical theories — such as demanding that Israel and the occupied territories should be re-invented as "Secular Palestine" (a truly impossible dream considering that both Israelis and Palestinians are blinded by nationalism and religious fundamentalism).

Labor Party: Formed in June 1996 in Cleveland, Ohio, by Adolf Reed's Labor Party Advocates (LPA) — as well as a number of left-leaning unions, including the United Electrical Workers (UE), International Longshoremen (ILWU), American Federation of Government Employees, California Nurses Association, United Mine Workers of America, and numerous locals of other unions. The union leaders that founded the Labor Party sought to pull the unions away from their traditional dependency on the Democratic Party. Many leftist groups (from DSA to Solidarity to Socialist Action)

saw the birth of the Labor Party as the creation of the mass workers' party that they had been waiting to see for decades. Unfortunately, from the very beginning at the founding convention, the labor bureaucrats had more voting power than the rank and file, and were able to halt attempts to run candidates against Democrats until 1998. In 1998, the bureaucrats passed motions that basically prevented Labor candidates from running with the party's blessing unless there was a very good chance that they would win. Despite this, the Labor Party does good work â€” publishing the bi-monthly Labor Party Press and leading the "Just Health Care" campaign for a national healthcare service. In Wyoming, where the Democrats are weak, the Labor Party also initiated an electoral bloc (a "Blue-Green Alliance") with the Green Party in 1998. The LP has also initiated a think-tank organization, the Debs Jones Douglass Institute. Present national headquarters is in Washington DC, where the next Labor Party constitutional convention and conference will be held July 25-28, 2002. Though the LP suffers from stagnation due to the bureaucrats' stranglehold on the organization, hopefully this can change with the efforts of the rank and file activists.

Labor Militant: See Socialist Alternative.

League of Revolutionaries for a New America: Founded in 1968 as the California Communist League by Nelson Peery and his supporters (former members of the Communist Party USA). In 1974, the CCL had a national convention and created the "Communist Labor Party" (CLP). The CLP considered themselves traditional Stalinists and Maoists, and opposed the direction that the Communist Party USA was taking by supporting "revisionism" in Russia. Peery claimed that the millions killed in Stalin's purges were "counter-revolutionaries," and that the purges were the "most humane industrialization" of a nation in history. Nelson Peery blasted the Communist Party for being "anarchists" and "syndicalists." Peery's writings also seem to illustrate a deep-seated fear of automation and mechanization. Shortly after the CLP's formation, it was one of the few Maoist organizations to move back toward the CP-USA â€” serving as a sort of orthodox opposition. Due to the fall of the Soviet Union and a near consensus of the international Left that Stalin was responsible for its demise, the Communist Labor Party dissolved in January of 1993 and reformed into the "League of Revolutionaries for a New America" (LRNA). Today, they try to downplay their Stalinist ideology, but that doesn't mean they no longer follow it. In 2000, the LRNA supported the Presidential campaign of the Green Party's Ralph Nader. They are mostly located in Chicago, and have been rarely seen there since the days they were called the CLP.

Left Party: See Socialist Alternative.

Left Turn: Formed in early 2001 by ex-members of the ISO who still supported the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Left Turn quickly became the American affiliate of the SWP's International Socialist Tendency (IST) and is working to catch up with the ISO in terms of an activist base. It is unclear what course Left Turn will take. Though initially making postures at a merger with Solidarity, the group now seems happy to remain independent of any other organization. It is likely that, with the support of the British SWP franchise, Left Turn will continue to grow and perhaps eventually eclipse the ISO.

Maoist Internationalist Movement: A tiny sect of Maoist revolutionaries, formed in October 1983 from an old SDS splinter, "RADACADS." Originally known as the "Revolutionary Internationalist Movement" (RIM), the MIM changed its name in 1984 after the Revolutionary Communist Party took the name RIM for its international organization. The MIM broke with the RCP officially over the issue of the war in El Salvador and the role of the FMLN. Virulently anti-Trotskyist, the MIM labels nearly every group it dislikes as demonstrating some form of "Trotskyist revisionism." They even label their fellow Maoists at the RCP "Crypto-Trotskyists"! Their organization's line also includes right-wing moralist ideas, including homophobia and refusing a woman's right to abortion. Obviously a group of aging New Left cooks, the MIM has only a small clustered membership in Western Massachusetts, Detroit and the Berkeley area. If the MIM used its time for positive organizing instead of blasting possible allies, perhaps some good could be accomplished.

News and Letters: This entry coming soon.

