



# the People

Published by the Socialist Labor Party  Established in 1891

VOL. 116 NO. 1

MAY-JUNE 2006

\$1.00

## **ANOTHER 'EVIL AXIS'**

### **The Religious Right And U.S. Policies**

By Bruce Cozzini

The Bush administration and the Republican Party as a whole have used their alliance with Christian fundamentalism as a bulwark of political power. An overt religiosity has been used to justify an imperial presidency that has sent us into an ill-justified war in Iraq and threatened civil liberties at home. Now even a prominent conservative Republican has voiced concerns that his party has become "the first religious party in U.S. history." Kevin Phillips, the architect of the Republican Party's southern strategy in 1968, has written a book entitled "American Theocracy: The Perils and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century." An article by him written for *The Washington Post* (April 9) explores some of the points made in the book.

The conditions that Phillips cites for an American theocracy are: "an elected leader who believes himself to speak for the Almighty, a ruling political party that represents true believers, the certainty of many Republican voters that government should be guided by religion, and a White House...that adopts agendas seemingly animated by biblical worldviews."

He claims domestic and foreign policies are "driven by religion's new prowess and its role in projecting military power in the Mideast." U.S. military posture, he notes, is organized around "protection of oil fields, pipelines and sea lanes." But in addition to concerns about oil and terrorism, "the White House is courting end-times theologians and electorates for whom the Holy Lands are a battleground of Christian destiny."

He notes that the Bush family's interests over multiple generations have "been linked to a politics that conjoined finance, national security and oil." Now they have added "close ties to fundamentalist power brokers of many persuasions." The Bush Republicans have become "the vehicle of all three interests—a fusion of petroleum-defined national security, a crusading, simplistic Christianity, and a reckless credit-feeding financial complex."

These developments, he comments, have muted democratic voices and "become a threat to America's future. No leading world power has become a captive of the sort of biblical inerrancy that dismisses modern knowledge and science." He likens America today to failed empires of the past that also thought that God was on their side.

Mr. Phillips' conclusions that the current Republican policies are pushing the United States to a state of national decline may be correct, but his warning is to save a capitalist system that is in a state of perpetual cri-

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## **Central Issue Ignored In Immigration Debate**

**H**undreds of thousands of people took to the streets in March and April to demonstrate their opposition to various proposals to reform the country's immigration laws and to tighten control over the border with Mexico. The proposal that did most to spark the demonstrations of at least 500,000 people in Los Angeles in March and Dallas in April, and dozens of a lesser size in cities across the country, would have branded undocumented immigrant workers as criminals.

That measure, which Republicans pushed through the House of Representatives last December, included a number of features that aroused widespread opposition. It "would build hundreds of miles of fence along the U.S.-Mexico border, mandate that businesses verify the legality of all employees through a national database, fortify border patrols, and declare illegal immigrants and those who help them to be felons." (*The Washington Post*, April 12)

A similar Republican measure failed to win approval in the Senate before Congress recessed on April 10 for its two-week "Spring District Work Period." Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona offered a somewhat less draconian compromise, in cooperation with Democratic Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, and the Bush administration has a proposal of its own.

Regardless of the particulars of the measures



Demonstrators in Los Angeles. Marcus/L.A. Indymedia

proposed in Congress or by the administration, however, it would be wrong for workers to conclude that they have any stake in the debate. Even if capitalists were to replace all of their employees with immigrant workers, for example, it would not follow that the immigrant would be the cause of declining wages, living standards and unemployment. Unemployment, and whatever pressure immigrant labor places on wages, is a direct result of the competitive capitalist system itself. It is a byproduct of the system of wage labor, which forces workers to compete for their livelihoods on the basis of the conditions laid down by the capitalist system.

Though capitalists, their politicians, academ-

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## **Who Are the Lobbyists In Washington, D.C.?**

By B.G.

The ongoing lobbying scandal of Jack Abramoff recalls the dubious rectitude of some other noteworthy personages who have entered the lobbying business.

A few years ago, when Republican Sen. Bob Packwood of Oregon was much in the news because of his numerous sexual affairs, which he had studiously recorded in his diary, he had become somewhat of an embarrassment to the members of the U.S. Senate, particularly its Republican members. The affairs in themselves were not so much the embarrassment as was their revelation to the public at large, and the fact that Packwood had publicly lied about them and evidently had directed his secretary to change certain of his diary entries when the senators demanded that he surrender his diary to the inspection of the Senate.

Packwood escaped further embarrassment and probable censure by the Senate by abruptly resigning his seat. Not to worry. He just as promptly rented an office in Washington, D.C., and set himself up as a lobbyist who had an

enormous amount of government contacts. Some senators at least still held him in high regard, despite what they considered his private peccadilloes. For instance, Democratic Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York announced that he would gladly see anyone Packwood sent to his office.

Another example of a politician with dubious ethics and morals was the case of the Louisiana Republican Rep. Robert Livingston, who was overwhelmingly chosen to replace the resigned Newt Gingrich as speaker of the House of Representatives. That change of leadership came just after the House of Representatives had completed its impeachment proceedings against former President Bill Clinton, much of which involved extensive inquiry into his extramarital affairs.

Lo and behold! Livingston was not speaker of the House much more than a day before women began coming out of the woodwork claiming to have had sexual affairs with him. Nor could Livingston adequately rebut their charges. Embar-

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# True Nature of Obscenity

By Michael James

On March 29, the Associated Press carried a story citing a recent poll that found obscene language on the rise in our society. Seventy-four percent of the 1,001 adults surveyed in the AP poll said that they encounter obscene language or profanity in public "frequently or occasionally."

Yes, profanity is vulgar, rude and distasteful. It suggests a lack of refinement, lack of vocabulary, lack of control or lack of respect for others. It is an antisocial act, without sensitivity or thought regarding the rights or needs of others. It even suggests a breakdown of community. But there is a context to this verbal obscenity.

It is hard to imagine a greater obscenity than American capitalism. It is hard for the imagination to even construct a greater affront to genuine human community, to civility, to humanity, to decency than capitalism. For example, U.S. military spending is a gross obscenity. Health care denied to millions of Americans is a huge obscenity. The percentage of our population in prison is a tragic obscenity. The war in Iraq is a criminal obscenity. The gap between rich and poor is obscene. The very foundations of capitalism itself are obscene: the profit motive, one class exploiting another, permanent war and the tyranny of allowing one class to control all social wealth.

The point is that capitalism abounds with structural or systemic obscenity. And it is interesting and empowering to see how certain apologists for capitalism, certain mystifiers and bewilderers who serve the bourgeoisie, use words and language to conceal capitalist crimes or obscenities. Consider a recent *Newsweek* interview with the Rev. Billy Graham. He has long served capitalism by befriending U.S. war criminal presidents and guiding them spiritually while they commit mass murder against peasants in places like Vietnam. Graham spoke to *Newsweek* about Hurricane Katrina and said that "God has allowed it, and there is a purpose that we won't know maybe for years to come." He went on pretty much to condemn the human race: "I don't see much improvement in man's heart. The whole thing is in man's heart: his desire, his greed, his lust, his pride, his ego. All of these things meshed together bring about sometimes a world war and sometimes a small war, but wars are going on everywhere..."

Graham's words are obscene! The suffering, destruction and death caused by Hurricane Katrina, according to Graham, have nothing to do with America's abandonment of the poor, neglect of levees and other infrastructure, or draining of money away from human beings and into the bloody coffers of the Pentagon. God allowed Katrina and we are not meant to know

why! And he cynically dismisses the human race as sinners, pretty much doomed by our inner shortcomings. He breathtakingly fails to see that capitalism is an antisocial and violent economic system that aggressively promotes and encourages the very traits he criticizes people for: greed, lust, pride and ego. Likewise, he blames us flawed humans, with our evil hearts, for war. But anybody with eyes and mind even half open can see that it is the criminal, capitalist ruling class that wages war for its own corporate gain. War is simply a method of conducting business, a ruthless, calculated expression of what Marx called "the furies of private interest." Capitalism and the capitalist class are off the proverbial hook in the eyes and mind of the Rev. Graham. He obscenely puts the blame squarely on God and the human race.

And so we are daily surrounded by capitalist obscenities such as poverty, war, injustice and inequality. Insult is added to injury when bourgeois spokespersons such as Billy Graham blame God and human beings. It is enough to make a person swear.

## ...Lobbyists

(Continued from page 1)

rassed and furious Republican members of the House began asking pointed questions. Who were these women? Were they lobbyists? The besmirched Livingston was forced to resign not only the speakership but, in addition, his seat in the House. Hail and farewell!

Again, not to worry. Livingston also rented an office in the city and set himself up as a lobbyist. Very recently, an inquiring TV reporter-photographer pointed his camera at the hard-working Livingston in his office, and the latter in great annoyance spat out a claim that the Democrats had forced him out of office. Really? What a short memory!

Now, John Ashcroft, President George W. Bush's former attorney general, has joined the fraternity of lobbyists. Ashcroft opened his new business, "The Ashcroft Group," last September, complete with fancy offices and a number of prominent Republican insiders on his staff. Ashcroft, however, insists that he is going to be a non-Abramoff lobbyist, and he incessantly uses the word "integrity" to describe himself and his business.

So far, Ashcroft has acquired 21 prominent clients, with more knocking at his door, and is selling his knowledge of how the Washington government works and is guiding these paying clients in the right direction as they seek to gain profit by doing business with the U.S. government.

Ashcroft has lined up such prominent clients as LTU Technologies, eBay, Oracle, ChoicePoint and Israel Aircraft Industrial International.

*The New York Times* of March 17 identified ChoicePoint as "a broker of consumer data that is increasingly being used by the government to keep tabs on people within the United States." ChoicePoint received "millions of dollars in contracts from the Justice Department under Mr. Ashcroft as part of the war on terror," the *Times* reported, and now has retained him to lure even more such lucrative contracts their way.

No matter how much Ashcroft emphasizes the word *integrity* to describe himself and his lobbying business, there are still a number of observers who find this move by the country's former chief law enforcement officer into the world of the grubby lobbyist to be quite undig-



Jack Abramoff

AB CAP for The People

nified, at the very least.

As he becomes increasingly bedazzled by his rapidly growing bank account, however, Ashcroft dismisses such quibbling criticism, emphasizing how good "people" and his business opportunities have been to him. "I'm earning significant multiples of what I've ever earned before," he told the *Times*.

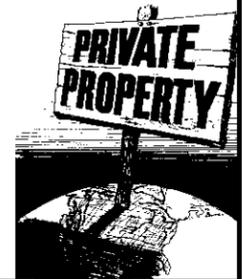
So now, there you have it. Washington lobbying adds up to the Almighty Dollar and the creation of an elite class of multimillionaires who sell themselves and their knowledge of how to manipulate the federal government to the highest bidders.

