

IN THIS ISSUE

**At Large—
'Hitler's Pope'**
Page 2

**Rep-Dem Election Spending
Shatters Previous Records**
Page 3

**Editorial—
Lifting the Court's Veil**
Page 4

**A Picture of
Socialist Government**
Page 8

Ukraine Closes Last Reactor At Chernobyl

On Dec. 15, Ukraine finally shut down the No. 3 reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The No. 3 reactor is attached to the No. 4 reactor, which was the source of the worst nuclear power accident in history. The 1986 meltdown at Chernobyl sent a poisonous cloud of radioactive matter over much of eastern and northern Europe. Many of the ailments and deaths were in Ukraine itself. According to the Associated Press, "Millions of its citizens are affected by radiation-related ailments."



The Chernobyl disaster occurred on April 26, 1986. "More than 4,000 cleanup workers have died since and 70,000 have been disabled by radiation in Ukraine alone," the AP reported. "About 3.4 million of Ukraine's 50 million people, including 1.26 million children, are considered affected by Chernobyl."

Ukraine President Leonid Kuchma claimed that with the shutdown "the world will become a safer place." However, the makeshift concrete sarcophagus that was hastily built over the No. 4 reactor is known to be breaking down and leaking. A new sarcophagus is planned for construction, but it is clear that unless some scientific breakthrough can detoxify nuclear waste reactor No. 4 will remain a danger for generations to come.

Chernobyl's reactors Nos. 1 and 2 were closed down years ago. The AP report said that 6,000 workers were employed at No. 3 and that thousands of them will be laid off. According to *The New York Times*, however, the shutdown will "lead within two years to the layoff of 2,200 of the plant's 5,600 operators and 3,000 support workers."

Whatever the precise numbers may be, it is apparent that the widespread suffering caused by the Chernobyl disaster is far from over. Apart from the economic hardship that the shutdown order will add to the misery of many Ukrainian workers, the working classes of that country, neighboring Belarus and others affected by the disaster of 14 years ago will continue far into the future.

Layoffs and Closures Hint That 'Recession' Is Near

Even before the U.S. Supreme Court spread the presidential mantle across his shoulders, George W. Bush was "acting presidential."

According to an article printed by *The New York Times* on Dec. 19, "Bush has been warning for the last two weeks that there may be a downturn just ahead, and that his proposal for a \$1.3 trillion tax cut over the next decade is just the prescription for a faltering economy."

The same report recalled that Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan gave a speech two weeks before in which he also "alerted investors that he was growing increasingly nervous about the economy's prospects."

Apparently neither felt the need to offer a word of warning to the working class. Perhaps they didn't think it was necessary, and perhaps they were right. Many workers began getting the message long before December.

Indeed, on the same day that *The New York Times* article appeared the *Los Angeles Times* featured one of its own that began on the note that, "Job cuts and layoffs are piling up like this season's Midwest snow."

"In the last two weeks," the *Los Angeles* paper added, "job cuts and layoffs have become as commonplace as profit warnings, coming this month alone from 'old economy' firms such as General Motors Corp., DaimlerChrysler and Whirlpool Corp., and service sector giants Dun & Bradstreet Corp. and PacifiCare Health Systems Inc. Merger partners Chase Manhattan

Corp. and J.P. Morgan have also announced job cuts or layoffs."

Plenty of other examples could have been added, and several were. On the same day—Dec. 19—in separate articles, *The New York Times* reported announcements by Gillette, which said it would close eight factories and 13 distribution centers that will cost 2,700 workers their jobs; by Cummins Inc., which said it would soon lay off between 500 and 800 workers at its plants in Indiana where it assembles engines for the Dodge Ram and other vehicles, and a total of 1,500 in its worldwide operations; and by the country's biggest health insurance company, Aetna Inc., which announced that it would be eliminating 5,000 jobs from its operations, including those of 2,400 workers who "will be dismissed over the next year."

In its Dec. 19 report, the *Los Angeles Times* said:

"The downsizings come on the heels of thousands of other job eliminations and layoffs in recent weeks, and they extend beyond the smokestack industries that are generally the first to take a hit in a downturn. Cutbacks are hitting health care, services, financial firms—and of course the once-vaunted tech sector."

The *L.A. Times* went on to cite some numbers gathered by Challenger, Gray & Christmas, which was identified as "a Chicago-based outplacement firm that has tracked layoff announcements since 1993." Those numbers showed that, "More than 480,000 layoffs have been announced through November this

year, 53 percent of them since July... The automotive sector was leading all others with 59,621 announced job cuts for the year through November, followed by retail with 56,623."

In addition, the *L.A.* paper quoted Ray Hilgert, who it identified as a professor of management and industrial relations at the Olin School of Business at Washington University in St. Louis.

"I think it's kind of ominous, and we're going to have a pretty severe jolt in 2001, with layoffs and increasing unemployment," he said.

"I'm hoping it won't be too severe or long," Hilgert added. "But...people forget that part of a marketplace economy is adjustments, and we're long overdue for one."

According to the "experts," however, we aren't there—not yet—even though nearly 500,000 jobs have been wiped out over the last six months and new lay-off notices are being announced on a daily basis.

Socialists have steadfastly insisted that capitalism cannot provide anything approximating economic stability or security for the nation's working-class majority. Socialists have also been ridiculed for steadfastly insisting on what has been repeatedly proven and is obviously true. Whether or not workers will heed that message as the next capitalist crisis begins to unfold remain to be seen. However, if they continue to ignore those warnings it is a virtual certainty that they will pay a heavy price during the next crisis that capitalism inflicts on the country.

Strike Ends at Summit, Western Safeway Supplier

By Ken Boettcher

Warehouse workers and delivery truck drivers voted last month to end a six-week strike at Summit Logistics in Tracy, Calif. Summit is the main distributor to 250 Safeway grocery stores in Hawaii, Nevada and Northern California. The 1,600 workers on strike voted 717-353 to accept a new six-year labor contract.

At issue in the strike were safer working conditions for warehouse workers, mandatory breaks and hourly pay for truck drivers. Warehouse workers' "principle complaint," according to one news account, "has been that they have been on a permanent speedup because of the imposition of work quotas they consider to be unrealistic." Delivery truck drivers are paid by the trip rather than by the hour, a scheme that has resulted in a grim safety record. According to a union report on the Summit workers' Web site:

"•Since January 1997, each Summit/Safeway truck has received 4 times as many citations as each Raley's truck, 4.75 times as many citations as each Von's truck, and 7 times as many as each Albertson's truck.

"•Since January 1997, each Summit/Safeway truck has been involved in 5 times as many accidents as each Raley's truck, 3.6 times as many as

each Von's truck and 15 times as many as each Albertson's truck."

The new contract increases warehouse workers' pay by 16.4 percent over six years, raises pay for new warehouse workers 22.7 percent over six years to \$13.50 per hour, and truck drivers' pay by 16 percent over six years. These are all wage increases that will likely fail to keep pace with the rising cost of living.

In addition, the company promised, as one account noted, "to join with workers to review driver pay policies, driver routes and warehouse worker production standards." But nothing much should be expected of that pledge.

Safeway and Summit apparently had problems training strikebreakers fast and well enough to restock stores efficiently. Shelves gradually went bare despite company use of managers' personal cars—at significant risk to public health—to haul perishable foodstuffs to some stores.

A California Highway Patrol (CHP) report issued during the strike—a report that may have played largely in Summit's decision to resume negotiations—attests to the company's ongoing disregard of worker and public safety.

As a *San Francisco Chronicle* article put it, the CHP report on replacement drivers hired during the strike "said

Summit allowed drivers to exceed legal driving limits and failed to conduct required drug and alcohol tests. The report also said that Summit 'allows or requires drivers to falsify their drivers' record of duty status in an attempt to conceal true driving and on-duty hours in order to avoid citation and/or prosecution."

The strike was effective in keeping many Safeway shelves bare despite the hiring of strikebreakers by Safeway and Summit. But Teamsters Local 439 officers said in a statement issued after the vote that "in ratifying the agreement, the members understand that they have not won either of their two principal demands—the end of the activity-based pay system, and negotiation of new production standards in the warehouse."

In the end, the companies' resources were simply greater than those the union could marshal in their current state of trades union organization. As the Teamsters' statement put it, "We were up against two multibillion-dollar corporations that could spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to transport, feed and house over a thousand strikebreakers for two weeks before the strike even began and that could absorb the loss of profits caused by our boycott."

at large

'Hitler's Pope'

By B.B.

HITLER'S POPE: THE SECRET HISTORY OF PIUS XII, by John Cornwell. Penguin Books, publisher, 1999; 464 pages. Please order from bookseller or publisher; do not order from us.

Hitler's Pope is a well-written, well-documented account of relations between Nazi Germany and the Catholic Church before and during World War II. Much of the responsibility for that relationship, and all that it implied, may be attributed to Eugenio Pacelli. In 1933, it was Pacelli, then the Vatican's secretary of state, who forged the infamous concordat between the church and the Nazi regime. Pacelli succeeded Pius XI as pope in 1939, just six months before Hitler ordered his Wehrmacht into Poland.

It is Pacelli's conduct as pope during the war—particularly his seemingly inexplicable silence over the Nazis' systematic extermination of 6 million Jews and millions of others deemed undesirable—that makes him "Hitler's pope."

