

MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

A Production of Des Moines Mutual Aid

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Why Vote?

Bourgeois democracy and it's electoral politics are an illusion

Comrade Jack

Come November, many folks trapped in the imperial core will set out to cast their vote for their flavor of bourgeois presidential candidates. Some vote out of fear, some out of compulsion, some because they believe it is a necessary part of living in our society. Whatever the reason, anyone who chooses to vote believes that what they are doing matters or will make a difference somehow. There are also plenty of people who do not take part in voting. There are many reasons to choose not to vote, but it is likely that the majority of non-voters have become disillusioned with this institution of bourgeois democracy.

To whatever degree of political awareness these folks possess, or whatever their reasoning may be, they have all asked themselves the same question: "why vote?" That question has caused a rift in the perspective of their own existence in bourgeois society, whether they have realized it or not. They may realize that the current institution of voting is alienating by design, meant to keep the common person as far away from the real decision making as possible. They may ask why they must be represented by another, when they are capable of representing themselves? Why do they not get to vote directly on the things they deal with in their everyday life such as, how long they work, what work needs to be done, how their healthcare is provided, or what needs to be done in their communities? The questions could be ever expansive, and should be.

All of the questions eventually culminate into the realization that our current democracy is a sham, and begs the question, "why vote?"

Yahya Sinwar, Fallen Freedom Fighter

You can kill a revolutionary, but not revolution

Subcomadante Ronnie

Those of us that fight for a world free of colonization and imperialism recently mourned the loss of Yahya Sinwar, Hamas leader and courageous freedom fighter who fell in battle against the occupiers in his homeland Gaza, fighting to his last breath.

Yahya was born in 1962 in the Khan Younis refugee camp, a result of the ethnic cleansing of the Nakba. Born into the struggle for a free Palestine, he fought for liberation his entire life. He was captured and sentenced to four life sentences in 1989. In prison he organized, orchestrated prisoner exchanges, influenced resistance strategy, learned Yiddish, and studied israel to better understand the enemy. In 2011 he was released in a prisoner exchange after 22 years in colonizer cages.

His leadership in Hamas was characterized by a focus on building the capacity of armed resistance when strategies like nonviolent resistance (Great March of Return) and diplomacy failed in the face of continuous expansion and extreme violence by the zionists, funded by the usa. Having lived only war and occupation, Yahya did not entertain the idea that the imperialists would develop morality and come to Palestine's rescue.

On October 16th Sinwar engaged in battle with occupation soldiers in Rafah. He sustained injuries and took to a building for cover. He fought off the soldiers with grenades until they retreated. A tank fired into the building severing his arm, but he continued fighting. A drone tracked him down which he fought with a stick until he was fatally shot. When his body was recovered he wore a Keffiyeh around his head, a field tourniquet on his severed arm, and he was upright.

Yahya Sinwar was 61 years old when he was Martyred.





They're Not Like Us

Our enemies exercise power at the cost of their humanity

Comrade Pat

Both presidential candidates vow to provide the tools for Israel's ongoing genocide on TV daily. Clips circulating on Twitter reveal that when ICE agents guard children in cages at the border, they do so with evident glee. Locally, Chris Coleman and Mayor Boesen grin demoniacally and offer platitudes about "tough love" while they vote to put people in jail for the crime of not having a home.

There is something not quite human about these people. It strikes you that you have never once seen them blink, that behind their lips lie monstrous teeth, that their faces are masks concealing something unspeakable.

Your senses don't deceive you. Those who choose to serve capital have been infected with an evil that is not natural. They have embraced this darkness and willingly turned away from their own humanity.

They are not like us, and they separate themselves from us however they can. Cops drink at cop bars and live in cop neighborhoods; politicians and bankers dine at restaurants you don't know about and sip expensive wines you can't even afford to think about. They get their kicks at parties on private islands and brush shoulders with Jeffery Epsteins and drug traffickers.

The rich cement class alliances with a shared sense of depravity. We build class solidarity in shared struggles, at dive bars and on picket lines. We are not like them, we turn towards humanity, and embrace it most fully when fighting for liberation. We are the people, we are not the pig!

This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, the political and social outlook which binds us together.

o. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities. We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

1. We believe in community autonomy. We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people's needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

2. We are police and prison abolitionists. Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don't rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities. Part of political education is connecting people's lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices. We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a volunteer know. For more information, including how to donate, visit <https://iowamutualaid.org/>.