### Earth Day vs. May Day Two Views of the Future

By Robert Bills

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# Will Your Job Survive Globalization?

By Ken Boettcher

Will your job survive the next decade of U.S. capitalist development? The trend toward globalization promises greatly increased outsourcing or offshoring of jobs in the industries and services owned by the U.S. capitalist class. The prospects for U.S. workers under capitalism are grim indeed.

Millions—perhaps even tens of millions—of U.S. jobs are projected to be lost. Some of the U.S. workers who lose them will never work again. Many will be employed in jobs that pay far less than their old jobs paid as massive numbers of jobs are moved—along with much of U.S. manufacturing and services—to other countries where labor power can be paid far less than the going rates in the United States.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations' website, "2 million manufacturing jobs... are estimated to have moved offshore since 1983." There are at present only about 14 million U.S. manufacturing jobs remaining. Nearly all of those jobs—those not due to be killed off by consolidation, technological advances or other factors under capitalism—are at risk of being offshored.

That is the estimation of Alan S. Blinder, writing in the March-April issue of *Foreign Affairs*. Manufacturing jobs, however, are the smallest part of the offshoring picture. Blinder—who has been described as "the most mainstream of economists"—went much further in his article, entitled "Offshoring: The Next Industrial Revolution?" He believes that virtually all service sector jobs involving "types of work that are easily deliverable through a wire (or via wireless connections) with little or no diminution in quality" could eventually be offshored.

Service-sector jobs already have been seriously affected by offshoring. Massachusetts-based Forrester Research estimated in 2003 that 400,000 service industry jobs had been offshored since 2000. Forrester also predicted that by 2015 "roughly 3.3 million service jobs will have moved offshore, including 1.7 million 'back office' jobs such as payroll processing and accounting, and 473,000 in the information technology industry," as the Council on Foreign Relations' website observed.

Blinder says the number will be far higher—somewhere between 42 million and 56 million. Whether or not all those jobs are moved offshore, the very fact that they could be means that "the Americans performing them will be in competition with people who will do the same work for a whole lot less."

Virtually no remaining job will be immune to this competition. As *Fortune* magazine observed last year, "Most U.S. workers whose jobs are sent overseas will try to find new ones, perhaps in other industries or occupations. So the off-

shoring of any jobs will produce job seekers who will tend to push wages down even in industries in which outsourcing isn't happening. Far more significantly, the mere threat of moving jobs offshore is enough to hold wages down—those

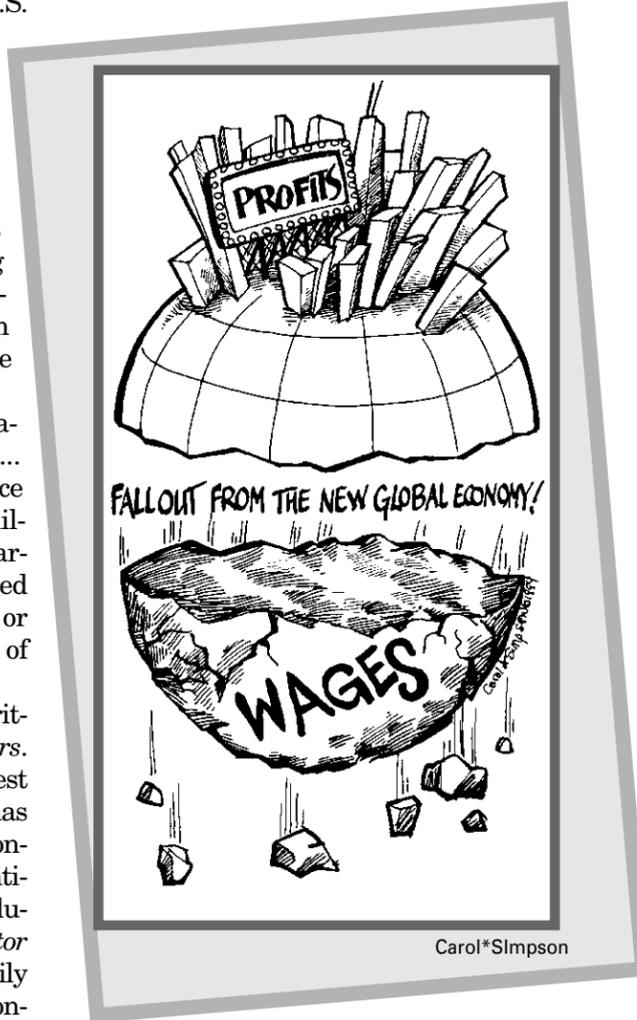
there would be little to prevent living standards in the world's interconnected economies from equilibrating. The rest of the world's living standards would rise, and...America's would decline."

In fact, that decline is already under way. In an April article entitled "Not Your Father's Detroit," the *American Prospect* observed that "A new survey of the nation's 361 metropolitan areas, which account for 86.3 percent of the nation's GDP, has found that the average wage of jobs lost in the recession of 2001–2003 was \$43,629, while the average wage of jobs created in 2004–2005 was \$34,378—a tidy 21 percent decline." Thanks to many of the forces capitalism has brought to bear upon the living standards of U.S. workers, including globalization, this decline is already longstanding. Measured in terms of 1982 constant dollars, average real weekly earnings have been declining since 1972, with only limited blips upward, for a total decline of 17.15 percent, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics figures.

It is time for U.S. workers to reject the mantra of U.S. capitalists and their representatives in government, the colleges, the pulpits and the media that "good" jobs will miraculously materialize to replace the massive job losses due to globalization already under way in the United States. Likewise with respect to their mantra that education is the answer to workers' declining living standards.

Capitalism has no solution to the crisis it is producing for U.S. workers. Workers are facing this catastrophe because the imperatives of competition and the profit motive in production central to capitalism have inexorably led to it. The crisis has everything to do with private ownership of the means of life and production for profit—and nothing to do with what is possible once workers understand the problem and begin acting in their own class interests.

We still have the natural resources and labor



growing armies of skilled workers around the world are increasing the labor supply in many occupations, and the immutable law of markets is that when supply goes up, prices come down."

These competitive pressures are driving globalization and offshoring now, not just in the future. As *Fortune* noted, "American computer programmers who made \$100,000 a year or more are getting fired because Indians and Chinese do the same work for one-fifth the cost or less." Moreover, "low-cost countries—not just China and India but also Mexico, Malaysia, Brazil and others—are turning out large numbers of well-educated young people fully qualified to work in an information-based economy. China will produce about 3.3 million college graduates this year, India 3.1 million (all of them English-speaking), the U.S. just 1.3 million. In engineering, China's graduates will number over 600,000, India's 350,000, America's only about 70,000."

Clearly, more education is not a solution for



U.S. workers. The defenders of capitalism have often chanted that "more education" or "better education" would enable those kicked out of work to find equal or better work elsewhere in the economy. The figures belie the chant.

*Fortune* says that the answer to the effects of offshoring and globalization is "maintaining technical superiority—continually creating high-value new jobs that workers in the rest of the world can't do yet." However, with education in the rest of the world producing the lopsided number of graduates—especially engineering graduates—*Fortune* itself cited, the magazine admits "the picture isn't encouraging for America."

"The loss of technology leadership could be historic," says *Fortune*. "Without that advantage,

power required to build a society of peace, freedom and plenty. Standing in the way is the ownership of and dictatorial control over the economy by a tiny minority class that has no right at all to the industries and services the working class of the country has built.

Workers have a choice. They can fight back against the capitalist system itself. Workers as a class must build a movement to abolish the existing system and build a new one. They must build a system under which they collectively control the industries and services, which must be placed under the ownership of all society, and planned and administered democratically to satisfy the needs and wants of all.

Such a socialist movement will not be easy to build. The capitalist class, its politicians, media, supporting labor bureaucrats and others will resist it.

But the seeming strength of those forces, and the seeming weakness of the workers, consists mainly in the ignorance workers now have of the real source of their problems. Once aware of the socialist answer to those problems, and of their potential strength as the creators of all social wealth, the workers can forge an invincible movement for real social change.

The Socialist Labor Party's program of Socialist Industrial Unionism explains what must be done—how the workers themselves can build a new society in which they will possess the power to determine their own future economic well-being. Learn more about it and then join us—help build a better world!

**the People**

Founded April 5, 1891

The People (ISSN-0199-350X), continuing the *Weekly People*, is published bimonthly 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.

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Rates: (domestic and foreign): Single copy, \$1. Subscriptions: \$5 for one year; \$8 for two years; \$10 for three years. By first-class mail, add \$4 per year. Bundle orders: 5–100 copies, \$16 per 100; 101–500 copies, \$14 per 100; 501–1,000 copies, \$12 per 100; 1,001 or more copies, \$10 per 100. Foreign subscriptions: Payment by international money order in U.S. dollars.

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Published by the Socialist Labor Party

Established in 1891

National Secretary: Robert Bills

VOL. 116 NO. 1

MAY-JUNE 2006

## May Day 2006

May Day 2006 sees the globalization of capitalism pitting workers of all countries ever more fiercely against each other. This is a global race to the bottom. It is a race in which workers of the advanced capitalist nations ultimately will find themselves competing with workers already struggling to survive with some of the lowest living standards in the world. It is virtually inevitable in a globalized labor market, where human labor is bought and sold as crassly and viciously as all other commodities on the world market. It is inevitable unless the working class of America wakes up to its predicament and organizes its political and economic might to build a new system based on cooperation and production to satisfy human needs.

Manufacturing jobs are still leaving the United States in droves. Increasingly, the service-sector jobs that the defenders of capitalism once predicted would replace them are also leaving en masse.

Yet, the movement of capital and technological advancements under its control are causing massive dislocations everywhere. China has reportedly lost 16 million manufacturing jobs since 1995, a higher proportion of manufacturing jobs lost than even those lost in the United States. Many Japanese, European and even Korean automakers find it more profitable to produce in the United States while U.S. automakers close plants here and build new ones elsewhere. Anti-immigrant fever is on the rise in the advanced countries while millions of immigrants demonstrate in the streets for amnesty for the undocumented and greater access to jobs in the United States.

Glib commentators would have it that, as one recently put it, globalization means, "They suffer, we suffer, we all win." The old public relations saw that productivity improvements are the engine for the eventual betterment of all provides grist for such inanities. The facts attest otherwise.