The author of this book, John Cornwell, is a journalist, research fellow, author of several books on Vatican affairs and a practicing Catholic. He confesses in his Preface that he had approached his subject with the deliberate intent of exonerating Pius XII from numerous insinuations and accusations that had been building up for years regarding Pacelli's conduct as pope during the war. Instead, Mr. Cornwell seems to put all but the final nails into the coffin of accusations.

The Nazi-Vatican concordat of 1933

was designed to preserve papal authority over German Catholics in return for certain concessions to the Nazi government. Pius XI and his secretary of state hoped the concordat would ensure that the Nazis would not meddle in church affairs by conceding what the Nazis wanted most at the time. What they wanted was to consolidate their power over the German state by eliminating all potential for organized political opposition. The Catholic Centrist Party was a major factor in German politics before Hitler came to power in January 1933. Accordingly, the concordat that Pacelli wrote and signed for the Vatican also required obedience to the Nazi state and put an end to the Centrist Party.

Cornwell believes that the Catholic Church could have done much to blunt the reckless abandon with which the Nazis went about wiping out all political opposition in Germany and committing its genocidal crimes if Pacelli had resisted Hitler rather than reach an accommodation with him.

Pacelli's racist and anti-Semitic beliefs, as well as his own authoritarianism and his antipathy towards democracy, "Bolshevism" and socialism (widely shared within papal circles), explain his inclination to waltz with the German Nazis and kindred authoritarian regimes in other countries.

By the time Pacelli became pope he was not only in bed with the Nazis, but also with such other fascist leaders as Spain's Francisco Franco, Portugal's Antonio Salazar and, of course, Italy's Benito



Mussolini. During the entire period of persecutions of the '30s and the mass murders of the '40s, he uttered not a single word in opposition to the Nazis or on behalf of the Jews as their victims, even though he was badgered to speak out by many of his underlings within the Vatican hierarchy.

But, Cornwell's book is as much about the growth of centralized authority within the church during the 19th into the 20th centuries, and about the church's conduct since the end of World War II, as it is about Pacelli. While the papacy postured as the guardians of sanctity, purity and Christian values, it was keenly attuned to the colonialist expansions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific of various capitalist powers and virtually their "camp followers."

In the words of the author: "Papal influence was amplified by modern communications as missionary endeavors expanded. Catholic populations multiplied in industrial regions, and Catholic emigration to the New World increased apace. Leo [XIII] recognized the need to keep abreast of a rapidly changing world and took measures to achieve outreach...from the Roman center to the farthest reaches of the earth." In other words, the souls of the "heathen" in the unindustrialized world, and of the workers in the industrialized sectors, were pacified for the exploitative benefit of capitalist imperialism and the enrichment of the Vatican's coffers.

"For Pacelli," writes the author, "democracy led either to the dubious values of the United States, which in many ways he deplored, despite its useful wealth, or to the specter of socialism, which he deemed a precursor of communism." His Holiness had prudent investments in blue chip stocks and had taken care to ship Vatican bullion to the United States during the war.

Organized religion, and therefore Catholicism, splits the inherent unity of the working class and supplants classconsciousness with the passive acceptance of exploitation. Exclusiveness, disparaging of all other creeds, obedience to ritual, perpetuation of myths, superstition, and notions of racial and ethnic superiority are all part of the control mechanism offered to the propertied class to divert and keep the working class divided. As such, the Catholic Church is a part of a vast apparatus for the perpetuation of class rule. Although *Hitler's Pope* is replete with riveting historical material, its author shrinks from this essential conclusion.

Do You Belong?

Do you know what the SLP stands for? Do you understand the class struggle and why the SLP calls for an end of capitalism and of its system of wage labor? Do you understand why the SLP does not advocate reforms of capitalism, and why it calls upon workers to organize Socialist Industrial Unions?

If you have been reading *The People* steadily for a year or more, if you have read the literature recommended for beginning Socialists, and if you agree with the SLP's call for the political and economic unity of the working class, you may qualify for membership in the SLP. And if you qualify to be a member you probably should be a member.

For information on what membership entails, and how to apply for it, write to: SLP, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Ask for the SLP Membership Packet.

Get Subs!

Mexico's 'Disappeared'

By Martin Espinoza
©Pacific News Service

MEXICO CITY—It's a woeful scene you would expect to see on the streets of Buenos Aires, Guatemala City or Santiago, Chile—forlorn mothers, carrying enlarged photos of their "disappeared" sons and daughters, demanding that the government return their loved ones.

This, however, is Mexico, a country that has long prided itself on being a safe haven for the world's political exiles.

Yet for those who claim to be victims of Mexico's *guerra sucia*—the so-called "dirty war" that has been waged off and on against political dissidents here since the early 1970s—Mexico is anything but a political sanctuary.

While the demonstrations by family members of hundreds of disappeared critics of the Mexican government are nothing new, what is new is that the Mexican government, nearly by accident, has recently put itself in a position where it must at least pretend to listen.

Mexico recently jailed two army generals with alleged ties to drug traffickers, an action that appeared to be a good-faith gesture in the country's ongoing, U.S.-backed war on drugs. Not surprisingly, the timing of the arrests coincided with President Ernesto Zedillo's sixth and last state of the union address.

Although arrested on drug charges, Arturo Acosta Chaparro and Humberto Quiros Hermsillo were notorious for their involvement in a military campaign in the impoverished state of Guerrero during the 1970s. According to human rights advocates, the two led a military operation against armed rebels that quickly turned into a Cold War-style internal purge that spread throughout the country.

To the family members of Mexico's disappeared, the arrest of Acosta and Quiros was

a stroke of luck. For years, the Mexican government has ignored demands for an accounting of hundreds of disappeared *campesinos*, student activists and intellectuals.

Now, with human rights groups finding an opening, the call for the prosecution of Acosta and Quiros for their role in unsolved cases involving torture, disappearances and extra-judicial killings has turned into front-page news.

Radio stations have interviewed torture survivors. Newspapers and magazines are revisiting Mexico's Cold War past, and politicians have called for civil investigations of the charges against the military.

Due to the outcry the military's attorney general, Rafael Macedo de la Concha, declared that his office was accepting citizen complaints against Acosta and Quiros for human rights violations.

De la Concha's announcement, though seen by critics as merely lip service, has angered some military officers. One anonymous army officer told the Mexican daily newspaper *La Jornada* that in society generals are usually the ones who do all the dirty work, and that it is not fair that they be punished for simply following orders.

Another military source told *La Jornada*: "What message are we giving young military college graduates whom we then send to the mountains to fight drug traffickers and armed rebels? Will they worry that in a few years they too may be prosecuted for fulfilling their duties?"

But some of these duties, according to a 1998 Amnesty International (AI) report on disappearances in Mexico, "include systematic torture during interrogation...[including] beatings, electric shocks, prolonged suspension from the wrists, near-asphyxiation in foul water, mock executions and sleep and food deprivation."

AI has documented more than 400 cases of disappearances in the last 20 years. Most of

these cases, the report says, "have remained unresolved, the victims have not been released or 'reappeared,' and those responsible have not been brought to justice."

AI works closely with *Comite Eureka*, a group made up of relatives of the disappeared and some abductees who have been released. Since *Comite* was founded in 1977, it has successfully campaigned for the release of 148 disappeared people.

Comite Eureka and AI are also credited with the decrease in disappearances in Mexico during the early 1990s. However, with the 1994 armed uprising in the southern state of Chiapas, and other rebel groups springing up in other impoverished states, reports of disappearances are once again on the rise.

The arrest of two high-ranking military officers for alleged links to Mexico's drug

(Continued on page 6)

**Read the Paper That's
In a Class by Itself.
The Working Class.
Read the People.**



the People P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218

\$2 for a 6-month subscription; \$5 for a 1-year sub
 \$11 for a 1-year sub by first-class mail

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ APT. _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Make check/money order payable to *The People*. Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Rep-Dem Election Spending Shatters Previous Records

By Ken Boettcher

Just before the presidential election of 1996, *Business Week* ran an article that analyzed record campaign spending in the federal election campaigns of that year. Its headline proclaimed "Campaign Finance '96: It Doesn't Get Much Sleazier Than This."

Oh, but it does. If the 1996 election campaigns were sleazy, this year's campaigns were positively sordid. According to a recent *Los Angeles Times* article, candidates for federal office raised \$2 billion in 1996. This year, however, they raised the mark by \$500 million, to a new record of \$2.5 billion.

Much of that spending may have been in direct violation of existing campaign spending laws. At the very least, it stretched to the limit the abundant loopholes designed into such laws. As former Federal Election Commissioner Trevor Potter put it in 1996, "The system used to be teetering out of control....Now it's fallen off the cliff."

This year, the *Times* reported, the "record-shattering sums—and new ways to get them into campaigns in large, unregulated amounts—have shredded restrictions imposed" by campaign spending laws. (Emphasis added.)

There is no secret about where the money comes from. The source of all these funds obviously is not the working class. Most workers wouldn't give a dollar to any politician even if they had a spare one to give.

