



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 2, 2010

Progressives Emerge Unscathed

The hard-core Left represented by members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the House of Representatives will survive essentially undamaged in today's mid-term elections.

Only one member of the CPC lost in the primary election, and only one other member is [predicted to lose](#) in today's election, according to the Cook Political Report. Three other members of the caucus are in races too close to call. The other 77 members of the CPC will keep their seats.

The caucus was founded in 1991 by six members of the House: Reps. Ron Dellums, Lane Evans, Thomas Andrews, Peter DeFazio, Maxine Waters, and Bernie Sanders. Other members soon joined, including Reps. Barney Frank, Pete Stark, and Nancy Pelosi. [It is supported](#) by other radical-left groups such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the Communist Party USA, and the left-wing think-tank Institute for Policy Studies. It is also linked to *The Nation* magazine, MoveOn.org, Americans for Democratic Action, the Progressive Democrats of America, the NAACP, the ACLU, as well as the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition.



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The founding statement of purpose for the CPC used standard soft language to hide its real agenda: [We are] organized around the principles of social and economic justice, a non-discriminatory society, and national priorities which represent the interests of all people, not just the wealthy and powerful. On its website the CPC supports universal healthcare (code for socialized medicine), increased taxes on the wealthy (code for class warfare and destruction of the middle class), and increased welfare expenditures (code for dependency on government).

The DSA website is [equally candid](#) about its support for the CPC and its purposes: Many socialists have seen the Democratic Party, since at least the New Deal, as the key political arena in which to consolidate this coalition, because the Democratic Party held the allegiance of our natural allies.

Through control of the government by the Democratic Party coalition, led by anti-corporate forces, a progressive program regulating the corporations, redistributing income, fostering economic growth and expanding social programs could be realized. [Emphasis added.]



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Its attack on free markets and private property is explicit: A democratic socialist politics for the 21st century must promote an international solidarity dedicated to raising living standards across the globe, rather than leveling down in the name of maximizing profits and economic efficiency. Democratic socialists are dedicated to building truly international social movements of unionists, environmentalists, feminists, and people of color that together can elevate global justice over brutalizing global competition.

Active members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus include Reps. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), Roland Burris (D-Ill.), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), John Conyers (D-Mich.), Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), Barney Frank (D-Mass.), Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas), Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Jim McDermott (D-Wash.), Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), Laura Richardson (D-Calif.), Bobby Rush (D-Ill.), Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.), Pete Stark (D-Calif.), Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), and Henry Waxman (D-Calif.). Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) served on the executive committee, but is not currently listed as a member.

Eleven of those members, including John Conyers, serve on the powerful House Judiciary Committee, and others have significant influence elsewhere in the House.

Until the strangle-hold of the CPC is broken, little change can be expected despite Republican victories in the midterms. In a Rasmussen poll just released, nearly half of those surveyed expect noticeable change following such a victory, while a third are more jaundiced and realistic in their views, expecting little positive from the new 112th Congress.

Photo of Socialist Bernie Sanders (left) with Willie Nelson: AP Images



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