A recent Northwestern University study showed that "over the entire period 1966–2001," a period that saw vast U.S. productivity improvements, "only the top 10 percent of the income distribution enjoyed a growth rate of total real income...equal to or above the average rate of economywide productivity growth. The bottom 90 percent of the income distribution fell behind or even were left out of the productivity gains entirely." Income inequality is growing everywhere. The fruits of workers' labor are going where they have always gone—to the capitalist classes of the world.

These are just a few of the reasons why the message of May Day, the international working-class holiday first officially celebrated in 1890, is more relevant in 2006 than ever. May Day signifies the unity of working-class interests worldwide. It recognizes that workers everywhere are waging a common struggle against the exploiting ruling classes of the world. It recognizes that this struggle must continue until the working class triumphs worldwide, taking full possession of all that it produces.

That the capitalist class is international, that it is as one against the working class despite bitter competition among the various national gangs of capitalists, that capitalists use the workers of one country to undercut the workers of another—these conditions go back to Marx's time. Changes in the means and methods of production have only magnified the capitalists' ability to pit workers against each other.

New technology has dramatically reduced the amount of socially necessary labor time required for transportation and communications. In many areas of production, the work process has been automated to the point where little education and skill is required, making cheaper, less educated labor more attractive to exploit. The retooling and relocation of facilities of production is ever easier to accomplish. These factors have given the capitalist class greater flexibility in its ongoing efforts to lower the share of labor's product that goes to the working class.

As global competition intensifies, the laws of capitalist development move toward their devastating end in accelerated fashion. The capitalists who are more efficient at exploiting labor wipe out those who are less efficient, thereby swelling the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed. Firms that have not found or forced lower wage rates are generally at a competitive disadvantage. In some cases, the resultant threat to the existence of the former firms is sufficient to win concessions from workers in countries like the United States. In other cases, capitalists use the threat of moving production offshore to extort wage and other concessions.

In the face of this global ruling-class assault on the working class, the need for an international working-class movement today should be obvious. However, U.S. workers cannot look to the procapitalist unions of the AFL-CIO to build such a movement. Despite their occasional statements of concern for the plight of workers in lesser developed countries, their main response has been to call for protectionist legislation, while centering their propaganda on nationalistic appeals to save American jobs.

A real working-class union would emphasize the need to organize the unorganized on a global basis and to build class solidarity across national lines. Its foremost concern would be the advancement of the *working class* toward its final emancipation, not "saving" jobs in one particular country. However, these unions have proved incapable of organizing workers as a class on a national, much less an international, basis.

It is the socialist movement that first raised and still upholds the slogan "Workers of the world, unite!" At a time when the capitalist classes of the world are using workers, divided by nation, to cut each other down on both the battlefields of war and the battlefields of commerce, the need to build the movement that embodies that slogan has never been more urgent.

The nightmarish world capitalism is busily fashioning everywhere can be replaced with a worldwide Socialist Republic of peace, plenty and freedom. Workers everywhere increasingly have little to lose but their chains. —K.B.

### A De Leon Editorial

## Workers of All Countries, Unite!



*The anti-immigration agitation only distracts the working class from the real source of exploitation and economic insecurity—the profit-motivated system of capitalism.*

**As to Immigration**  
(Daily People, Sept. 18, 1910)

"If the immigration question is of no importance to the workers, why does the Socialist Labor Party bother so much about it?" is a question put to us for elucidation.

The immigration question is of importance, and that is just the reason why the Socialist Labor Party has paid so much attention to it. The question of immigration is similar to the tax question, the free silver question, the tariff question, and other questions raised by capitalism, and apt and meant to humbug the workers.

If, as the anti-immigrationists, among whom are the Gompers unions and the so-called Socialist Party, hold, it is the immigrant that overstocks the trades, reduces wages and throws the workers here workless into the street, then the question of immigration is of importance. If, on the other hand, the acknowledged deplorable condition of labor is not due to immigration, it is of prime importance that the worker be not fooled by that as an issue.

The Socialist Labor Party holds that for every one man, whom immigration increases the supply of labor in the labor market by, the privately owned and steadily improving machine increases the supply of men in the labor market by 10. According to present-day calculation, there are several millions of "superfluous" workers in the land, not displaced by immigrants but displaced by machinery, displaced by one man at work doing the work of two men, displaced by the long hours of work that must be put in by those at work.

Close the doors to immigration and this condition will remain just the same, there is no gainsaying that. Another fact that confirms it is that conditions do not improve as a result of emigration in the countries from which the heaviest immigration comes, which they should do if the theory of the anti-immigrationists be correct. That conditions do not improve in European countries, despite the heavy emigration, is due to the very same factor that makes the question of immigration not the cause of misery here, the factor that machinery is ever increasing the supply of labor by displacing it.

On the other hand, the question of immigration is of prime importance to help divorce the worker from the capitalist agencies who dangle the immigration issue before his eyes, cheating him and thereby capturing his vote in their own interest.

The Socialist Labor Party points out to the worker the absurdity of raising a hue-and-cry against the insignificant displacement of labor by immigration, as against the wholesale displacement of labor by the privately owned machinery of capitalism.

The anti-immigration cry comes from the felon class of capitalism who utter it as a sort of pretense of sympathy for the workers. No longer able to deny the suffering and misery of the people, they now try to put the responsibility for it anywhere, so long as it is away from themselves.

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## 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. It means a classless society that guarantees full democratic rights for all workers.

Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a closed party-run system without democratic rights. Those things are the very opposite of socialism.

"Socialism," as the American Socialist Daniel De Leon defined it, "is that social system under which the necessities of production are owned, controlled and administered by the people, for the people, and under which, accordingly, the cause of political and economic despotism having been abolished, class rule is at end. That is socialism, nothing short of that." And we might add, nothing more than that! Remember: If it does not fit this description, it is not socialism—no matter who says different. Those who claim that socialism existed and failed in places like Russia and China simply do not know the facts.

Socialism will be a society in which the things we need to live, work and control our own lives—the industries, services and natural resources—are collectively owned by all the people, and in which the democratic organization of the people within the industries and services is the government. Socialism means that government of the people, for the people and by the people will become a reality for the first time.

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, to end poverty, racism, sexism, environmental disaster and to avert the still potent threat of a catastrophic nuclear war. 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.

# Marx and Religion

[The following article originated at [www.socialistworker.co.uk](http://www.socialistworker.co.uk) on March 4 and is reprinted here by permission of the publisher.]

By Anindya Bhattacharyya

What is Karl Marx's best known quote on religion? Many people know that Marx described religion as "the opium of the people." But far fewer know the whole quote: "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people."

A careful examination of Marx's writings on the subject reveals that while he certainly criticized religion, he was equally scathing about liberals who elevated criticism of religion over all other political concerns.

As with so much of Marx's work, to understand his analysis of religion we have to take a closer look at the political struggles he was involved in throughout his life.

Marx was born in Prussia, now part of Germany, in 1818. One defining political struggle during Marx's early career revolved around religion.

Jews in Prussia faced systematic discrimination, with laws determining where they could live and the occupations they could take up. In the 1840s, there were raging debates about Jewish emancipation, which parallel some of the arguments about Islam and Muslims today.

At the time, Marx was making a name for himself as a radical journalist working on liberal publications. Much of his energy was spent debating with a circle of liberal writers and thinkers known as the Young Hegelians. Prominent among them was Bruno Bauer, who had been one of Marx's tutors at university.

Bauer started off his academic career on the right, but had shifted left politically, becoming increasingly critical of Christianity. In 1842, he was dismissed from his university post in Berlin because of his radical views.

There were good reasons why Bauer and the Young Hegelians criticized Christianity and religion in general. Prussia at the time was still an absolute monarchy with restrictive laws dating from the feudal era, propped up by the stifling ideology of the church.

The liberals in Prussia hankered for the kind of reforms that had come in the wake of the 1789 French Revolution. They were, however, considerably less keen on the messy business of actually having a revolution. Consequently, they focused on demanding reforms from the creaking Prussian government—in particular parliamentary elections and the separation of church and state.

The Jewish demand for emancipation was part of this wider struggle. Marx, whose Jewish father had converted to Christianity to escape oppression, backed the campaign to scrap the laws that discriminated against Jews.

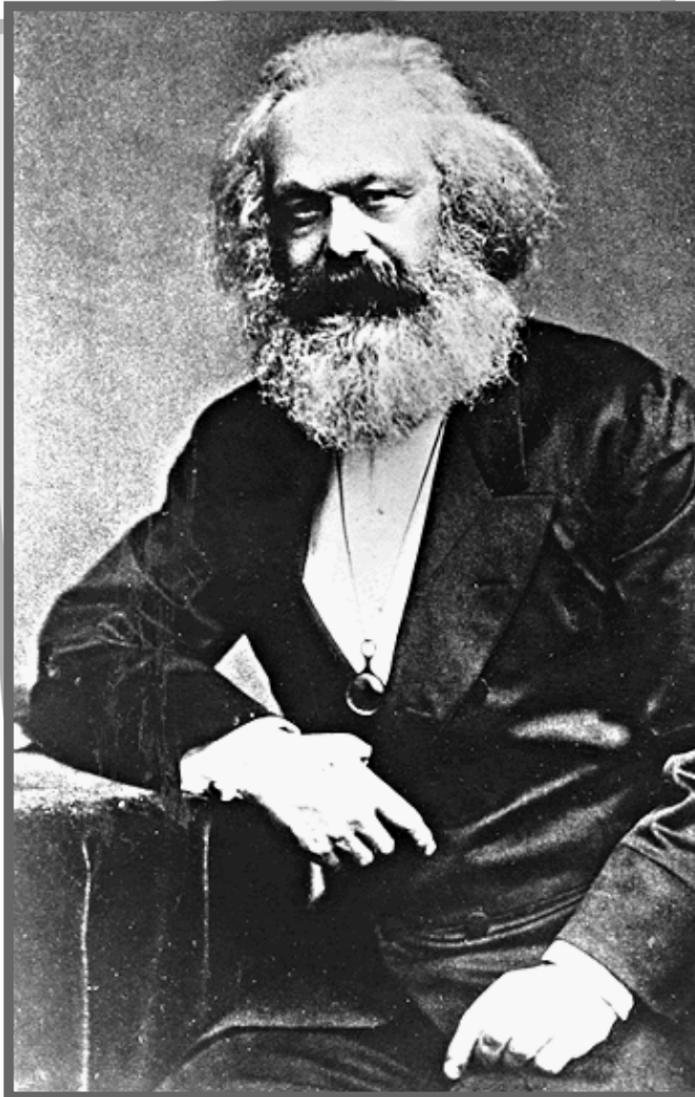
## Liberal Atheists

But not all liberals followed suit. In sharp contrast to Marx, Bauer came out against Jewish emancipation, mobilizing in his defense a seemingly left-wing argument. Many of Bauer's comments prefigure the arguments put by some today for downplaying, ignoring or colluding with Islamophobia.