A 1998 report on "Individual Congressional Campaign Contributors" by the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP), which bills itself as a "nonpartisan, non-profit research group which tracks money in politics and its effect on elections and public policy," showed the annual family income of 20 percent of individual congressional campaign contributors to be over \$500,000, that of another 26 percent to be between \$250,000 and \$499,999, and that of another 35 percent to be between \$100,000 and \$249,999. Fourteen percent of contributors had family income between \$50,000 and \$99,000. Only 5 percent of contributors had incomes of \$49,999 or less. In comparison, federal figures showed that approximately two-thirds of U.S. families had incomes of less than \$50,000 per year in 1996, and less than a tenth had incomes of \$100,000 or more.

About a third of what congressional candidates spend comes from the "public treasury," thanks to past campaign finance "reforms" and court decisions aimed at "preventing" corruption—a system that plays no small part in guaranteeing the continued domination of American politics by the two major parties. But most funding by far comes from political action committees (PACs) that represent major corporations, industry associations and other capitalist interests, as well as from the "wealthy"—primarily individual capitalists or their representatives.

Unions and other associations contribute as well, but their contributions are dwarfed by those of the capitalist class. According to Larry Makison, executive director of the CRP, the ratio of "business" to "labor" contributions during the 2000 election campaign was "about 15 to 1 overall."

Why the money flows from capitalist interests is no secret either.

First, capitalists and PACs having the deepest pockets are virtually guaranteed a political victor. According to Jamin B. Raskin, associate dean at the Washington College of Law at American University, "The top money-getter wins nine times out of 10." That was four years ago, but nothing in the equation has changed to alter the results.

Moreover, those who win election arrive in Congress beholden to the primary sources of their vast campaign war chests—first to the capitalist class as a whole; but, within the framework of practical local politics, to individual capitalists or industries.

In short, as Congress attends to busi-

ness, business attends to Congress. As Jennifer Schecter, a spokesperson for the CRP put it in 1996, "If you give big contributions to the parties, your legislative proposals will, at the very least, be considered." Contributions, Schecter noted, are "the price of admission" to consideration before Congress.

Contributions frequently buy more than admission, however. As *The People* editorialized after the 1994 off-year elections:

"The one thing even the dullest capitalist will never do on purpose is make a bad investment, and that applies to Capitol Hill as much as it does to Wall Street....You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that he (or she) who pays the bills calls the shots. You don't even have to be a lab assistant to figure out that he (or she) who is paid is expected to deliver the goods." ("It's the Piper Calls the Tune," Dec. 10, 1994)

Examples of political influence-peddling abound. Books have been filled with histories of the practice. Constant calls for campaign finance reform—calls we heard from virtually all the candidates running for any federal office last year—ignore the plain fact that domination of the political process by the rich and powerful simply reflects the class nature of capitalist society.

The political process under capitalism is sleazy. It is rife with corruption. But one thing that should be kept in mind by any workers who because of these facts are thinking of devoting some of their sparse "spare" time to work for campaign finance reform is this: even if the political process was not polluted with capitalist money, the two major parties would still

stand for capitalism. They would still stand for a sleazy system under which the majority, the working class, is robbed of the lion's share of the fruits of their labor by the minority capitalist class.

Capitalist control of the political state is part and parcel of the rule of the capitalist class. If workers are ever to further their interests as a class against the rule of their capitalist exploiters, they must fashion an *organized political challenge* to the parties of capitalism.

Not that the existing political process will honor—or even allow for—a truly democratic expression of their majority will. Workers must engage in this struggle because any effective challenge to capitalist exploitation must deal with the political institutions—the legislative bodies, the courts, the police agencies—that defend and uphold exploitation.

Fashioning a working-class response to U.S. capitalism's two-party farce means agitating as openly and widely as possible for a socialist reconstruction of society. It means advocating a new form of social organization—socialism—in which decisions affecting society will be made, not by political lackeys doing the bidding of monopoly capitalists, but by working people collectively acting in their democratically determined majority interests.

A primary objective of this political activity must be advocating and working for the establishment of mass economic organizations—Socialist Industrial Unions—that will unite all working people behind a program for abolishing capitalism and establishing socialism.

Until workers build such a movement and carry out the necessary socialist transformation of society, government will continue to be the political reflection of the sleazy capitalist class.

NEW YORK

Armory Built to Fight U.S. Workers To Get Makover

By John-Paul Catusco

The Seventh Regiment Armory in Manhattan, which takes up the entire block between 66th and 67th streets with a Park Avenue entrance, is scheduled for a high-end renovation.

The New York Times recently reported that the Seventh Regiment Armory Conservancy was the only organization to return a bid on the New York State project. Conservancy chairman Wade F.B. Thompson said his group plans to turn the historic building into "a world class cultural institution," and include a "high end" restaurant. Thompson estimated that the renovation will cost about \$100 million in private and public funds.

While noting the Seventh Regiment Armory's role in hosting famous art shows during the 20th century, the *Times* said nothing about why the Seventh and many similar armories were built during the second half of the 19th century.

The Seventh Regiment Armory was constructed from 1877 to 1881. The country was not at war with a foreign enemy, but it was a period of rapid industrial expansion and unrestrained exploitation of the working class. There were few unions, and those that existed were mostly of a local character. Nonetheless, there were many strikes, notably the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, which was precipitated by sweeping wage cuts. Most of the country's great railroad lines were shut down during that strike. There were violent clashes between angry workers and state militia called in to disperse workers and crush the strike in Maryland, Pennsylvania and other states.

During this period, capitalists sometimes brought in private armies to break strikes,

(Continued on page 7)

LOS ANGELES

MTA Boosted by Strike Settlement

By Ken Boettcher

October saw the end of a 32-day drivers' strike against the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority. The strike resulted in something of a compromise between the MTA and the United Transportation Union. The UTU represented the 4,400 bus drivers and commuter train operators involved in the strike.

The MTA wanted to expand rail services to outlying suburbs by privatizing and "decentralizing" the transit system, replacing union jobs with nonunion ones. It also wanted more lower wage part-time drivers and operators to reduce the number of full-time jobs with benefits. To help finance its expansion plans, the MTA demanded the elimination of existing guarantees for eight-hour days and 40-hour weeks, reductions in health care benefits, an increase in unpaid downtime, and pay reductions during breakdowns and inspections.

The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor supported the UTU during the strike, although the building trades unions anticipate benefits for themselves from extra jobs and duespayers that may come their way as a result of the MTA's planned expansion.

Members of the supervisors and mechanics unions refused to cross the picket lines of the striking workers even after the heads of their unions urged them to do so at the behest of California Gov. Gray Davis. Davis reportedly expected this treachery in exchange for his signature on legislation that ostensibly guarantees MTA jobs for four years even if the MTA starts shuffling things around in its planned expansion.

Moreover, the largely Hispanic Bus Riders Union supported the strike of largely African-American UTU members. The BRU is actually a "consumers" group that

lobbies against higher fares and for expanded service for L.A. County's poorer working-class neighborhoods. The two "unions" have been at loggerheads in the past, with the BRU apparently holding bus drivers' wages partly responsible for fare increases and reduced services.

In the end, UTU members got a small increase in pensions and 8.3 percent wage increases over the life of the new contract. The wage increases don't recover what drivers lost during the strike, however.

Politicians and union leaders were ambiguous about the outcome of the strike. "Both sides can claim victory," said L.A. Mayor Richard Riordan. Goldy Norton, a spokesperson for the UTU, said that while the union "didn't get everything we wanted; they [the MTA] didn't get everything they wanted." Nonetheless, she added, "It's a fair settlement. It protects our members."

MTA board member Zev Yaroslavsky saw it somewhat differently. "This is a very solid deal for the MTA," he said. "We're better positioned today than we were 33 days ago" when the strike began.

Yaroslavsky's estimate probably came nearer the truth. According to a *Los Angeles Times* report on the strike settlement, "The MTA achieved its objective of expanding the use of lower paid, part-time drivers."

"The package includes a reduction in overtime worked by the most senior drivers, another MTA goal," the *Times* added. "It reduces or eliminates certain work rules that the MTA complained were union featherbedding."

The same report also noted that, "The strike actually made the MTA money—it saved an estimated \$10 million to \$15 million in labor costs during the month that buses and trains were idled."

the People
Founded April 5, 1891

The People (ISSN-0199-350X), continuing the *Weekly People*, is published monthly by the Socialist Labor Party of America, 661 Kings Row, San Jose, CA 95112-2724.

Periodicals postage paid at San Jose, CA 95101-7024. Postmaster: Send all address changes to *The People* P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Communications: Business and editorial matters should be addressed to *The People* P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Phone: (408) 280-7266. Fax: (408) 280-6964.

Production Staff: Donna Bills, Ken Boettcher, Genevieve Gunderson. Robert Bills, acting editor.

Access *The People* online at <http://www.slp.org>. Send e-mail to: thepeople@igc.org.

Rates: (domestic and foreign): Single copy, 50 cents. Subscriptions: \$5 for one year; \$8 for two years; \$10 for three years. By first-class mail, add \$6 per year. Bundle orders: 5-100 copies, \$8 per 100; 101-500 copies, \$7 per 100; 501-1,000 copies, \$6 per 100; 1,001 or more copies, \$5 per 100. Foreign subscriptions: Payment by international money order in U.S. dollars.

the People

Published by the Socialist Labor Party Established in 1899

National Secretary: Robert Bills

VOL. 110 NO. 10

JANUARY 2001

Lifting the Veil

The clumsy and inept manner in which the U.S. Supreme Court handled the Florida recount case last month earned it some sharp criticism from the media and other sources.