Peace & Freedom Party: Founded in the 1960's as a left-wing party opposed to the Vietnam War, the PFP reached its peak of support in 1968 when it nominated Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver for President. Although a convicted felon, Cleaver carried nearly 37,000 votes. Famed "baby doctor" Benjamin Spock â€” a Democratic Socialist and staunch opponent of the Vietnam War â€” was the PFP Presidential nominee in 1972. Since then, the PFP was often used by smaller extremist groups who were after its California ballot spot. In 1996, the PFP successfully blocked an attempt by

the Workers World Party to capture the PFP's Presidential nomination for the WWP's Monica Moorehead. The PFP 1996 Presidential candidate, Marsh Feinland, garnered over 25,000 votes in California. Unfortunately, in 1998, the PFP failed to attract more than 2% in any statewide election, causing them to lose ballot status in the state. There is currently a legal battle (supported by prominent leftists such as Howard Zinn and Noam Chomsky) to get the PFP back on the California ballot. Hopefully, this initiative will succeed. [The PFP is not included in the chart at the top of this page because their individual members could literally occupy any part of this map, and it is hard to gauge their true membership.] See the number of votes the PFP has received in Presidential elections.

Progressive Labor Party: Formed in June 1962 in New York as the Progressive Labor Movement by about fifty former members of the Communist Party USA who considered themselves Maoists. The founders of the PLM sympathized with China in what became known as the Sino-Soviet Split — putting them in direct opposition to the CP-USA's "revisionist" line. Early on in the organization's existence, the leaders of the PLM traveled to Cuba and defied State Department orders against this. The PLM was also one of the earliest activist organizations against the Vietnam War (through the PLM-dominated "May 2nd Movement"). By 1964, the PLM had about 600-800 members and growing. In the summer of 1965, the PLM was renamed the "Progressive Labor Party" (PLP), and in 1966 the PLP was given a highly centralized command structure and a mission to enter Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The PLP supported a very workerist and "Old Left" perspective concerning its members, opposing drug use and counter-culture attire because the leaders felt these things alienated youth from the workers' movement. At the 1969 SDS convention, PLP succeeded in taking over the organization; while many remained with the PLP, most left to form other groups. During the 1970's, the PLP denounced Mao Zedong as a traitor when he met with Richard Nixon in 1972. The PLP took up an anti-revisionist form of Stalinism and supported the "true socialist" regimes of Albania and North Korea. They are one of the few leftist groups that supports a violent execution of the entire upper class (a la Pol Pot's Cambodia). The tiny sect that remains of the PLP exists only in portions of California and New York. They publish a Stalinist newspaper, Challenge.

Revolutionary Communist Party: Founded as the Bay Area Revolutionary Union (BARU) in the early 1970's by Maoist Bob Avakian. Avakian's Revolutionary Union was one of the factions of Students for a Democratic Society who opposed the Progressive Labor Party. Since 1975, Avakian has created a web of youth/minority/worker protest groups, all quietly commanded by the RCP. These front groups would include Refuse & Resist (founded by RCP'er Clark Kissinger), the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, Mumia 911, and many others. The popular radical rock band Rage Against the Machine supports the RCP and many of its measures (including the right to burn the American flag). The black radical and death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal is also an RCP supporter, though probably not a member. Though very convinced it has the right answers to problems of minorities in America, the RCP has been blasted by groups such as the Black Autonomy Network for being a mostly white, mostly middle-class (yuppie) radical organization. Also, until very recently, the RCP took up the Maoist idea that homosexuality is "bourgeois decadence"; they finally came around to changing this in 2001 (just barely beating Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson at coming to this conclusion). The RCP publishes a newspaper, the Revolutionary Worker. The RCP also has an international federation, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), which includes the Communist Party (Shining Path) of Peru and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Chairman Avakian is currently in "exile" in France, hiding from the FBI. Overall, the RCP is a very centralized and authoritarian group.

Revolutionary Workers League: Formed in 1976 as a split from the Spartacist League, the RWL is a dogmatic and intensely militant Trotskyist group based in Detroit. Little is seen of them outside of Michigan and California state, and (like the Spartacist League) they demand the devotion of all their members. They have set up a network of puppet organizations: the National Women's Rights Organizing Committee (NWROC, founded 1980's), the Committee to Defend Affirmative Action By Any Means Necessary (BAMN, founded 1995), and others. These front groups are where the RWL's primary activism takes place. They often practice entryism -- entering larger organizations and trying to bend them toward their own ideology. The most recent case of this occurred in Oakland, California (far from their home base), where BAMN supporters tried to take over the local teachers' union, the OEA. A group that split with the RWL during the Gulf War, the Trotskyist League, would break from the RWL's traditional entryism and work with Solidarity and other groups, though maintaining their ultra-left stance. No matter what group they enter, RWL will never win many converts to their extreme tactics.