Bauer argued that religion was the main enemy, and therefore to support Jews demand-

ing emancipation as Jews would be tantamount to capitulating to religion and the special pleading of a religious minority. Jews should first renounce their religion, he insisted, and only then would they deserve the support of liberal atheists.

"As long as he is a Jew, the restricted nature which makes him a Jew is bound to triumph over the human nature which should link him as a man with other men, and will separate him from non-Jews," wrote Bauer in one essay on the question.



Karl Marx

While this argument superficially seems to treat all religions as "equally bad," it was rapidly backed up by another that clarified what was really at stake. In a second essay attacking the Jewish emancipation campaign, Bauer argued that while all religions were equally bad, some were more equal than others.

Specifically, Bauer now claimed that Christianity was in fact superior to Judaism: "The Christian has to surmount only one stage, namely, that of his religion, in order to give up religion altogether. The Jew, on the other hand, has to break not only with his Jewish nature, but also with the development towards perfecting his religion, a development which has remained alien to him."

Here the parallels with arguments over Islam today are striking. Liberal secularists often insist that they are against all religion, and have no specific issue with Islam. But the specific religion that most exercises them, the one they hold predominantly responsible for social evils from terrorism through to homophobia, invariably turns out to be Islam.

Marx, who was already rethinking his relationship with the Young Hegelians, responded forcibly to his former mentor Bauer in a polemical essay called "On the Jewish Question," published in 1844. Rather than join in the attacks on "Jewish backwardness," or issue simpering pleas for "tolerance," he turned his guns on the failings of Bauer's liberal politics.

First, Marx noted that the restricted "political emancipation" called for by Bauer—effectively, the demand for a secular state—was nowhere near enough. In fact, it wouldn't even get rid of religion, which was supposedly Bauer's main target. Marx noted that the U.S. Constitution was avowedly secular, yet the U.S. was "pre-eminently the country of religiosity," teeming with all manner of sects and cults peddling their wares.

## Social Struggle

More fundamentally, Marx argued that religious faith was primarily an effect, rather than a cause, of a much more general oppression. Focusing on the religious question served to obscure this wider picture, diverting energy away from real social struggle and into sterile theological debate.

Marx also noted that liberals viewed human society as rigidly divided between a public "political life" and a private "civil society." Political reform should be restricted to the former, they claimed, leaving untouched economic arrangements such as private property and wage labor that fell into the category of "civil society."

Marx proceeded to tear down this artificial opposition. He explained how the supposedly atheistic demands of the Young Hegelians in fact served to conceal their own quasi-religious assumptions.

Specifically, they believed in a vision of human society composed of atomized private individuals that owned property and were motivated by self-interest—a kind of Thatcherism before its time that bore no relation to how society actually worked:

"The so-called rights of man are nothing but the rights of a member of civil society, the rights of egoistic man, of man separated from other men and from the community."

The irony here, as Marx notes, is that Bauer accuses Jews precisely of "egoism," of deliberately isolating themselves from society, of being obsessed by money making and trad-

ing. Bauer is himself guilty of the sins he accuses Jew and Judaism acts as a convenient scapegoat for his own political failings.

In contrast to the liberals, Marx called for the radical generalization of "political emancipation" into a "human emancipation" that would revolutionize economic relations and the whole of society, as opposed to merely tinkering with the nature of the state. And this socialist political project would be based on a consistently materialist understanding of the world, not just an atheistic one.

Marx's essay "On the Jewish Question" was one of a series of writings through which he settled scores with the political timidity of the Young Hegelians. Soon Marx was to become the revolutionary champion of the working class that he is remembered as today.

Bauer, by contrast, rapidly shifted to the right and later became a cheerleader for the vile anti-Semitism that emerged in Germany in the 1870s—an ideology that would eventually lead to the Nazi gas chambers.

We on the left need to rediscover Marx's insights today. Contrary to the claims of prowar secular liberals, Marx did not consider belief in the free market and the worship of private property to be in any way superior to religious thinking.

And he certainly had no time for those who used opposition to religion as an excuse to scapegoat religious minorities, while simultaneously singing the praises of a capitalist system that leads to poverty, racism and war.

# Mark Twain, Daniel De

[The following article originated at [www.marxist.com](http://www.marxist.com) on Feb. 17, 2005, and is reprinted here by permission of the publisher.]

By Fred Weston

At the beginning of December 2004, the Pentagon's Defense Science Board issued a statement that President Bush would not want to be widely publicized. The statement was frank and to the point. "Coalition" forces were not only losing the battle for Iraqi "hearts and minds" but "may also have achieved the opposite of what they intended."

Occasionally, reality gets a look-in among U.S. Pentagon analysts! But Bush carries on regardless. He continues to spout lies and distortions. He may even be so limited in his understanding of what is going on that he believes his own propaganda. He is helped in this by the corporate media, especially the major U.S. TV channels who try to convince everyone that everything is going according to plan, the elections being a further step in transforming Iraq into a "normal" country.

In this world turned on its head, what is real becomes unreal and what is unreal becomes real! Experts in the Pentagon can see what is happening but the media present the exact opposite.

We are presented with a view that so-called Iraqi "insurgents" are the criminals, while the invaders, the imperialists, are the legitimate force of law. This is like a police officer arriving at the scene of a burglary and declaring the thief the rightful owner of the house and the owner the criminal.

This is not the first time in history that we have seen this kind of reporting. It is always the method of imperialism to present itself as "helping," even "civilizing," the people they are oppressing. They want to convince people at home, and their own troops on the ground, that what they are doing is right.

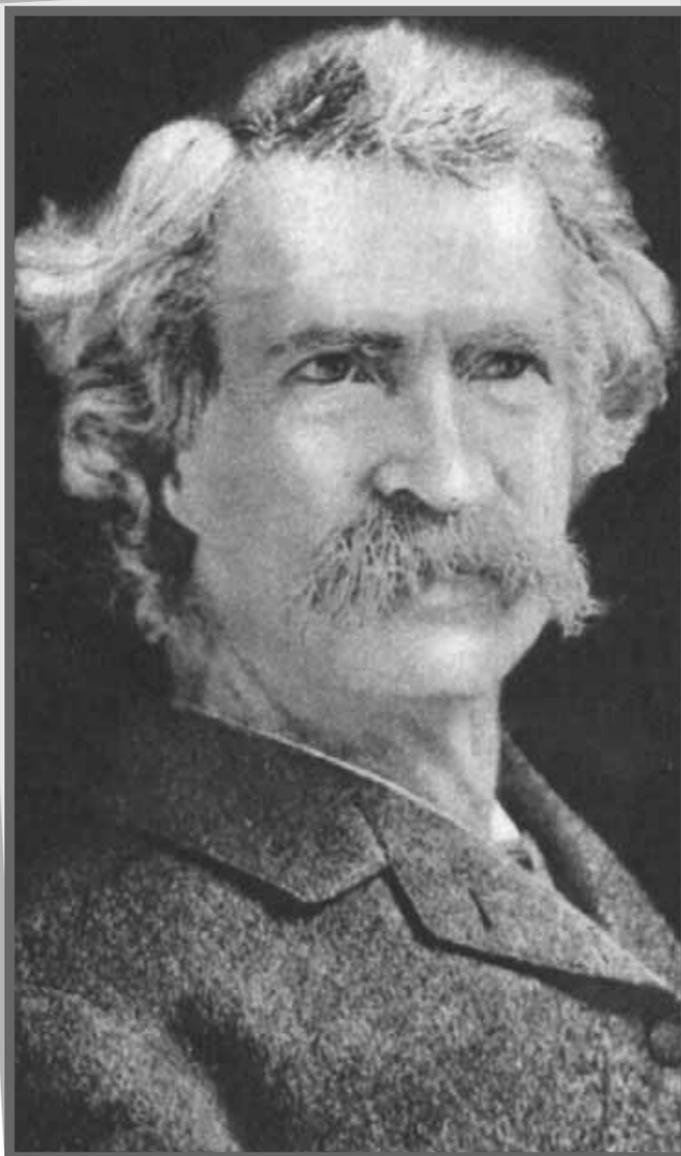
If we go back 100 years to the beginning of the 20th century, we had a similar scenario in the war of the U.S.A. against Spain which led to the Spanish being thrown out of the Philippines and the U.S. replacing them as imperialist masters. The U.S. government, of course, presented the whole thing as "liberating" the Philippines, as they say they are doing for the Iraqis today. In the same period, the British were "liberating" South Africa from the Boers. In reality, they were rounding up the Boers, women and children included, and herding them into concentration camps where they suffered terribly and thousands died. Meanwhile, the blacks, the huge majority that inhabited the land, were not even considered as human beings!

America was then beginning to emerge as a world power. In the Spanish-American War of 1898, it seized Spain's colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific. A national liberation struggle had been going on in the Philippines (as also in Cuba) against Spanish colonial rule. The U.S. government skillfully exploited this to its own ends.

The Americans destroyed the Spanish fleet at Manila, but to take the interior they used the Filipino rebels. They brought the exiled Filipino revolutionary leader Emilio Aguinaldo from Hong Kong to the Philippines. Aguinaldo had the advantage over the Americans in that his supporters were the Filipino people them-

selves, and thus he could muster an army on the ground. The bulk of U.S. troops were still to arrive.

As in all wars of independence, the local people fought bravely and overwhelmed the Spanish forces. In just under two months, they had practically defeated the Spanish on the main island of Luzon. What remained of the Spanish troops was bottled up in Manila. In June of the same year, the Filipino rebel leaders issued a Declaration of Independence based on the U.S. model.



Mark Twain.

Typically, the 15,000 remaining Spanish troops only surrendered to U.S. forces in August. The United States and Spanish imperialists reached an agreement whereby the Filipino independence fighters were not allowed to have anything to do with the surrender.

The U.S. administration then refused to recognize the newly independent Filipino Republic. In October of the same year, it declared its plans to annex the Philippines. To justify this position, President McKinley apparently said that "God Almighty" had ordered him to transform the Philippines into a U.S. colony. No doubt, today's Bush has similar delusions. However, it had not been a war of liberation, but one step in the building of the U.S. empire! In 1899, to back up this decision to annex the Philippines, U.S. troops moved against the Filipino fighters and went on to crush them in blood.

The U.S. was expanding its domination in the Caribbean and in the Pacific. The Philippines were seen as a gate into the Chinese market. (In fact, later, in 1900 the United States used the Philippines as a base from which to send troops into China to help put down the Boxer Rebellion.)