The Wall Street Journal described the ruling that handed George W. Bush the Oval Office as “a highly confusing decision born of intense division.”

A columnist for *The New York Times* declared that, “For an institution that must conserve its moral capital, the immediate effect of the split decision threatens to harm the public’s confidence, a confidence that Justice Stephen Breyer has called ‘a public treasure.’”

The *San Jose Mercury News* editorially pronounced it “a messy and ugly ending to a messy, ugly, and not at all satisfying election, in which every dispute was settled by the narrowest of margins.”

“It is no surprise that a partisan would adopt a strategy of confusion and delay,” Margaret A. Burnham wrote for the *Boston Globe*. “But the Supreme Court’s sad embrace of that approach places the undiluted ideological nature of the hyper-activist Rehnquist court on naked display.”

Gwendolyn Mink, professor of politics at the University of California at Santa Cruz, called the court’s decision a throwback to a time “when the court contorted the Constitution to suit its economic and political sympathies.”

A sense that it had botched its responsibility to reach a decision that at least kept up appearances even penetrated into the court itself. In his dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens proclaimed that, “Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year’s presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation’s confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.”

In truth, however, the U.S. Supreme Court has a long and nefarious history of contorting the Constitution to suit economic and political interests—those of the capitalist class in general and its dominant economic elements in particular. The presumed to be widely accepted perception that the high court is an infallibly impartial body whose role as the final authority on issues of public concern is clearly “ordained and established” by the Constitution of the United States has been carefully nurtured by that class. As *The People* observed on an earlier occasion:

“The fact is that the Constitution did not and does not do any such thing. It was in 1803, years after that document had become the law of the land, that the U.S. Supreme Court, in its decision in *Marbury v. Madison*, first arrogated to itself ‘the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.’ It thereby laid the foundation for transforming the court into what one writer astutely termed ‘a continuing constitutional convention.’

“As such, the court during the past ...has interpreted and reinterpreted the Constitution (and other laws) to meet the changing needs and interests of the capitalist class. Charles Evans Hughes, chief justice during the 1930s, expressed it quite correctly on one occasion when he said that the Constitution of the United

States ‘is what the [Supreme Court] judges say it is.’

“He would have been even more correct if he had added the phrase, ‘at any given time.’”

Before the ascendance of the capitalist class over the slave-holding class in the 19th century, the U.S. Supreme Court supported slavery and its legal structures alongside those of the rising capitalists, many of whom got their start as slaveholders. As wage slavery proved to be a cheaper and more efficient way to produce and get rich than owning human labor power in the form of slaves, the interests of the capitalist class superseded those of the slaveholders, and the Supreme Court’s decisions followed suit.

The court upheld segregation when that was in the interests of the capitalist class, and integration when those interests changed. It has circumscribed ballot rights and the Bill of Rights as capitalist interests dictated. It has supported, then not supported, then again supported the death penalty as capitalist-class political interests changed over time.

Throughout this history of service to ruling-class interests, the Supreme Court has been well aware that public acceptance of its decisions is due in considerable measure to the illusion that it is a body composed of apolitical individuals of great intellect and objectivity endowed with a deep and abiding sense of justice. The court is also well aware of the importance of maintaining that reputation. That awareness was clearly reflected in a decision it rendered in the early 1990s in an abortion case. As *The People* observed at the time:

“In that opinion, the court noted that the weight of its authority derived from ‘its legitimacy, a product of substance and perception that shows in the people’s acceptance of the judiciary as fit to determine what the nation’s law means and to declare what it demands.’

“And it added: ‘The court must take care to speak and act in ways that allow people to accept its decisions on the terms the court claims for them, as grounded truly in principle, not as compromises with social and political pressures having, as such, no bearing on the principled choices that the court is obliged to make.’”

In the case of the court’s decision to halt the Florida recount, as in many other cases, the justices disagreed as to the best means of protecting and otherwise serving the capitalist system, and their own ideological leanings clearly played a role in guiding their judgment. But historically, the prevailing social and economic interests of the capitalist class, influenced as they are by changing social and economic conditions, ultimately determine the prevailing direction of the Supreme Court.

The denial of the democratic process implied in the court’s decision to halt the recount and the majority’s decision that it was worth risking being unmasked as pretenders to judicial impartiality are both actions that speak eloquently about the dangerous road down which ruling-class interests are presently taking the country.

—K.B.



A De Leon Editorial

Juggling the Vote

The “sanctity of the ballot” and the “integrity of the system” are myths. Juggling with votes is nothing new in U.S. electoral history.

The Voting Machine as a Crematory

(Daily People, June 3, 1908)

There is no little color of truth in the joke cracked at the expense of physicians that they are the most enthusiastic people in favor of cremation. Cremation insures their safety.

In the 18th century Beaumarchais satirized physicians by declaring their art to be the noblest of all—“its great achievements are illumined by the sun, while its blunders are concealed under the sod.” And before Beaumarchais, Molière’s shafts at the doctors were numerous and witty: “the dead were so discreet.” But those days have gone by. The sod has ceased to conceal medical blunders; the dead have ceased to be discreet. They are exhumed, and then they frequently talk with a loudness, a directness, an eloquence that has resulted in heavy damages to doctors, occasionally even in imprisonment. Cremation insures the discreetness of babbling corpses, and, there-with the impunity of physicians.

What cremation is expected by physicians to do for them, that is expected by the capitalist politicians to be done for political crookedness by the voting machine. The election frauds that the Hearst recount is exhuming out of the ballot boxes, together with the utter lack of discreetness on the part of the exhumed ballots, has given a new impulse to the cry for the voting machine on the part of the long-headed capitalist politicians. And wise they are in their generation. The path being once found by which to cause ballots to speak after they are buried, what Rep-Dem politician could enjoy his life in peace with the specter of the possibly resurrected ballots dogging his heels?

Capitalism is a self-haunted criminal—it needs peace, yet it is the breeder of unavoidable war; it needs wealth, yet its law of supply and demand compels it to

blight production; it needs commerce, the tunneling of rivers and mountains, the cutting of canals, in short, the removal of impediments to traffic, yet the law of its very existence drives it to raise the artificial impediments of tariff walls; it needs science, yet enlightenment summons it to the bar of Reason and adjudges it guilty; etc., etc. So with regard to the voting machine.

The mission of capitalism is to lick society into shape for that cooperative labor without which production cannot be as plentiful as civilization requires. This implies the machine. The machine saves labor and multiplies the product. The transfer of the machine from the field of production to the hustings is natural. It is a progressive thought. The voting machine saves labor. More expeditiously and accurately than with the ballot, the work of voting, recording and announcing the result can be done by the voting machine. But no sooner is the idea hit upon than the evil genius which marks capitalism Ichabod comes to blight the invention. Under capitalist conditions of fraudulency, the voting machine would promote fraud and hold the defrauder scathless. The machine can be “fixed” in advance. It has been known to be “fixed”—registers a certain number of votes for a hostile candidate, and then stops registering any more, while continuing to seem to operate. What golden opportunities for fraud with impunity the voting machine offers may be judged from the shouts that, led by the organ of the banker Jacob Schiff, *The New York Times*, has gone up from the capitalist camp in favor of the machine the moment the Hearst recount began to expose the false counting of the mayoralty campaign of 1905.

So long as capitalism prevails the blessings of human genius become curses. Voting machines are to operate as crematory obliterators of election frauds.

what is socialism?

Socialism is the collective ownership by all the people of the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land and all other instruments of production. Socialism means production to satisfy human needs, not, as under capitalism, for sale and profit. Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and social services by the workers through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization.

Under socialism, all authority will originate from the workers, integrally united in Socialist Industrial Unions. In each workplace, the rank and file will elect whatever committees or representatives are needed to facilitate production. Within each shop or office division of a plant, the rank and file will participate directly in formulating and implementing all plans necessary for efficient operations.

Besides electing all necessary shop officers, the workers will also elect representatives to a local and national council of their industry or service—and to a central congress representing all the industries and services. This all-industrial congress will plan and coordinate production in all areas of the economy. All persons elected to any post in the socialist government, from the lowest to the highest level, will be directly accountable to the rank and file. They will be subject to removal at any time that a majority of those who elected them decide it is necessary.

Such a system would make possible the fullest democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the most primary freedom—economic freedom.

For individuals, socialism means an end to economic insecurity and exploitation. It means workers cease to be commodities bought and sold on the labor market and forced to work as appendages to tools owned by someone else. It means a chance to develop all individual capacities and potentials within a free community of free individuals.

Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a state bureaucracy as in the former Soviet Union or China, with the working class oppressed by a new bureaucratic class. It does not mean a closed party-run system without democratic rights. It does not mean “nationalization,” or “labor-management boards,” or state capitalism of any kind. It means a complete end to all capitalist social relations.

To win the struggle for socialist freedom requires enormous efforts of organizational and educational work. It requires building a political party of socialism to contest the power of the capitalist class on the political field and to educate the majority of workers about the need for socialism. It requires building Socialist Industrial Union organizations to unite all workers in a classconscious industrial force and to prepare them to take, hold and operate the tools of production.

You are needed in the ranks of Socialists fighting for a better world. Find out more about the program and work of the Socialist Labor Party and join us to help make the promise of socialism a reality.

Capitalism's Throwaway Old

By B.G.