Social Democrats USA: This group is moribund and nearly completely defunct. See their entry in the Old American Red Groups.

Socialist Action: Group formed by Nat and Sylvia Weinstein, Les Evans, and other Trotskyists in 1983 upon their expulsion from the Socialist Workers Party, which had replaced Trotskyist ideas with those of Fidel Castro. Socialist Action began publishing a militant left newspaper and applied to join the Fourth International (USFI), the largest federation of Trotskyists in the world. SA is a member of the USFI's left minority, which includes Socialist Action of Canada and the Chinese Revolutionary Communist Party. Les Evans left SA in 1985 and formed Socialist Unity, which would soon join other groups in forming Solidarity. Another SA split, Activists for Independent Socialist Politics (AISP), joined Committees of Correspondence before eventually also joining Solidarity. SA has shown its still-close relationship with the Socialist Workers Party by supporting every SWP Presidential candidate and showing strong support for Cuban Communists and Fidel Castro. Though it had always been very small, SA had always been very active in labor, women and minority demonstrations. They strongly support Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners. In 1997, due to their group's increase in size, SA created a youth wing, Youth for Socialist Action. Also, their Socialist Action newspaper has gained a circulation of thousands. Current national secretary of Socialist Action is Jeff Mackler, one of the leaders of the The Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Socialist Alternative: Known as the Labor Militant until they changed their name in 1999. This group was founded in 1986 by supporters of the British Militant Tendency (which had gained much attention for their clandestine entry into the Labour Party in the early 1980's) in the hopes of forming an international network. (They succeeded in forming such a network, which is now known as the Committee for a Workers International CWI.) Socialist Alternative opposes both Black and Irish nationalism. They want an American style of the Labour Party to "fight for the end of domination of big business over U.S. society through nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy." They opportunistically backed Ralph Nader for President in 2000, but they want him to leave the Green Party and start supporting the party that he actually is a member of, the Labor Party. Recently, the CWI has been pressuring Socialist Alternative to compete with the ISO in organizing on university campuses. The CWI also wanted Socialist Alternative to de-emphasize support of Nader. These squabbles have caused a number of splits, including the New York Socialist Alliance and Labor's Militant Voice. Recently, a Socialist Alternative faction (from Minneapolis and San Francisco) led by former Morenist Carlos Petroni was expelled and "founded" the Left Party, a "paper" organization of about a dozen activists; their only success has been a terrific ability to promote their website on email lists. All in all, Socialist Alternative is a factionalistic and opportunistic group whose leadership jumps to any whim of the CWI and British Socialist Party.

Socialist Labor Party: Founded in Newark, New Jersey, in 1877 as the Workingmen's Party of America, the party that would become the Socialist Labor Party was a confederation of small Marxist parties from throughout the United States, becoming the first nation-wide Socialist party and only the second one of the so-called "third parties" (the Prohibition Party being the first). In 1890, the SLP came under the leadership of the famous (and infamous) doctrinaire, Daniel De Leon, a lawyer who lectured at Columbia Law School. From that point to the present, the SLP has adhered to the form of orthodox Marxism known as DeLeonism. This caused De Leon's opponents, led by Morris Hillquit, to leave the SLP in 1901. Hillquit's "Kangaroo" faction fused with Eugene Debs' Social Democratic Party and formed the Socialist Party of America. From that point forward, the SLP lived in the shadow of the much larger and popular Socialist Party. And later, the SLP lost even more footing when two other parties, the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party began capturing militant Marxists who would have otherwise joined the SLP. Always critical of both the Soviet Union and of the Socialist Party's "reformism," the SLP has been isolated from the majority of the American Left, and that isolation seems to be ever increasing. In 1976, the SLP ran its last Presidential race, and hasn't run many campaigns since then. They recently have been having trouble even funding their newspaper, The People. Due to their die-hard, puritanical politics, the SLP is likely to continue to wither away, much like the Prohibition Party has. See the number of votes the SLP received in Presidential elections.