Tragically, the Filipino fighters were no

match for the military might of the U.S.A., but they fought bravely and gave the Americans a lot to think about. More than 126,000 U.S. soldiers were sent to the Philippines. At least 250,000 Filipinos, in large part civilians, were killed. The number of U.S. soldiers killed was 4,200. And as Gen. Arthur MacArthur confided to a reporter in 1899:

"When I first started in against these rebels, I believed that Aguinaldo's troops represented only a faction. I did not like to believe that the whole population of Luzon—the native population that is—was opposed to us and our offers of aid and good government. But after having come this far, after having occupied several towns and cities in succession...I have been reluctantly compelled to believe that the Filipino masses are loyal to Aguinaldo and the government which he heads."

The Filipino guerrilla struggle was supported by the overwhelming majority of the population. The U.S. military responded brutally. They resettled whole populations in concentration camps. They burnt down their villages, carried out mass hangings. They combined all this with systematic raping of women and girls, and used torture. One of the U.S. generals, Jacob Smith, ordered his soldiers to "kill and burn," to target "everything over 10" and to transform the island of Samar into "a howling wilderness." Another U.S. general, William Shafter, went as far as to say that it might even be necessary to kill half the Filipino population before "perfect justice" could be granted to the other half!

Although eventually the U.S. forces defeated the Filipino fighters, fighting continued for years, especially in the south. Then as now, the U.S. government declared the rebels as "bandits."

However, not all Americans were blind to what was going on. Among these stands none other than the famous Mark Twain,

who made a name for himself as author of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*. What is less known—or less highlighted at least—about Mark Twain is that he was one of the founders of the New England Anti-Imperialist League, which was set up in Boston. In George W. Bush's America, he would no doubt be classed as an unpatriotic traitor. He was, in fact, a progressive and a defender of basic democratic rights.

Twain turned his attention—with his renowned razor-sharp wit—to what was happening in the Philippines and wrote a satirical letter "to the person sitting in darkness." By this he meant the oppressed peoples of the colonial world. He turned his attentions to what the British were doing in South Africa during the Boer War, and wrote the following:

"Mr. Chamberlain manufactures a war out of materials so inadequate and so fanciful that they make the boxes grieve and the gallery laugh and he tries hard to persuade himself that it isn't a private raid for cash but has a dim vague respectability about it somewhere, if he could only find the spot; and that by and by he can scour the flag clean again after he has finished dragging it through the mud and making it shine and flash in the vault of heaven once more."

# Leon and the War in Iraq

Replace Chamberlain for Bush or Blair and the same words could be used to describe what these imperialist bloodsuckers are doing today in Iraq! Then as now atrocities were committed, all in the name of “saving,” “liberating,” even “civilizing” the colonial peoples. Surrendering Boers were bayoneted by British soldiers, as were Filipino “insurgents” by the Americans.

In the Philippines, as we have seen, the U.S. imperialists served themselves with the help of Filipino independence fighters, who had been struggling to oust the Spanish, only to betray them later by taking over the country for themselves. The Kurds in Iraq should draw a lesson from this, as should all oppressed minority peoples today who think that an imperialist power can be trusted to defend their interests. Whole countries have been conquered throughout the ages by imperialists using local conflicts to play one group off against another in order to subdue all of them.

After they had used the local Filipino nationalists to oust the Spanish, the Americans turned on them. As Mark Twain wrote, “What we wanted was the archipelago, unencumbered by patriots struggling for independence, and war was what was needed.” They achieved this by provoking a war against the popular Filipino leader, Aguinaldo. Gen. MacArthur (father of the famous Douglas) gave the order that all Filipino rebels should be killed, among them many who had fought on the side of the Americans against the Spanish. Mark Twain satirized the whole thing with these words:

“There have been lies; yes, but they were told in good cause. We have been treacherous; but that was only in order that real good might come out of apparent evil.

“True, we have crushed a deceived and confiding people who have trusted us... We have stabbed an ally in the back and slapped the face of a guest; we have bought a shadow from an enemy that hadn’t it to sell; we have robbed a trusting friend of his land and liberty; we have invited our clean young men to shoulder a discredited musket and do bandit’s work

under a flag which bandits have been accustomed to fear, not to follow; we have debauched America’s honor and blackened her face before the world, but each detail was for the best. We know this.”

He went on to pour scorn on all the official lies and sanctimonious propaganda of the governments of “Christendom” that dominated the world:

“The head of every state and sovereignty in Christendom and 90 per cent of every legisla-

be a rebel in your own home? Also today, the resistance in Iraq is criminalized by the mass media. Undoubtedly there is a fringe of the resistance movement that uses barbaric methods. But the numbers taking part in the resistance are estimated to be upwards of 200,000 and they have mass backing. Just as they were not criminal or bandits in the Philippines 100 years ago, the large majority of the “insurgents” in Iraq are not criminals but the people of Iraq fighting for the right to govern themselves.

Mark Twain was what we could define as a genuine bourgeois liberal of his time. But there was another American who went a lot further than Twain, namely Daniel De Leon. He was an American Socialist theoretician and political leader. He had studied the works of Marx and Engels and tried to apply them to the struggle for the defense of the rights of American workers.

We will end this article by quoting what he said in an editorial, written in response to the U.S. Army’s repression of the Filipino struggle in 1899. The editorial had the title “Ramrodding Freedom.”

“Last week’s battle of Manila is said to have cost the lives of over 5,000 Filipinos.

“These men had a notion that the country of their birth is their own. Arms in hand, they resisted the Spanish

yoke, and succeeded to the extent that Spanish sovereignty over the whole Archipelago never was more than a nominal fact. A quarrel broke out between their tyrant and a foreign nation. They looked with joy at what seemed divine interposition, and aided the United States to drive out Spain. Freed from Spain, they imagined themselves freed from all foreign yoke.

“Not so. Our capitalist Government forthwith claimed possession by ‘conquest,’ and assumed the role of a dispenser of freedom in a style quite its own. ‘These Filipinos,’ our Government claimed, ‘do not know what freedom means; we must teach them.’ The teaching is now going on; the first lesson has been given. With the ramrod as instrument, ‘Freedom’ is to be jammed down the throats of the insurgent patriots whom our expansionist capitalists insult with the name of ‘insurgents.’

“But the freedom ramrodding process is not going on in the distant Philippines only. For every Filipino slaughtered beyond the Pacific a workingman is slaughtered, or the foundation is being laid for his being slaughtered right here in the United States. Over the prostrate bodies only of the ‘insurgent’ Filipinos can our Government march to the establishment of its peculiar ‘freedom’ promoting social system in that Archipelago. The establishment of American factories in the Philippines is equivalent with a leveling process of wages here that will be given the name of ‘equalization’ but which in fact spells MURDER.” [From *The People*, Vol. III, No. 46, Sunday, Feb. 12, 1899.]

These eloquent words can equally be applied today to what U.S. imperialism is doing in Iraq. Just as then, while the U.S. administration wages war on the people of Iraq it also wages war at home against the American workers.



A U.S. Marine in Iraq.

U.S. Marine Corps photo

tive body in Christendom, including our Congress and our 50 legislatures are members not only of the Church but of the blessings of civilization trust. This world-girdling accumulation of trained morals, high principles, and justice, cannot do an unright thing, an unfair thing, an ungenerous thing, an unclean thing. It knows what it is about. Give yourself no uneasiness; it is all right.”

His anger at what U.S. imperialism was doing was revealed in this line: “We can have just our usual flag with the white stripes painted black and the stars replaced by the skull and cross-bones.”

Mark Twain found the idea that Filipino independence fighters could be classed as rebels as an absurdity. For him how could you

## SLP Sets 2006 NEC Session

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party will hold its regular biennial session in Santa Clara, Calif., from July 14 to 16.

Under the party’s Constitution, the biennial National Conventions elect the NEC, composed of seven members, to “conduct the agitational, educational, organizational and executive work of the party” between National Conventions. The election of each member is subject to approval by a general vote of the party’s entire membership. The 46th National Convention, held last July, elected the current NEC, whose term of office will expire with the 47th National Convention in July 2007.

While the members of the NEC and the national office of the party are in frequent com-

munications through email and otherwise, the Constitution still requires the committee to meet at least once in regular session during its term of office. NEC Sessions review the party’s policies and positions on current political, economic and social concerns and attend to other important SLP business that can only be resolved in face-to-face consultation.

Although the formal agenda for NEC Sessions is set only when the committee convenes, such questions of current interest and bearing on the class struggle as the war, globalization, global warming and immigration—to name a few—and on attracting new supporters and members for the SLP, are virtually certain to be subjects for deliberation.

(Continued on page 8)

## 50 YEARS AGO

# 1956 SLP Resolution on Racism

The following is the text of a Resolution on Racism adopted by the 24th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party in May 1956. As with all SLP resolutions pertaining to matters of policy, it was submitted to the entire membership of the party for a vote by ballot, and approved.

## Resolution on Racism

At its 23rd National Convention in 1952, the Socialist Labor Party of America declared that property interests, fear and insecurity make the social soil of capitalism fertile for the seed of poisonous race prejudice.

As the Socialist Labor Party of America meets at its 24th National Convention in the City of New York, on May 7, 1956, it is evident that the above statement has been fully confirmed by the reaction to the Supreme Court's decision against segregation in public schools and elsewhere.

The decision intensified the already existing racism of the South. The results of that intensification include the following:

The creation of the White Citizens Councils as a new form of Ku Klux Klanism. Economic reprisals against Negroes who sign pleas for school integration. The use of economic and social pressures against whites who express opinions even mildly in opposition to segregation. The acquittal of cold-blooded murderers of Negroes, providing white supremacists with a license to kill Negroes at their pleasure. And so forth.

The fact is that the intensification of the South's racism, like racism itself, is the work of the beneficiaries of the system of exploitation. The policy-forming members of the White Citizens Councils are capitalists, bankers, landowners, lawyers, militarists, ministers. The anarchistic moves of the state legislatures

and governments in contempt of the Supreme Court are directed by such ultra-"respectable" capitalist politicians as James F. Byrnes, former governor of South Carolina and former secretary of state under Roosevelt; and U.S.



AB CAP for The People

Sen. Harry F. Byrd, agricultural capitalist and political boss of Virginia.

A clue to the cause of racism was furnished by William Faulkner, Mississippi plantation owner and Nobel Prize winner in literature. In an interview with the *London Times*, Mr. Faulkner declared: "To produce cotton we have to have a system of peonage. That is absolutely at the bottom of the situation." Mr. Faulk-

ner was then asked: "Are the psychological rationalizations for prejudice something grafted on to the economic root?" He replied: "Yes, I would say that a planter who has a thousand acres wants to keep the Negro in a position of debt peonage and in order to do it he is going to tell the poor class of white folks that the Negro wants to violate his daughter. But all he wants at the back of it is a system of peonage to produce his cotton at the highest rate of profit."