The abuses in the nursing home industry and the gross mistreatment often meted out to patients in nursing homes are just two aspects of the many inconsistencies and injustices in our capitalist society. On Nov. 6, New York State Attorney General Eliot L. Spitzer handed down a criminal indictment of five registered nurses at the Townhouse Extended Care Center in Uniondale, N.Y. The five were charged with tampering with documents to cover up the blunders that led to the death of a 97-year-old woman and gave injury to two other female patients. The 97-year-old woman was being fed through a tube attached to an enema bag.

As shocking as this malfeasance is, it is merely the latest of a long list of problems in the nursing home industry across the country. Jennifer Steinhauer, writing in *The New York Times* (Nov. 9), noted: "Perhaps because they serve a population that has limited political power and consists of the frailest and most infirm of residents, nursing homes have long been an area of health care rife with abuse."

There are 676 nursing homes in New York State. Between 1998 and 1999, there was an increase of 30 percent in citations issued by the State Department of Health against these homes for inadequate care of patients. Since 1999, the number of the most serious violations in these nursing homes nearly doubled.

In October of 1999, the State Department of Health cited the Workman's Circle Nursing Home in Co-op City in the

Bronx as one of two such homes in the entire state with the most flagrant treatment of its elderly residents. Fifty residents were being confined in the basement for 12 hours each day during renovation to the center.

In the prior year, both state and federal authorities charged New York City with giving substandard care at Neponsit Health Care Center, which was a part of the public hospitals corporation.

In fact, New York State ranks high in the country as a whole when it comes to widespread violations of both health and safety requirements in its nursing homes, according to a recent congressional investigation. And of the nursing homes on Long Island, N.Y., about 17 percent were found to be giving inadequate or even harmful care.

New York State is not alone in these delinquencies. In a report issued in the summer of 2000, the Health Care Financing Administration stated that 54 percent of nursing homes in the country were giving less than the required minimal two hours a day care by nurses' aids for each patient.

Part of the problem stems from staff shortages in the homes, overburdened caregivers and financial shortcomings. Nurses' aids bear the brunt of the care responsibilities. These positions are often low paying as well as being highly stressful.

In 1997, a federal law decreased sharply Medicare reimbursement for nursing homes. Some nursing home conglomerates that control many private nursing homes responded to this new financial problem

by filing for bankruptcy.

The 1997 law gave broader discretion to nursing homes in how they spent government funds dispensed to them. These homes are now reimbursed by the government, not for each resident's care but for their estimated needs. This gives the nursing homes leeway to use government payments for administrative costs and executive salaries and for profits rather than for additional staff hired for increased care of residents.

New York State's Health Department has been lax in the past in making monthly inspections of nursing homes and has failed to use all federal monies meant for these inspections. The department announced recently that it will be hiring 100 new inspectors for the state's health care facilities, including nursing homes. Better late than never, of course.

These gross inequalities, mismanagement and failures are unfortunately typical of bourgeois capitalist governments as well as of the profit-oriented nursing home industry.

It is also noteworthy that the federal government, which some reformers look to as a "protector" of the people, has brought added misery to countless helpless elders by squeezing its Medicare payments to nursing homes, evidently in an attempt to balance its elder care budget, and allowing lax oversight of the expenditures. The inequalities of our present society only emphasize the necessity of scrapping this inadequate, unjust and outmoded system for a more caring and humane social structure. ■

warm hand of fraternal greetings to you and to all of our comrades in the SLPU. I look forward to cooperating with the SLPU and to what I am confident will be a permanent and mutually beneficial relationship.

"Turning now to your petition:

"The Constitution of the SLP of America provides that the National Executive Committee (NEC) shall 'establish proper relations and communication with socialist parties of other countries.' Accordingly, the SLPU's petition for recognition as a sister organization of the SLP of America has been placed before the NEC for its consideration. I am confident that the NEC will cheerfully grant your petition.

"To assist the NEC in reaching a decision I have several questions to ask and requests to make. If these questions can be answered affirmatively, and if the requests can be fulfilled, they will be of great assistance to the NEC and do much to expedite its consideration of the SLPU's petition. If they cannot be fulfilled now, or sometime soon, the NEC may feel the need to raise several questions of its own before rendering its decision.

"My questions and requests are as follows:

"First. Has the SLPU adopted a Declaration of Principles and, if so, is it available in English translation? If the answer is yes, I would request that the text of that Declaration or Statement of Principles be e-mailed to me so it may be placed before the NEC.

"Second. Has the SLPU adopted By-laws or a Constitution and, if so, is it available in English translation? If the answer is yes, I would request that the text of the SLPU Constitution or its By-laws be e-mailed to me so it (or they) may be placed before the NEC.

"Third. Has the SLPU elected officers and, if so, can you e-mail their names, titles and proper forms of address to me?

"If the information requested is not available, please inform me if it will be possible to provide some or all of it at a future date.

"Incidentally, the Constitution of the SLP of America and its Declaration of Principles will be e-mailed to you sometime within the next 72 hours. If you need any information about the SLP of America, or if there is any assistance you believe this office can provide the SLPU, please let me know what it is. I will do everything possible to fulfill promptly any reasonable request for such information or assistance.

"Again, on behalf of the SLP of America, I am honored and pleased to extend the firm handgrip of comradeship to the SLPU, to you and to all of our Ukrainian comrades."

Another member of the SLPU replied to report that Skubenko was out of town, but that the new party had elected an executive committee and was considering drafts of a Constitution and Declaration of Principles. When Skubenko returned to Kiev and replied on Dec. 10, he reported that the SLPU had recently "distributed our materials, including translations and information about Marxism-De Leonism and about the SLPU and SLP US" in Kherson and Zaporizhzhya in southeastern Ukraine, and that the SLPU had won several "new contacts amongst...young socialists" in those areas. He also reported that the SLPU had adopted a Constitution and Declaration of Principles, that translations were in preparation and that they would be e-mailed to the SLP of America when completed.

The NEC will act on the SLPU's request to be recognized as a sister organization of the SLP of America after it receives and has had an opportunity to review translations of the new party's Constitution and Declaration of Principles.

Ukrainian Marxist Group Forms De Leonist SLP

Last summer, a group of workers centered in Kiev, Ukraine, initiated a correspondence by e-mail with SLP member Carl Miller of Houston, Tex. In one of its earliest letters the group identified itself as the Marxist Group of Ukraine (MGU). The corresponding secretary, Sergiy Skubenko, wrote that the MGU was organized in 1994, and that during its six-year history it had been in contact with many other groups in Ukraine and Russia. Following an intensive period of debate, evaluation and practical work, however, the MGU rejected Stalinism, Trotskyism and reformist Social Democracy. Skubenko also wrote that the MGU had read the SLP's Web site "with great interest."

In a separate letter to Miller last August, Skubenko wrote that "all of our comrades are very enthusiastic of beginning our international contacts. We hear a lot about Daniel De Leon's works but unfortunately before we hadn't possibility to read and research it...."

At about the same time, in replying to another correspondent who is not a member of the SLP, Skubenko wrote:

"...We know very well the group 'Workers Democracy' from Moscow you wrote about. The point is we have very serious difference with them as well as with all Trotskyists. We believe that both Trotskyism and Stalinism are dangerous and wrong currencies for worker class. So, tactic of Trotskyists in CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries is, from our opinion, completely social-democratic. We believe that worker class needs the theory for real defense of its own interests and needs real workers' International. It is the reason our contacts with SLP and our interest for works of Daniel De Leon...."

In October, Skubenko wrote Miller a



letter in which he reported that the MGU had distributed leaflets at a demonstration in Kiev. "It was the first time when Ukrainian workers received information about Marxism-De Leonism and about heritage of De Leon," he said. He also thanked Miller for sending SLP "materials, which...were used for preparation of our leaflet [and] were indispensable for it."

Skubenko then added:

"Also I'm happy to tell you about very important changes in our group. We had a meeting and after discussion we unanimously made the decision to indicate our adherence to Marxism-De Leonism and commonality of our ideas with De Leon and your organization ideas as well. In connection with our wish to identify ourselves as a party we changed the name of our organization to Socialist Labor Party of Ukraine (SLPU)!"

On Nov. 4, Skubenko officially reported this decision in the following letter to the SLP's National Headquarters:

"We are happy to tell you officially that our organization, Marxist Group of Ukraine...[at] our meeting 15 October 2000, made [the] following decisions:

"1. To adopt Marxism-De Leonism as ideology of our organization.

"2. With the aim of indicating of our Marxism-De Leonism views and our political development, to change the name of our organization on Socialist Labor Party of Ukraine (SLPU).

"3. To apply to our comrades from U.S. SLP to consider us as part of world Marxist-De Leonist movement."

SLP National Secretary Robert Bills responded to Skubenko's e-mail letter on Nov. 12. Following some preliminary remarks, Bills wrote in part as follows:

"Now, then, please accept my hearty congratulations on the MGU's decision to establish a Marxist-De Leonist political party in the Ukraine. That is wonderful news. On behalf of the SLP of America, I take great pleasure in extending the

on the web

The SLP's Web site (www.slp.org) continues to attract attention from workers all over the world. A striking indication of this was the notification recently received of a new Marxist-De Leonist Socialist Labor Party being organized in Ukraine. (See full report in another column.)