Socialist Party USA: The Socialist Party USA is one of the heirs to the Socialist Party of Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas. Formed as the "Debs Caucus" in the old Socialist Party, the founders of the SP-USA were the most left-wing of the forces who opposed the right-wing leadership which renamed the old Socialist Party as Social Democrats USA (SDUSA). Leaving SDUSA, the Debs Caucus reconstituted the Socialist Party in 1973. Several old Socialist leaders, including Milwaukee

Mayor Frank P. Zeidler, Quinn Brisben and David McReynolds, became leaders of the new party, and the organization began fielding candidates once again for President in 1976. In 1980, the SP was the first party to field an openly gay man for President — peace activist David McReynolds. In the 1980's, the SP grew slowly, but this changed in the 1990's. Karen Kubby, a Socialist Party member from Iowa City, was elected to the City Council in 1990. More recently, black unionist Wendell Harris of Milwaukee won 20 percent of the vote in the 2000 Mayoral election. The party has consequently grown from 600 in nearly 1,500 in just the past 5 years. However, power struggles have arisen over recent issues between the ultra-left Boston local of the SP and several other locals. This infighting has caused a lot of effort to be wasted on negative factionalism, but hopefully this will soon pass. The SP publishes a magazine, *The Socialist*, and an internal discussion bulletin, *ARISE!*. See the number of votes the Socialist Party has received in Presidential elections.

Socialist Workers Party: Formed on January 1, 1938, from the Communist League of America after it was expelled from the Socialist Party by the SP's moderate leadership. Leaders of the early SWP included James P. Cannon, Max Shachtman, Martin Abern, George Novack, and others. The SWP had taken from the Socialist Party many sympathizers from their youth section, YPSL. The Trotskyists of the SWP also had won over many militant unionists (such as Farrell Dobbs) after the success of the Minneapolis Teamsters strikes on 1934. The SWP became one of the strongest groups during the founding of Trotsky's Fourth International on September 3, 1938. The SWP paper, *The Militant*, became one of the key papers of the American Left. However, political infighting occurred early on; Shachtman left in 1939 and founded the Independent Socialist League. Because of their criticism of World War II (calling it a war between two rival imperialist alliances), many SWP leaders (including Cannon and Dobbs) were imprisoned under the Smith Act of 1941. Most of them spent their time in Sandstone Prison and were released after the war. When the pragmatic Trotskyist, Michel Pablo, became leader of the Fourth International's "International Secretariat" in 1953, Cannon's SWP joined the British Socialist Labour League and French PCI in forming a rival group — the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). However, in 1963, Pablo's Secretariat (now led by Ernest Mandel) and the SWP (now under the leadership of Farrell Dobbs) reunited to form the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI). A faction of the SWP, still loyal to the ICFI, founded the "Revolutionary Tendency" in 1959 and was expelled in 1964; this group became the Spartacist League and Workers League. During the 1960's, the SWP became one of the strongest supporters of the Cuban Revolution, and played a strong role in the New Left through their youth organization, the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA). In 1973, Jack Barnes replaced Farrell Dobbs as the SWP's national secretary. Barnes (who had come from the New Left and not the labor movement) was a Castroist and expelled hundreds of Trotskyists during the 1970's and 1980's. He also ordered that SWP members "move into industry" and take factory jobs to get closer to the workers. He criticized Trotsky's theories and instead supported Lenin's idea of a two-stage revolution and the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" (a dual government of farmers and workers which Lenin himself abandoned after 1917). This theory is very impractical in the US, because most farmers/peasants are very conservative. Internationally, Barnes formed a number of Communist Leagues, creating a small international SWP network. Most expelled American Trotskyists went on to form the groups Solidarity and Socialist Action. The remainder of the SWP has become an isolated sect, doing little more than selling issues of *The Militant* and Pathfinder Press books to financially support Jack Barnes and Mary-Alice Waters. They came under severe criticism everywhere when they sued the Marxist Internet Archive for posting several Trotsky works that the SWP had copyrighted. This shriveled-up and dying group is a sad end to the revolutionary party Trotsky hoped to see develop. See the number of votes the SWP has received in Presidential elections.

Solidarity: Formed in 1986 from the fusion of the International Socialists, Socialist Unity, and Workers' Power. Solidarity was named after the Polish Solidarnosc at that time an independent labor union that challenged the Soviet Union from the left. From the beginning, Solidarity was an avowedly pluralist organization that included traditional Trotskyists, left-wing Shachtmanites, and Luxemburgists. Founded on the basis of far-left re-groupment, Solidarity sought to unite with other groups and create a large revolutionary-socialist and feminist party. Calling for a mass Labor Party, Solidarity also had substantial impact in the trade union movement, especially in Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU). It has also had great success in circulating thousands of copies of its journal, *Against the Current*. During the 1990's, Solidarity has had two organizations merge with it: the Forth Internationalist Tendency (a group expelled from the SWP) in September 1992 and Activists for Independent Socialist Politics (a Socialist Action split that had previously worked in Committees of Correspondence). It has also initiated internal fractions that work inside the Labor Party and the Green Party. In 2000, Solidarity endorsed both the Green Party's Ralph Nader and the

Socialist Party's David McReynolds for President. Recently, discussions of "Left Refoundation" have also been initiated between Solidarity and groups such as Left Turn, Freedom Road Socialist Organization, and Detroit's Trotskyist League. Further, many members of the organization are also interested in stronger relations (if not a merger) with the Socialist Party USA. Hopefully, this sort of initiative on Solidarity's part will continue. Besides publishing *Against the Current*, Solidarity also publishes an internal discussion bulletin, *Solidarity News*.