The evidence substantiates the Marxian analysis of racism by the Socialist Labor Party of America. The social soil of capitalism is indeed fertile for the flourishing of poisonous race prejudice. In the light of the foregoing be it therefore

*Resolved*, That the Socialist Labor Party of America reaffirm its stand that the race question is but a part of the larger social question, that the fundamental division in society is along class lines (exploiters and exploited), and that the workers of all races have a common interest in solving the larger social question. And be it further

*Resolved*, That all the evidence proves that the social question arises from the exploitation of the many by the few and that it can be solved in but one way, by the socialist reconstruction of society. And be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Socialist Labor Party of America appeal to the workers of all colors, creeds and national origins, and to all persons who recognize the evils of capitalism, to join with us in our efforts to bring a speedy end to the criminal capitalist system and to create the economic and social conditions for freedom, equality and universal brotherhood by establishing the free society of socialism, thereby eliminating the cause of racial prejudices.

## ... De Leon

(Continued from page 4)

These gentry, too, are the very ones who brought and continue to bring the immigrant here, and so long as immigration serves their purposes no laws passed, even if they would relieve the labor market, would be enforced.

Anti-immigration as an issue is one that is wonderfully calculated to cover up the real sore. If the worker can be sent scurrying to keep out the immigrant as his enemy, all the more securely can the real enemy, the capitalist, pluck and exploit him.

On the other hand, the immigration issue is a valuable one to illustrate to the worker the futility of supporting the capitalist parties and that cannot be done by lying to him and claiming that the immigrant is the cause of all his woe. To do that is to play the workers into the hands of the capitalist parties.

The real cause of the "overstocking of the trades" is the capitalist system of private prop-

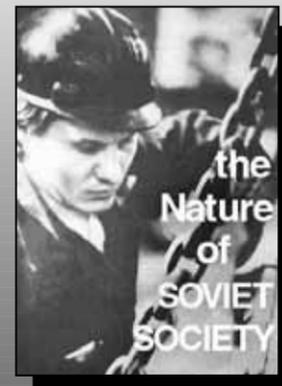
erty in the machinery of production whose rapid improvement keeps continuously displacing labor. Gompers unionism, which shuts out of the union all workingmen in excess of the jobs it controls, is logically anti-immigration; the so-called Socialist Party is anti-immigration because its leaders are weak-kneed poltroons who cower before the labor fakirs for material support and in the hope of getting "union" votes. The SLP alone holds to the socialist position, that to prevent immigration would not improve labor's condition, for the reason that whether there is immigration, or no immigration, the condition of labor must deteriorate under the capitalist ownership of the machinery of production whose rapid improvement increases the reserve army of labor and thereby lowers its condition by lowering its price or wages.

The militant Socialist does not by any means waste his time in showing up the fallacy of such issues. It is only by taking them up and tearing them to pieces that the militant Socialist can make his agitation effective.

## ... SLP NEC

(Continued from page 7)

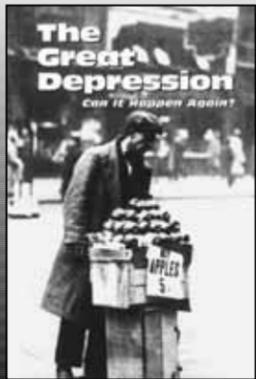
Because of the importance of these and other questions, this year's NEC Session will be one in which every moment of time will be needed to contend with these matters. Accordingly, no NEC banquet, such as those held in previous years, has been scheduled in conjunction with the 2006 NEC Session.



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# Railroad Automation Rolls Over More U.S. Jobs

By B.B.

The past 50 years have seen a dramatic reduction of workers employed in the nation's rail industry, largely because of the increased productivity allowed by automation. Now the second largest railroad company in the nation, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), wants to reduce train crews to a single engineer on all of its lines. Should they succeed, it is a veritable certainty that all other companies will follow suit. The United Transportation Union (UTU) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (BLE) are vehemently opposed to the idea and have filed suit against the rail companies, claiming they cannot act nationally because of existing local crew agreements. If the past is any indication, their long dysfunctional opposition will wilt and capital will have its way.

BNSF's incentive for single-operator trains is obvious—increased profits. The firm estimates single-operator trains could “save” rail capitalists “a billion dollars annually.” At stake for workers employed in this \$42 billion industry are dwindling jobs and the accompanying poverty against the movement of dramatically increased freight and profits. Since 1955, the volume of freight has increased from .624 to 1.69 trillion-ton miles (one ton of freight moved one mile).

This dramatic increase in tonnage is largely the result of American and European capitalists' having shifted production to China, resulting in enormous increases in manufactured goods being shipped to the United States and sent to market for local consumption by rail from various U.S. ports. Ironically, at least in some cases, these shipments reach their final destinations along routes where Chinese workers laid down the first rails more than a century ago.

The National Carriers Conference Committee, representing all train companies, is ingeniously pleading the threat of competition as justification for reducing crew size to single-operator trains. The enabling technology, called “positive train control,” is being promoted as a safety net for engineers when eliminating the conductor. A version developed by the Wabtec Corp., and called the Electronic Train Management System, consists of on-board computers that control a train's speed, a global positioning system, braking systems and other devices that otherwise would require a conductor. In a pilot program tested in Illinois, Wabtec reported that 1,300 error-free runs had been made as evidence that the program is safe. The data is being used in support of BNSF's quest for federal approval to try the system out on trains from Fort Worth, Tex., to Arkansas City, Kan.

The unions argue that safety is at stake and that the pilot program was faulty one-third of the time. They point out that trains—some carrying toxic substances such as chlorine—are frequently over 100 cars long and require two people to operate. They insist that more testing is needed. Moreover, in a separate item appearing on the UTU website entitled “Fatigue,” it is reasonably argued that fatigue “is the number-one danger facing transportation workers today,” a risk that obviously would be exacerbated by a single worker bearing sole responsibility for operating freight trains.

On this point, the UTU and BLE agree, despite an acrimonious merger dispute that has helped to impede unified action against the rail companies. Decades ago train crews consisted of two brakemen, an engineer, a fireman and a conduc-

tor. Indeed, in 1917 the railroads employed 1.8 million workers and in 1955 employed 1.24 million, as opposed to 236,000 now. Yet four times the amount of freight is being moved! In fact, we may see the day in the not-too-distant future wherein trains will be fully automated and controlled from a central command point by remote monitors requiring no crews, in much the same manner as model trains are controlled. Indeed,

ever stopped technology” while noting, “We are not opposed to one-person crews when the technology has proven safe.”

Thus, in a single breath, Mr. Wilner conceded the unions' past failures to protect jobs and proclaimed a willingness to accept more of the same if that is what it will take to preserve his dues-collecting business. He would prefer that things remain just as they are, but, being incapable of mounting anything faintly resembling an effective resistance to further encroachments, he will accept whatever leavings the railroad companies are prepared to concede on their own terms.

The past anticipates the future. It is in the nature of the capitalist system, as Frederick Engels once observed, “that the ever-increasing perfectibility of modern industry is, by the anarchy of social production, turned into a compulsory law that forces the individual industrial capitalist always to improve his machinery, always to increase its productive force”—not for the benefit of society but for the accumulation of profit and self-aggrandizement.

Unions must intervene to play a decisive role to end capital's domination of technology and tyranny over industry and society. They have the means to insure that the outcome of greater productivity redounds to the benefit of workers and society by reducing the working day, by eliminating arduous and dangerous jobs rather than

impoverishing lives, families and communities.

However, they cannot accomplish that objective in their present form of the UTU, BLE, Teamsters, AFL-CIO or any such dues-paying businesses. True unionism must repudiate the collaborationist orientation with the owners of industry embraced by the existing unions. They must recognize that workers' interests are irreconcilable and fundamentally antagonistic to those of capital.

Moreover, they must organize on the basis of integral industrial unions whose makeup will comprise a whole new democratic governmental framework based upon production for use and not for profit, and which are prepared to take, hold and operate the industrial apparatus of the country in behalf of the country itself. Only then can technological change benefit society rather than be seen as a source of dread and impending horror.



Carol\* Simpson

this may be the next stage as capital continues its incessant drive to increase productivity. We can imagine that the issue will then be how those controllers can be made more productive. Having gotten rid of train crews altogether, the focus will be how can the remote operators be reduced or how can their working hours be extended?

UTU President Byron Boyd stated that the members of both unions “indicated they wanted a single operating-employees union to match the bargaining strength of a rail industry that has seen more than three-dozen major railroads merge into just six mega systems.” “We structured the merger so that BLE dues would be reduced and BLE heritage would be preserved,” he added. Deciphered, this means that the turf battles over membership dues between opposing union hierarchies would end in favor of just one “bargaining” outfit haggling over the sale of rail workers' labor power to the companies.

Referring to the increase in railroad profits and the effort to reduce workers, Don Hahs, president of the BLE, determined to demonstrate his business acumen, whined, “They are making money hand over fist right now.... Why not try to build a business instead of squeeze employees? We think we are very productive with a two-man crew.” UTU representative Frank Wilner whistled a slightly different tune, insisting, “No union has

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# ...Immigration Debate

(Continued from page 1)

ics and media pundits routinely deny it, labor is as much a commodity to be bought and sold on the market—the labor market—as any other commodity. Without capitalism and its wage labor system, not only the cause but also the fact of involuntary unemployment would be completely wiped out. There is no reason on earth, apart from the profit-driven system that constantly compels capitalists to hold wages down, for a single worker to live from hand to mouth and in economic insecurity.

The contention of some that immigrant labor is the cause or a source of worsening economic conditions for workers in general is as pernicious as it is false.

This assertion is hardly a new one. When, for example, the Irish immigrant of the late 19th and early 20th centuries felt the competition of the more newly arrived Italian immigrant, and the Italian that of the more newly arrived Hungarian, and the Hungarian of the Pole, etc., each immigrant in turn viewed with alarm the influx of “foreigners who were taking Americans’ jobs.”

Similarly, male workers who are not classconscious, noting the increasing employment of female workers, still often tend to regard the labor of women as a chief cause of their misfortune.

It hardly seems necessary to dwell on the obvious advantages to the employers of this view among workers who feel themselves victimized by immigrants or other workers entering the American labor market. Workers whose resentment is directed toward each other are not going to organize against the capitalist master class. If they can be organized at all, it is only against each other.