New Additions

Eight new additions were made to the "Marxist-De Leonist Literature Online" section of the site in December, and several more are scheduled for this month.

The December additions include Dr. Harriet E. Lathrop's translation of Karl Marx's *Wage-Labor and Capital*, complete with Frederick Engels' 1891 Introduction, and eight of Daniel De Leon's editorials on reform and "social democracy."

The newly added De Leon editorials include "Trimming the Poodle," "Milkshops, or Men," "Immediate Demands," "Three S.P. Figures," "Socialism' in Milwaukee," "Demands—Immediate' and 'Constant,'" "Stealings of Thunderings" and "Debs on the Program of Socialism."

All of these editorials were checked against the *Daily People* issues in which they were published, and apart from obvious errors are reproduced exactly as they appeared when originally printed.

Coming Soon

The January additions (barring unpredictable technical or other difficulties) will include Daniel De Leon's *Two Pages From Roman History*, Gustav Bang's *Crises in*

European History and some additional selections from the vast reservoir of De Leon's editorial writings. The finishing touches are also being put on a collection of basic questions and answers about socialism.

Gopher Gone

Regrettably our Internet Service Provider (ISP) recently discontinued our gopher site.

Accordingly, the "Recent Articles" and "Older Articles" links for *The People* formerly found on our Web site can no longer be accessed. However, HTML versions of all articles formerly posted will soon be available. In the meantime, Portable Document Format (PDF) versions of all issues from December 1999 through December 2000 continue to be available at the party's site.

John M. Lambase, Conrad Gutermuth, Laurance Phillips, Edmund Light, Janelle Barabush, Bill Ransbottom, Frank Ufert, Dave Bartle, Mark R. McGrath, Joseph Viditch, Carl O. Truman, Hiram Mock, Lawrence W. Golden, Maurice Greb, Robert Burns, Robert A. Nash, David E. Casey, A. Arico, Rev. Pat Harkins, J.P. Oppenheim, Richard F. Mack, James McCaffrey, Dagfinn Sjoen, Charles Bateman, Mark Korat, Joseph Wood, Dora Ruggiero. Craig L. Kysar \$8.83; David Melamed "In memory of Nathan Karp" \$8; \$7 each Phillip White, K.M. Davis; Greg Stark \$6; \$5 each Henry Coretz, Edmund J. Light, Diane Poole, Wayne Young, Frank & Annie Kosla "In memory of Peter Kapitz," John Taube, Don Patrick, Kenneth Frisbie, Michael Arcus, John Sillito, Marotte, Gerard Gunderson; \$4 each H.A. Rodich, Gary Wayne McIntire; Chester Hensley \$3.50; \$3 each Ralph Rieder; Anonymous; M. Grussing \$1.32.

Carl Danelius; George E. Gray \$26. \$25 each Monroe Prussack, Gina Cozzini "In memory of Nathan Karp," Sophia Carevich, Lois Kubit "In memory of Peter Kapitz," Genevieve Gunderson "In memory of Joseph Gingras," Genevieve Gunderson "In memory of Peter Kapitz," Robb Angelo, James J. Schiller, David R. Weaver, Chuck Fair, Barbara Graymont, Joseph Massimino, Louise Radley, Paul Bakulski, Blake Bearden, Walter J. Leibfritz, James A. Barr, Richard Deshaies, Steve Kellerman, William B. Scanlan, Paul L. Wolf, Paul Zuppan, Al Goldberg, Wendel Wettland, Tom Throop, Frank L. Minzenberger, Matt Casick, D.B. Stickler, Don Binkowski, Lloyd A. Wright, James Holt, Harry C. Segerest, Leon A. Nasteff, Anonymous, Genevieve Gunderson "In memory of John Carlson," Michael J. Rooney, Michael R. Mahoney, F.P. Cruikshank, Donna Meyer, Marlene Mancini Frost "In memory of Katherine Kapitz," Gina Cozzini "In memory of Georgia Cozzini," Donald L.H. Scott, Harold Madsen.

Marshall G. Soura \$24; L. Hann \$22; J.T. Plant \$21.33; \$20 each John S. Gale, Joseph & Fred Bellon, Frank & Betsy Kennedy, Steve Kovach, Karen E. Palm-Bader, Brian Blanchard, Robert Varone, Michael Walsh, Orville Rutschman, Sarah Haggard, Frank W. Bell, R.V. Pasalich, Richard Wilson, Bill Conklin, Mrs. Annie Malivuk "In memory of Peter Kapitz," Jill Campbell, Earl L. Shimp, Edward C. Kowalski, Henry Schnautz, Charles L. Gerhard, Mona Fraser.

Stanley W. Tuttle \$16.70; D. Mohle \$15.53; \$15 each H.R. Mock, John H. Buchtinec, Juliette Jackson; Arlene Haber \$14; David P. Mohle \$10.72.

\$10 each Curtis J. Raisig "In memory of Nathan Karp," W.H. McLeod, L. Lela, Richard H. Cassin, Jill Campbell "In memory of Joseph Gingras," Kenneth E. McCartney, Frank Rudolph, Larry R. Lewis, Harry E. Gibson, Joseph Bellon, Richard Catusco, Keith Ocamb,

...Mexico

(Continued from page 2)

trade was hardly a surprise. In 1997, drug czar Gen. Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo was arrested for alleged ties with Amado Carrillo-Fuentes, Mexico's most powerful drug trafficker in recent history. Since then several high-ranking military officials also have been found to have links to the drug trade.

But the Mexican government is apparently willing to confess only its military officialdom's drug-related crimes, but not others.

Ibarra Piedra of Comitè Eureka told reporters in Chihuahua, "Now they want to punish [Acosta and Quiros] for drug trafficking, when long ago they should have been tried and punished for those disappearances for which they are responsible."

activities

Activities notices must be received by the Monday preceding the third Wednesday of the month.

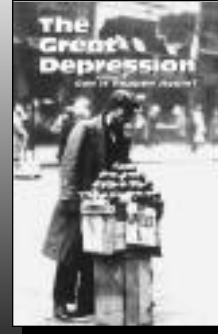
TEXAS
Houston

Discussion Meetings—The SLP group in Houston holds discussion meetings the last Saturday of the month at the Houston Public Library, Franklin Branch, 6440 W. Bellfort, southwest Houston. The time of the meetings varies. Those interested please call 713-721-9296, e-mail reds1964@netzero.net or visit the group's Web site at http://home.beseen.com/politics/houston.slp.

OREGON

Portland

Discussion Meetings—Section Portland holds discussion meetings every second Saturday of the month. Meetings are usually held at the Central Library, but the exact time varies. For more information please call Sid at 503-226-2881 or visit our Web site at http://slp.pdx.home.mindspring.com. The general public is invited.



- What Caused the Depression?
- The Depression's Inflationary Legacy
- Capitalism's Next Crash: The Socialist Legacy

43 pp. - \$2.25 (Postpaid)

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218

Thank You

The following is a preliminary list of contributors to *The People's annual Thanksgiving Fund drive*. It attests to the dedication and concern of all those who came forward to assist *The People* and the SLP in overcoming a serious financial problem. We are extremely gratified by the generosity of all those who responded to our appeal in time to report in this issue. Additional contributions that could not be included here have been received and will be reported in our next issue.

(Total as of Dec. 13: \$23,890.18)

Anonymous \$5,000; \$1,000 each Anonymous, Marie & Ray Simmons; Joan Davis \$800; Glenn Schelin \$600; \$500 each Nicholas Poluhoff, Irene Schelin, Lois Reynolds, Louis Lipcon, E.A. Irving, Bernard & Rachel Bortnick; Jim & Mary Buha \$400; Robert P. Burns \$480; Michael Preston \$350; \$300 each Chris Dobreff, John L. Walbridge, Anonymous, Angeline Kleist.

Section San Francisco Bay Area "In memory of Nathan Karp" (\$830): Genevieve Gunderson \$500; \$100 each Louis Lipcon, Dale Birum & Joseph Gingras; \$25 each Jennie Seekford, Robert & Donna Bills; \$20 each Frank & Mary Prince, Ken Boettcher, William Kelley; Anne Karp \$15; Diane Secor \$5.

\$250 each Robert Burns "In memory of Peter & Katherine Kapitz," Marty Radov; \$200 each Walter Vojnov, Harvey K. Fuller; Section San Francisco Bay Area "In memory of Joseph Gingras," James McHugh, Jack Radov, Anonymous; Fred Birum, David Birum & Penny Lee Maas "In memory of Joseph Gingras" \$150; Section Cook County, Ill., \$449.46; Joseph B. McCabe \$175; Carl C. Miller Jr. \$145; Section Philadelphia, Pa., \$113; Karl Heck "In memory of Nathan Karp" \$104; Anonymous \$101.

\$100 each Nathan Goldberg, Louis Fisher, F. Cruikshank, Harry Banks "In memory of Nathan Karp," Harry & Faye Banks "In honor of Nathan Karp," Section Cleveland "In memory of Peter Kapitz," Ben Kraft, Frederick Vogelgesang, Richard A. Aiken "In memory of John W. Aiken," Dale Birum, Richard A. Weiner, Louis Fisher, Norman K. Smith, Jim Tennyson, Gerald Lucas, Dr. L. Miles Raisig, Jack Radov, Manuel Vurnakes, Donald Rogers, John-Paul Catusco \$85; \$80 each Section Cleveland, Margaret & Frank Roemhild; Elliot Podwill \$65.