Spark: Formed in 1971 by Kay Ellens and supporters of the French group *Lutte Ouvrière* who left the Spartacist League. Like their French mentors, Spark suffers from a great deal of workerism, often talking down to workers in their paper *Spark*. Spark makes a fetish out of faux Bolshevik clandestine activity — the identities of their commanders are never revealed, most Spark activists are not members of the organization, and Spark members use fake names to "fool" the authorities. The newspaper *Spark* has horrible layout, large print, and simple language to "appeal" to industrial workers, while *Spark's* journal *Class Struggle* is meant to be a "theoretical" publication. In general, all the isolationist and elitist mannerisms of the Spartacists are ten times worse in the sectarian sect known as Spark.

Spartacist League: Originally formed as the "Revolutionary Tendency" of the Socialist Workers Party, the Spartacist League was formed in 1964 when they were expelled from the SWP for not supporting the Cuban revolution, as well as opposing the SWP's part in the "revisionist" United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USFI). Led by James Robertson, the SL was named after Rosa Luxemburg's Spartakusbund (the precursor to the German Communist Party). Though the Spartacists consider themselves to be orthodox Trotskyists, their Trotskyism is infused with a great deal of Left Communist ideology. The SL's international wing, the International Spartacist Tendency (now known as the International Communist League), was formed in 1974 and has managed to establish a number of small parties in numerous countries. The "Sparts" are known by much of the Left for their cult-like dedication to their group and their sectarian attitude toward other groups. In 1973, the SL tried to take over the Socialist Party USA at its national convention, but were expelled. Since the 1970's, the SL has also been criticized for its strong support of "revolutionary" actions by the Soviet Union, including the Red Army invasion of Afghanistan and the repression of the Polish *Solidarność* trade union. During the fall of East Germany in 1989 and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the SL attempted to organize the workers of those nations to oppose both Gorbachev and the western capitalists, but without much success. One of the Spartacist organizers in Russia, Martha Phillips, was murdered during this period — possibly by the Stalinist groups she was working with. The Spartacist League suffered two large splits: the first being the formation of the International Bolshevik Tendency in 1985 and in 1996 a group formed by the expelled SL newspaper editor, Jan Norden (known as the Internationalist Group). The Spartacists have been known to get into brawls with far-right groups such as the KKK and the World Church of the Creator, but have also become violent at meetings of the ISO and DSA. Two SL front organizations are the Partisan Defense Committee (dedicated to "defending class-war prisoners") and the Prometheus Research Library (a collection of historical Trotskyist documents). Overall, the Spartacist League is one of the most sectarian and ultra-left groups in the American Left.

Workers World Party: The Workers World Party was founded by Sam Marcy in 1959 when he left the Socialist Workers Party. Over time, Marcy's political ideology had warped from Trotskyism to an unusual form of Stalinism. The WWP claimed that it supported the rights of workers, but supported the overthrow of workers by the Soviet Union in places like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. The Workers World Party nominated its first candidate for office in 1980. Though the WWP is small, its membership is highly dedicated and can accomplish much. In 1996, the WWP succeeded in capturing a ballot spot in California that led to WWP Presidential candidate Monica Moorehead getting over 29,000 votes (mainly from California) in 1996. Moorehead once again ran for President in 2000 under the WWP ballot, but this time received less than 5,000 votes. The WWP has created a number of front organizations, including the International Action Center (which has been involved in the anti-globalization demonstrations) and the newly-formed ANSWER (an anti-war group). On May 10, FBI Director Louis Freeh named the WWP as a "domestic terrorist group" without providing any evidence, paving the way for future attacks on civil liberties on groups for merely having different opinions than the mainstream. This has brought sympathy from many leftists toward the WWP. However, the WWP continues to do things which will turn leftists away from them, including backing the Kimist dictators of North Korea and supporting the efforts of the anti-Semitic, chauvinistic Russian Communist Workers Party (RKRK). Overall, Workers World is one of the most authoritarian groups on the Left today. See the number of votes the WWP received in Presidential elections.