The more important point is that today’s immigrant, no more than the immigrants of our earlier history or the increase in the number of women entering the labor market since the middle of the last century, is responsible for underemployment, stagnant and falling wages or declining living standards. Their effect on the working class as a whole is illusory, but the illusion is of immense advantage to the capitalist exploiters of labor because it blurs the real cause of unemployment, falling wages and declining living standards.

So-called liberals and conservatives are agreed on one point: The debate on immigration policy is essentially a debate on labor policy. It is a debate on regulating the ebb and flow of labor onto the labor market. Writing on “Immigration Debates” more than a year ago, for example, Stephanie Clifford of Inc.com summed up opposing arguments as follows:

“Opponents argue this easing of immigration controls might lead to higher health care costs, with uninsured workers crowding hospitals, along with Americans losing their jobs, beaten out by the foreign workers. But supporters say foreign workers are an economic necessity, and America must handle that reality. ‘Anyone who employs people in lower tech jobs anywhere in the U.S. knows that our companies are already employing hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of foreign nationals who reside here without authorization. And our laws are written in a way where we pretend that we don’t need them,’ says Steve Ladik, past president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and head of the immigration law group at Jenkens & Gilchrist in Dallas. ‘But the fact is the economies of Texas, Illinois, California, New York and half the country would collapse if tomorrow we could click our fingers and have every undocumented worker out of the country. Construction, hospitality, the medical industry, manufacturing—all these key segments of our economy are dependent upon these people.’” (Jan. 6, 2005)

Clifford continued by noting that businesses employing high-tech workers have a similar stake and worry that more restrictive immigration laws

will discourage foreign students from applying to American colleges and universities and skilled workers from accepting jobs in the United States.

Even so-called liberals who count themselves as sympathetic towards the millions of immigrants at the center of the current debate fail to perceive this. They argue that the immigrant does not come into direct competition with most workers because they gravitate into those industries and services where skill requirements are minimal. One recent example of this comes from Joshua Holland of AlterNet.com and his article, “Toward a Real Immigration Debate,” posted on the website on April 16.

“The myth is that there is one American ‘labor market’ which adheres strictly to the laws of supply and demand,” Holland claimed. “As Thom Hartmann recently put it, ‘Working Americans have always known this simple equation: More workers, lower wages. Fewer workers, higher wages.’”

“That kind of simplistic view is dangerously inaccurate. It suggests that working people are perfectly mobile, both geographically and socioeconomically. To understand the real picture, you’ve got to disaggregate. There is no ‘American’ labor market—that’s a simplification. There are dozens of labor markets divided by education and skills levels, as well as by region. Thom Hartmann writes: ‘Do a little math...there are between eight and 20 million un- and underemployed Americans,’ and concludes that natives could fill all the jobs taken by immigrants. But an unemployed Pennsylvania steel worker doesn’t do anything for a California farmer’s labor needs.”

In truth, however, capitalism is organized in such a way that conditions in any industry are bound to have an impact on workers in all industries. As intensified exploitation and declining wages in the production of food and the manufacture of clothing proceeds, for example, the equivalent of what workers in all industries require as a “living wage” is bound to decline. Wages have been stagnant for decades and profits have soared precisely because of advancing productivity. Indeed, the circumstances today do not differ fundamentally from what they were 94 years ago when Daniel De Leon had occasion to write the following in these columns:

“Go back to first principles. What is ‘production’? Production is human labor applied to matter and rendered useful to the consumer. Hence: ‘production’ is not limited to the fashioning of matter. Production continues so long as necessary human labor is expended. Hence, the human labor necessary in transportation, distribution and communication is part and parcel of production.

“What is ‘exploitation’? Exploitation is the taking from the human labor necessary for production any part of the fruit of its efforts.

“Consequently, exploitation extends all along the line, until the wealth so produced reaches the ultimate consumer.

“The important point in this is that exploitation, however seemingly otherwise, is not the act of any individual capitalist, or set of capitalists, perpetrated upon any individual workingman, or set of workingmen. Exploitation is a class act—the act of the whole capitalist class—perpetrated upon a class—the whole working class.” (Feb. 4, 1912)

The plain and simple truth is that if we did not have the capitalist system with its labor market and production for sale, if instead we had a socialist industrial democracy with production for use, then the more workers there were available to perform society’s collective labors all the lighter would the burden be on each of us.

There is but one sure way of keeping one’s vision clear and free from the misleading propaganda that pulls workers apart rather than helping to unite them. That is through the study of socialism and the SLP’s program of Socialist Industrial Unionism, which proves that the real cause of the manifold social evils that plague us today is the capitalist system.

# ...‘Evil Axis’

(Continued from page 1)

sis. He does not consider that the turn to religious fundamentalism and militarism is very likely an effect of the failure of capitalism rather than its cause. Nowhere does he consider the needs of the working class, how they will be affected by this decline, or what they need to do to save themselves from its effects. While he mentions the concentration of wealth that has taken place in recent years, he does not discuss the effects of globalization and increased exploitation of the working class. He doesn’t acknowledge that it is the sons and daughters of the working class who are fighting the war in Iraq.

While he speaks of the pernicious effects of the new Republican theocracy, he does not consider the use of religion to blur classconsciousness and portray the government’s warmongering, exploitive and environmentally destructive actions in a “moral” light. While he mentions the dismissive attitude towards science and knowledge, he does not acknowledge the Orwellian manipulation of scientific information or creation of Doublespeak terms: “creating democracy” for an imperialist invasion, “climate change” for global warming, “Clear Skies” for increasing air pollution.

Lastly, Phillips offers no solution. There is none under capitalism. The system is spinning out of control. It cannot respond meaningfully to predicted oil shortages, global warming or the challenges of wars in the Mideast. Workers must realize that the answer is not in religion, but socialism.

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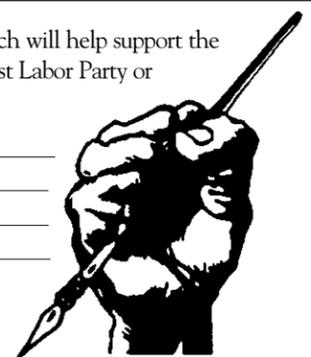
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## letters to the People

### Lenin and Stalin

The "50 Years Ago" article in the March-April issue of *The People*, "De-Stalinization Couldn't Save Soviet Union From Its Betrayal of Marxist Principles," overlooked one big reason why Lenin was forced to bureaucratize the Communist Party shortly after the October Revolution.

Lenin was counting on a workers' revolution in Germany, which would then spark a European revolution. Lenin knew the victory of the Bolsheviks would be short-lived without the support of all of Europe. I agree that Stalin betrayed Marxist principles, but the article attempts to place unfair blame on Lenin. Criticism among comrades means looking at what we do wrong and what we do right and then progressing the proletariat towards its ultimate mission and to never lose sight of the fact that we are united in one goal—the emancipation of all oppressed peoples, the emancipation of the working class.

Doug Smiley  
Indianapolis, Ind.

*[It is probably safe to say that the Soviet Union was doomed to collapse from the start, but that is a different question from the measures taken to preserve it. Lenin and Trotsky both understood that the Soviet Union could never survive without the direct support of a socialist revolution in Germany, at least, and repeatedly said so. However, that did not justify stripping the workers' own organizations of their power and of laying the political foundation for a repressive state apparatus. Rosa Luxemburg certainly didn't think so, and neither did the SLP. The article from 50 years ago did not "blame" Lenin, however. It merely noted a fact. No one man can be held solely responsible for great historic events, obstacles or opportunities. To do so would be to deny the materialist conception of history. Yet, it would also be wrong to go to the opposite extreme to exonerate people from all responsibility for their actions. Building up rather than undermining the workers' organizations of revolutionary Russia, nurturing rather than stifling working-class democracy, contrary to the Bolshevik policy over which Lenin incontrovertibly had great influence, almost certainly would have maximized whatever the Soviet Union's chances for survival really were. It would have done that by holding up an example more closely resembling what the socialist revolution aspires to, thereby adding some stimulus to the European revolution conceded as being necessary for success. To lose sight of this would be to blind ourselves to history's lessons and leave the working class vulnerable to similar*

*disasters in the future. We can think of no greater disservice to the human race.]*

### Google at Home

I am replying to your article "Do Capitalists Put Profit Before Principle?" in your issue of March-April. While your analysis of Google's duplicity in acquiescing to China's restrictions on the search engine in that country is very impressive, nevertheless, such abridgments are taking place against the background of the U.S.'s own attempts at censoring the same domain under the pretext of looking for pornography. In reality, the main reason for wanting these records is to spy on as many people as possible that use Google and other major Internet search engines, especially in the political domain, as it has been the case since 9/11 (as well as well before 9/11). In other words, the main reason for the government's going after Google is not to look for pornography (local, national as well as international law enforcement agencies already have this power), much as trying to spread its tentacles in monitoring what many people read as well write or say. In this vein, it aims at trying to whittle away at real, imagined or future dissenting voices to both its domestic and foreign policies under the guise of searching for pornography. Oftentimes, state repression is coated with good intentions that are supposed to streamline morality. For instance, after the expulsion of the Asian population in Uganda in 1972, the Amin regime started reading ordinary mail that came in and out of the country. This was supposed to be a temporary edict of ensuring that the departing Asian population was not smuggling money out of the country through mail. However, that habit was never rescinded after the Asians' departure from the country. Instead, surveillance of all incoming and outgoing mail became official government policy. In a similar manner, the U.S. government could use the Google records on the pretext of hunting for pornography as a stepping stone into monitoring peoples' surfing, reading and writing habits. Yes, it is good to point out Google's self-censorship vis-à-vis China. However, it is also imperative to point out with trepidation, the U.S. government's attempt at censoring the Internet, as well as intimidating its users, under such lofty ideals as smut search.

Stephen B. Isabirye  
Flagstaff, Ariz.

## ACTIVITIES

### CALIFORNIA

**San Francisco: Discussion Meeting**—Section San Francisco Bay Area will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, April 29, 1:30–4 p.m., San Francisco Public Library, Conference Room, Grove & Larkin streets.

### ILLINOIS

**Chicago: Discussion Meeting**—Section Cook County will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, May 20, 3–5 p.m., New World Resource Center, 1300 N. Western Ave. Topic: "Socialism: Its Meaning and Promise." For more information write SLP, PO Box 1432, Skokie, IL 60076, or email alexjiwasa@gmail.com.