\$50 each Anonymous, Section Cleveland "In memory of Margaret Rachek," Robert Hofem, John & Mary Bilas "In memory of Peter Kapitz," Henry Korman, Fred Didomenico, Ada & Al Bikar, Nick York "In memory of Nathan Karp," Anthony Econom, Robert Ormsby, Richard & Mildred Woodward, Diane M. Giachino, Harriet Dolphin, William E. Tucker, Daniel Goodsaid, Edward T. Jasiewicz, Dimitre Eloff, Tony Marsella, Bill Romberg, Rudolph P. Sulenta, Ronald Somerlott, Harley G. Selkregg, Jennie Seekford, Ken Boettcher "In memory of Nathan Karp."

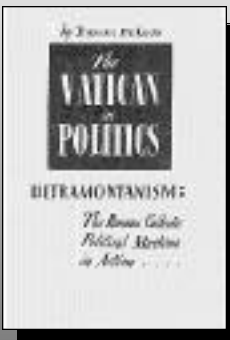
Joseph J. Frank \$45; Anonymous \$42; \$40 each Manuel Luevano, Lawrence Hackett, Edith Mautner, Jim Lehner, Joseph T. Longo, John Hagerty, Patrick E. McSweeney; Jim Plant \$36.66; \$35 each R. Brunson, William H. Nace; Robert Jensen \$33; Anonymous per N. Goldberg \$30.13; \$30 each Roger Caron, Roger Stevens, Robert Rink, Milton A. Poulos,



53 pp.—\$1.50 postpaid

Was the former Soviet Union socialist? State capitalist? Or was it a new form of class society? This instructive pamphlet discusses each of these theories and their implications. Presents the SLP's case for viewing the former U.S.S.R. as a new form of class-divided society.

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218



80 pp. - \$1.50 (postpaid)

A collection of editorials by Daniel De Leon examining the role of the Roman Catholic Church as a political institution

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218

Steps You Can Take...

You can help provide for the long-term financial security of *The People* by including a properly worded provision in your Will or by making some other financial arrangement through your bank. Write to the Socialist Labor Party, publisher of *The People*, for a free copy of the booklet, *Steps You Can Take*. Use this coupon.

Socialist Labor Party • P.O. Box 218 • Mountain View, CA 94042-0218

Please send a free copy of *Steps You Can Take* to:

YOUR NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ APT. _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____



Please send me free information on socialism.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ APT. _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Socialist Labor Party, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218 01/01

PRESS

SECURITY FUND



Yes! I want to help support *The People*. Enclosed please find my contribution of \$ _____.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ APT. _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

[] Please send a receipt. (Contributions are not tax deductible.) Please do not mail cash. Make your check/money order payable to *The People*. Send to: *The People*, P.O. Box 218 Mountain View, CA 94042-0218

...Armory

(Continued from page 3)

as Andrew Carnegie did when he hired the Pinkertons during the Homestead Steel strike in 1892. Other times state militia was used, as at Albany and Buffalo, N.Y., in the 1890s, or federal troops were called in, as at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and during the great Pullman Strike in 1894.

Many fortress-like armories, some of which still stand in our eastern cities, were built during this period. The Seventh Regiment Armory in Manhattan is one of them.

The Seventh Regiment Armory is still home to one of capitalism's other continuing legacies. For the past 15 years there has been a women's homeless shelter on the third and fifth floors. The shelter is most likely to be phased out of the renovation as bidders did not have to include it in their submitted proposals to the state. Presumably, it will be relocated to another neighborhood.

Whatever uses the Seventh Regiment Armory building in

Manhattan is put to in the future, it stands as a monument to the ruthless brutality a ruling class is capable of when it feels its interests threatened.

It is a monument to the fact that the political state, far from being a neutral representative of the people as a whole, is an instrument of class oppression. The usefulness of the armory in maintaining capitalist domination may have gone the way of horse-mounted cavalry and wooden ships, but the political state remains to protect ruling-class interests whenever it is called upon to do so.

So the next time you happen to find yourself on Park Avenue somewhere in the upper 60s staring in awe at the million-dollar brownstones, luxury apartments and the high-priced salons and you come upon a building with rifle slits pointing out in all directions, just stop for a moment and remember just how far a ruling class will go to hold on to the wealth it did not produce.

Question Period

Was the Socialist Labor Party founded in 1877 or in 1890?

The Socialist Labor Party of America was founded on its present Marxist basis in 1890. For 13 years before 1890, or since 1877, there had been a Socialistic Labor Party, an organization dominated by German-speaking Socialists who had fled from Germany when socialist activity was outlawed there by Bismarck's antisocialist decrees. Most of the Socialistic Labor Party's agitation was conducted in the German language and was aimed at German immigrants. Then, in 1890, drastic changes were made in the party's principles and policies. The "ic" was dropped from the name and the entire organization revamped as

an American socialist party that conducted its agitation mainly in the English language and that aimed at winning the hearts and minds of American workers of all races and national origins. At the same time, the un-Marxist and nativistic tendencies of the *Alte Genossen* (old German comrades) were repudiated. The principles and implications of the class struggle as explained by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the cofounders of scientific socialism, were firmly embodied in the SLP Constitution as the unflinching guide in all tactical and policy decisions.

Was Frederick Engels' criticism of the original Socialistic Labor Party valid?

Yes. Engels pointed out that the Socialistic Labor Party was German in language and thought, and without the means for communicating with American workers. In a special preface to the American edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, Engels said: "This party [the SLP] is called upon to play a very important part in the movement [in America]. But in order to do so they will have to doff every remnant of their foreign garb. They will have to become out and out American. They cannot expect the Americans to come to them; they, the minority and the immigrants, must go to the Americans, who are the vast majority and the natives. And to do that, they must above all things learn English."

We repeat that this was written in 1886. Four years later the steps were taken to make the SLP a movement with roots in the political and economic life of America.

255075100 years ago

Post-War World

(Weekly People Jan. 6, 1951)

The "United Labor Policy Committee"—a group of the country's leading labor fakers (excluding [CIO leader] John L. Lewis and his lieutenants)—called at the White House the other day and pledged their respective unions "unreservedly to the service of our nation; and to the support of the president [Truman] in the present [Korean War] crisis." Boiled down, the committee's long weasel-worded statement amounted to a pledge to use the unions—as they were used in World War II—to "stabilize" wages and keep the workers in line. As a reminder of how the unions performed the function of riding herd on the workers in World War II we quote the following from the June 12, 1942, issue of *The United States News*: "In the last World War [World War I], employees who went on strike against vital war plants faced a 'work or fight' ultimatum from President Wilson. To enforce industrial peace for this war, the War Labor Board has worked out a substitute for work or fight. The substitute amounts to 'work or be expelled from your union.' *The unions are to be used as disciplinary agencies.*"

It soon became evident, however, that using the unions as disciplinary agencies was deeply resented by the duespayers—especially by the duespayers who were being "disciplined." Frequently there was talk of turning the responsible labor leaders out of office, and even of pulling out of the union en masse. Obviously such action would have weakened the union's ability to fulfill its function of holding the workers in line, so the War Labor Board devised a plan for strengthening the hand of the labor leader. This plan developed into the well-known "maintenance of membership" program under which rebellious workers were held "captive" by the union and a general exodus prevented. As Charles E. Wyzanski Jr., a member of the board, put it, in consideration of their cooperating in "stabilizing" wages the union leadership was entitled to "some guarantee of membership."

One of the War Labor Board's first maintenance-of-membership edicts was in the case of the Walker-Turner employees at Plainfield, N.J. In November 1941, 95 percent of the company's 250 employees were members of the CIO electrical workers' union. But after a long period of stalling on wage demands, during which the union leaders refrained from calling a strike and otherwise cooperated in "stabilizing" wages, the union lost half its members. Finally, on April 3, 1942, the WLB issued a maintenance-of-membership order retroactive for six months, back to the time when the dispute started! Thus the board forced all those workers who had dropped out as a protest against the treachery of their union officials to become members again.

The board explained frankly that the union had "already begun to disintegrate" because its officers had enforced the no-

strike pledge. "To require the union [officials] now to recanvass the membership in the light of these circumstances would merely accelerate the forces of disintegration already in operation. The result might well be no more than an expression of resentment against the wage provisions of the contract which the negotiating agents of the union have been obliged to accept..." Here it might be asked: What more weighty reason could there be to repudiate a union than its failure, through treachery to get its members the market price for their labor?

The experience of World War II is worth recalling, because everything points to a repetition of the same treacherous policy in the mobilization period ahead. [AFL president] Bill Green has already volunteered to impose a "no strike" edict on the AFL as soon as the president asks for it.

Letters to the People

Kautskyism

The December issue is very helpful in understanding the struggles of Marx and De Leon to remain true to basic issues of theory and practice—that only in their combination is there hope of finally getting beyond opportunism, etc. Today, many of the "left" and neoliberal groups again are taking people down a dead end. But basic Marxism shines through the fog to open our minds to the possibility of a new beginning and of emerging from our long history of ruthless exploitation of everything alive and dead. Thank you for the paper.

Frank Roemhild
Bayfield, Wis.

Nature Striking Back

Capitalism, in its relentless pursuit of greater profits, is destroying bit by bit humanity's natural habitat and taking us with it to the brink of disaster. Large areas of England have been flooded due to climatic changes and heavy rainfall. A tornado tore through the little town of Sussex, causing extensive damage to property. Others

were sighted off the Kent coast, but luckily did not come inland. Australia has seen 83,000 square miles of its land submerged in flood waters. The story repeats itself in almost every other country throughout the world, and all are related to the same cause—capitalism. Heaven knows what lies ahead for humanity as nature turns the tables on its capitalist abusers.

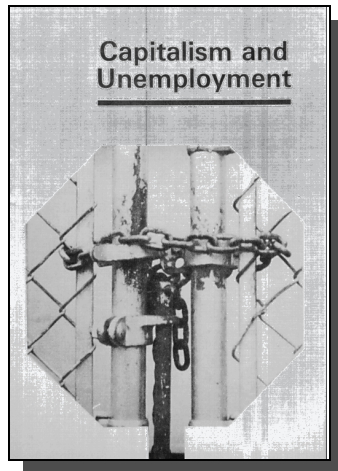
T. McGregor
Glasgow, Scotland

"Charity"

I loved the article on "Self-Seeking Charity" [December issue] because I used to give a lot of money to charities, even though I am disabled. I'm tired of reactionaries telling me to keep Christ in Christmas. We don't need "charity," which asks for more than what it ever gives back. It seems the charities can never get enough.

Gary McIntyre
St. Paris, Ohio

Letters meant for publication should be brief and on subjects likely to be of interest to our readers. Anonymous letters are not printed, but names are withheld upon request.



Traces the socialist approach to a problem capitalism has never been able to solve.

61 pp.
\$1.50 Postpaid

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218

directory

USA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

NATIONAL OFFICE, SLP, P.O. Box 218, Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218; (408) 280-7266; fax (408) 280-6964; e-mail: socialists@slp.org; Web site: www.slp.org

ALBANY, N.Y.

SLP, P.O. Box 105, Sloansville, NY 12160-0105.

CHICAGO

SLP, P.O. Box 642, Skokie, IL 60076-0642.

CLEVELAND

Robert Burns, 9626 York Rd., N. Royalton, OH 44133. Call (440) 237-7933. E-mail: j.oneil@worldnet.att.net

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX.

Call (512) 991-0287.

DALLAS

Call Bernie at (972) 458-2253.

DENVER

Call (303) 426-5108.

DULUTH

For information, call Rudy Gustafson at (218) 728-3110.

EASTERN MASS.

Call (781) 444-3576.

HOUSTON

Call (713) 721-9296. Web site: http://home.beseen.com/politics/houstonslp E-mail: reds1964@netzero.net

HUNTER COLLEGE, NYC

HunterSLP@aol.com

LARAMIE, WYO.

E-mail: portage@uwyo.edu

LONG ISLAND, N.Y.

LongIslandSLP@aol.com

MIAMI

Call (305) 892-2424. E-mail: redflag@bellsouth.net

MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

SLP, 506 Hunting Hill Ave., Middletown, CT 06457. Call (860) 347-4003.

MILWAUKEE

SLP, 1563 W. Rogers St., Milwaukee, WI 53204-3721. Call (414) 672-2185. E-mail: milwaukee@slp.org

NEW LONDON, CONN.

SLP, 3 Jodry St., Quaker Hill, CT 06375. Call (203) 447-9897.

NEW YORK CITY

Call (516) 829-5325. E-mail: nycslp@aol.com

OCEANSIDE, CALIF.

Call (760) 721-8124.

PALMDALE, CALIF.

E-mail: med@ptw.com

PHILADELPHIA

SLP, P.O. Box 28732, Philadelphia, PA 19151. Call (215) 234-4724. E-mail: slpphilly@aol.com

PITTSBURGH

Call (412) 751-2613.

PONTIAC, MICH.

Call (810) 731-6756.

PORTLAND, ORE.

SLP, P.O. Box 4951, Portland, OR 97208. Call (503) 226-2881. Web site: http://slp.pdx.home.mindspring.com E-mail: slp.pdx@mindspring.com

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

SLP, P.O. Box 2973, Sacramento, CA 95812.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

SLP, P.O. Box 70034, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-0034. (408) 280-7458. E-mail: slpsfba@netscape.net

SEABROOK, N.H.

Call (603) 770-4695.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

Call (727) 321-0999.

SOUTH BEND, IND.

Jerry Maher, 211 S. Michigan St., #505, South Bend, IN 46601; (219) 234-2946.

S.W. VIRGINIA

Thad Harris, P.O. Box 1068, St. Paul, VA 24283-0997. Call (540) 328-5531. Fax (540) 328-4059.

WILKES COUNTY, N.C.

E-mail: DarrellHKnight@aol.com

AUSTRALIA

Brian Blanchard, 58 Forest Rd., Trevallyn, Launceston, Tasmania 7250, Australia. Call or fax 0363-341952.

CANADA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

SLP, 1550 Laperriere Ave., Ottawa, Ont., K1Z 7T2. Call Doug Irving at (613) 728-5877 (hdqtrs.); (613) 226-6682 (home); or (613) 725-1949 (fax).

VANCOUVER

SLP, Suite 141, 6200 McKay Ave., Box 824, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4M9.

THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY OF SOCIALISM

Revolutionary Program

The Socialist Labor Party has a twofold program for building a socialist society. What follows is a brief summary of its main points.

POLITICAL ACTION

To establish socialism, political unity under the banner of a mass political party of labor is needed. The role of the party is to educate workers to the need to abolish capitalism, to agitate for the formation of class-conscious industrial unions, and to express the revolutionary mandate of the working class at the ballot box. The party must also aim to capture and dismantle the political state—the present territorial form of government—and thus pave the way for a new form of government, a participatory democracy based on industry.

ECONOMIC ACTION

To establish socialism, workers must unite as a class, by organizing new unions. These democratic, rank-and-file-controlled unions, built along the lines of industry, would not only fight day-to-day battles for better wages and conditions. Based on the principle that the working class is involved in a class struggle with the employing, capitalist class, a struggle that cannot be ended under the capitalist system, a Socialist Industrial Union movement would be motivated by a higher goal: replacing capitalist ownership of the industries and services with social ownership and democratic workers' control.

Thus, while fighting day-to-day battles, these unions would move toward that goal, mobilizing workers' real strength as the sole productive class in society by building the greatest possible unity and solidarity. When the majority of society is in favor of socialism, the Socialist Industrial Union would back up the decision made at the ballot box by taking, holding and operating the industries and services of the land in the social interest.

Socialist Industrial Unions would then become the governing bodies of socialist society. We would have a truly democratic government in which society's useful producers would be in control of their own economic security and well-being.

NOT A BLUEPRINT

The chart below is not a blueprint. Rather, it is intended to illustrate graphically the principle upon which Socialist Industrial Unionism and the future socialist industrial democracy rest, using the auto industry as an example. A similar chart could be used for any socially necessary industry or service. A chart at the upper right depicts the flow of representation in socialist society.

The Socialist Industrial Union unites workers for the establishment of socialism. And it provides the governmental framework through which to organize and administer social production for the benefit of all the people. Council members at every level of government will be elected from industrial constituencies which coincide with the subdivisions of the integral industrial union of all the useful producers. This industrial self-government of the producers provides a viable means for society to operate the economy collectively and democratically, without social classes or any form of state oppression.

Revolutionary Act

The revolutionary ballot will establish the right of the people to establish socialist society.

The Socialist Industrial Union will create the power to back up that right.

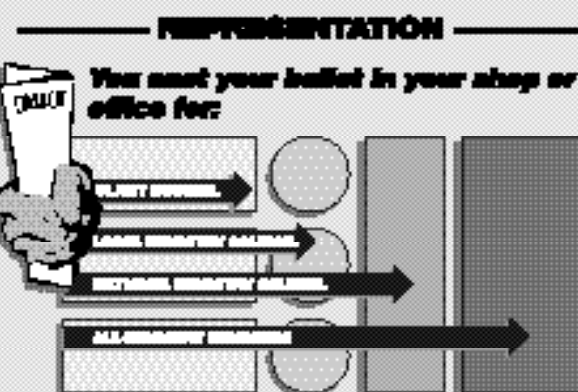
"Industrial unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and the goal once reached, the industrial union is the Socialist Republic in operation."
— Daniel De Leon



New Society

After the revolution, the administration of all production and distribution will be the function of the democratically elected Socialist Industrial Union government.

As industry is organized for production, so will be the administration of the new socialist society:



Socialist Industrial Unionism is the only certain safeguard against bureaucratic usurpation. In socialist society final authority will rest with the rank and file of useful producers.

The useful producers will elect administrators and representatives to all levels of government, and they will have the easy and immediately exercisable power to recall and remove any administrator or representative who, in their judgment, fails to serve their interests in office.

The Socialist Industrial Union, in firm possession of the industries and services of the land, will insure that all power remains in the only safe place for power to be—with the rank and file of society's useful producers.

Today, in the procapitalist unions, union bureaucrats are almighty, and union members are virtual subjects. But in the Socialist Industrial Union each individual worker will have an effective voice as well as a vote in everything from the operation of the workplace to the administration of society.

This will be a social organization in which the people who do the work will have complete democratic control of their tools and products—thus production will at long last be for use and the benefit of all.

THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