### OHIO

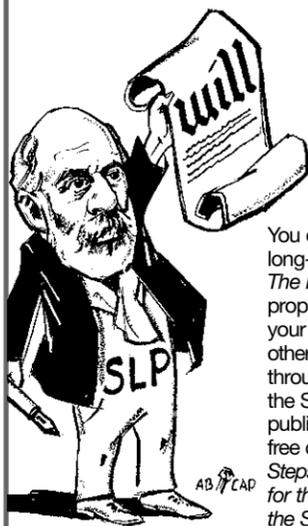
**Cleveland: Literature Booth**—Section Cleveland will staff a literature booth at this year's Hessler Street Fair, May 20–21, noon to dusk. The street fair is located off Ford Drive near Euclid Ave., University Circle, on Cleveland's East Side. For more information call 440-237-7933.

**Columbus: Discussion Meetings**—Section Cleveland will hold discussion meetings on Sunday, May 14 and June 25, 1–3 p.m., Carnegie Library, Meeting Room 1, Grant and Oak streets. For more information call 440-237-7933.

**Independence: Discussion Meetings**—Section Cleveland will hold the following discussion meetings from 1–3 p.m.: Sunday, May 7, Independence Public Library, 6361 Selig Dr., (off Rt. 21 [Brecksville Rd.] between Chestnut and Hillside); Sunday, June 4, 1–3 p.m., Days Inn Motel, 5555 Brecksville Rd. (just south of R17-Granger Rd.). For more information call 440-237-7933.

### OREGON

**Portland: Discussion Meetings**—Section Portland will hold the following discussion meetings from 10 a.m.–12 noon at the Portland Main Library, SW Yamhill & 10th: Saturday, May 13, "Can It Happen Here? The Instability of Capitalism"; and Saturday, June 10, "The Communist Manifesto in the 21st Century." For more information call Sid at 503-226-2881 or visit the section's website at <http://slp.pdx.home.mindspring.com>.



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(Feb. 11–Apr. 14)

### Christmas Box

Earl Prochaska \$100; Ed Jasiewicz \$50;  
Marion Miller \$35.  
Total: \$185.00

### New Publications Fund

Jason Cant \$3.00. (Total)

### Press Security Fund

Anonymous \$500; Chris Dobreff \$400; \$200 each Gertrude Sim (In memory of Archie Sim), Irene Schelin; Thomas Maurer \$100; Phillip Colligan \$95; Robert Ormsby \$75; \$50 each Barbara Coffman (In memory of Archie Sim), Harvey K. Fuller, John S. & Rosemary Gale; Marshall G. Soura \$45; \$30 each George Frenoy, Jane Christian, Richard F. Mack; William Rickman \$28; Joseph C. Massimino \$25; \$22 each Alex Iwasa, Sol Berman; Jim Comerford \$20.40; \$20 each Daniel Goodsaid, George Lovrich, Sophie Carevich; \$15 each Marotte, Robert Varone; Daniel Kryk \$10.20; \$10 each Ben Kraft, Costanzo A. Rufó, Dorothy M. Olean, Louis J. Marovitch; Roy K. Nelson \$9.60; Don Patrick \$6.22; Robert & Mandarsita Brothers \$6; \$5 each Orville Rutschman, Robert A. Bloomer, Robert Beaudette; Marvin Ronis \$3; Daniel Brian Lazarus \$2; Ronald G. Spangler Jr. \$1.  
Total: \$2,155.42

### Prisoner Subscription Fund

Wells Bain \$5.00 (Total)

### SLP Leaflet Fund

Henry Coretz \$35; Daniel Kryk \$12; \$10 each Alex Iwasa, Ronald Ingalsbe; Joe Frank \$6.  
Total: \$73.00

### SLP Sustainer Fund

Joan Davis \$800; Robert P. Burns \$320; Bernard Bortnick \$300; Chris Dobreff \$200; Michael Preston \$125; \$100 each Lois Reynolds, Section Wayne County, Mich. (In memory of Comrades John Sarkisian and Archie Sim); Richard A. Aiken (In memory of John W. Aiken) \$45; Section San Francisco Bay Area: Bill Kelley \$40; \$30 each Clayton Hewitt, Jill Campbell, Steve Littleton; \$25 each Christofer Nigro, Helena Stevens, Louis J. Marovitch, Mike Kowalski; Michael A. Wenksunas \$20; George Gaylord \$2.  
Total: \$4,323.00

### Socialist Labor Party

#### Financial Summary

Bank balance (Jan. 31) .....\$145,660.18  
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Income (Feb.-Mar.) ..... 7,584.27  
Bank balance (Mar. 31) .....\$133,959.63  
Deficit for 2006 .....\$ 15,893.63

**MORE STRIFE AHEAD**

# New Oil & Gas Estimates Raise Stakes in Afghanistan

By Diane Secor

In October 2001, U.S. military forces invaded Afghanistan ostensibly to “liberate” its people from the Taliban and to protect the American people from terrorism. After four and a half years of U.S. military intervention, the fighting continues as the U.S.-sponsored regime of Afghan President Hamid Karzai struggles to stay in power.

The future of Afghanistan and the prospects for a prolonged U.S. military presence there took on new importance in March when it was disclosed that the U.S. Geological Survey and the Afghan Ministry of Mines and Industry had discovered that the Afghan-Tajik and Amu Darya basins contain much larger reserves of natural gas and oil than previously estimated.

“Two geological basins in northern Afghanistan hold 18 times the oil and triple the natural gas resources previously thought, scientists said Tuesday [March 14] as part of a U.S. assessment aimed at enticing energy development in the war-torn country.” (Associated Press, March 15)

What that means in terms of sheer volume becomes clear when comparing the new estimate of Afghanistan’s gas and oil reserves to an earlier one published by the U.S. Department of Energy:

“Northern Afghanistan has proved, probable and possible natural gas reserves of about 5 trillion cubic feet....This area, which is a southward extension of the highly prolific, natural gas-prone Amu Darya Basin, has the potential to hold a sizable undiscovered gas resource base, especially in sedimentary layers deeper than what were developed during the Soviet era. Afghanistan’s crude oil potential is more modest, with perhaps up to 100 million barrels of medium-gravity recoverable from Angot and other fields that are undeveloped. Afghanistan

also may possess relatively small volumes of gas liquids and condensate.” (“Afghanistan Fact Sheet,” June 2004)

The new estimates came out of a four-year study financed by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency. The oil and natural gas deposits in these two basins may be even more abundant since this study was limited to Afghan territory and did not include the parts of these basins in neighboring countries.

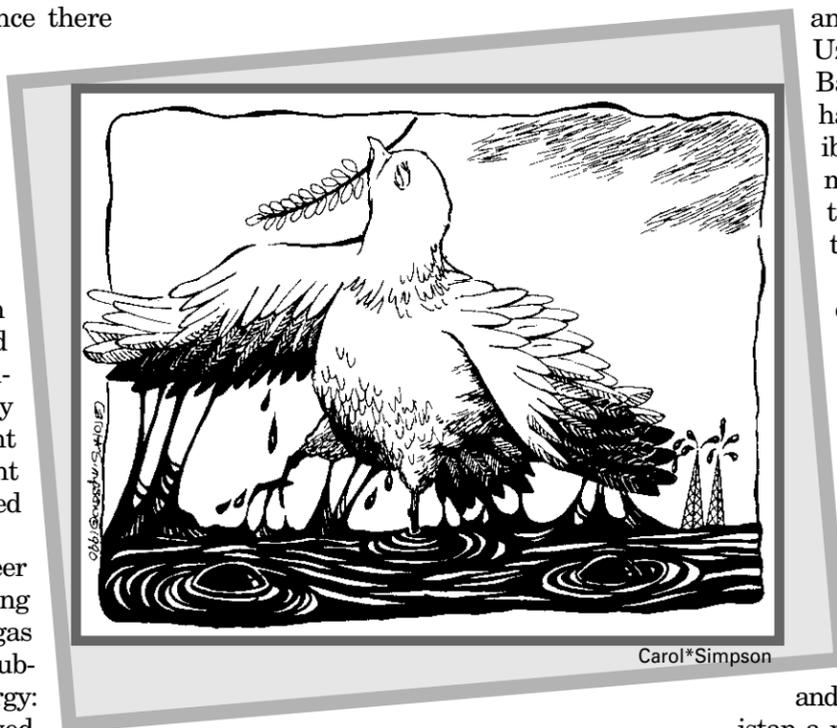
edly, the United States also offered to safeguard this pipeline route and construction by the “permanent stationing of its troops in the region.”

During the 1990s, the American oil firm Unocal led an international consortium with similar intentions. That plan also envisioned a gas pipeline that would pass through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The infrastructure of this gas pipeline and Central Asian Oil Pipeline Project could be linked to the “oil and gas fields of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan portions of the Amu Darya Basin.” Because these pipelines would have to pass through what then was Taliban-controlled Afghan territory, Unocal made overtures to the Taliban regime to try to make them business partners of the consortium.

Negotiations with the Taliban regime eventually broke down. When the Bush administration decided to replace the Taliban regime in 2001, they pledged to provide the new Karzai regime with full “political, diplomatic, military and security support.” In accord with this arrangement, Associated Press reported that Karzai has been promised \$1.1 billion in U.S. aid for Afghanistan next year.

The discovery of greater oil and natural gas resources in the Afghan-Tajik and the Amu Darya basins makes Afghanistan a more lucrative prize in the competition among the world’s capitalist classes for control of the region. The Afghan ambassador to the United States, H.E. Said Tayeb Jawad, said that “the legal infrastructure is in place for the companies to come in” to “start exploring oil and gas.” He assured foreign investors that the Karzai regime is committed to “fighting terrorism” and to making Afghanistan safe for foreign capitalists.

What the new discoveries suggest about the future of U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan seems too obvious to explore.



Karzai had reason to welcome these “very positive findings,” as he called them, and which he hopes will lure more foreign investors. More than two years ago, *Alexander’s Gas and Oil Connections*, an online source of information about the industry, reported that the governments of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan had “signed a protocol” for the construction of the trans-Afghanistan Gas Pipeline Project, also called TAP. The Karzai regime promised to provide security for this pipeline route. Report-

## Climate Warming Impacting Polar Ice

In the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken of the massive ice sheets covering both Greenland and Antarctica, NASA scientists confirm climate warming is changing how much water remains locked in Earth’s largest storehouse of ice and snow.

Other recent studies have shown increasing losses of ice in parts of these sheets. This new survey is the first to inventory the losses of ice and the addition of new snow on both in a consistent and comprehensive way throughout an entire decade.

The survey shows that there was a net loss of ice from the combined polar ice sheets between 1992 and 2002 and a corresponding rise in sea level. The survey documents for the first time extensive thinning of the West Antarctic ice shelves and an increase in snowfall in the interior of Greenland, as well as thinning at the edges. All are signs of a warming climate predicted by computer models.

The survey, published in the *Journal of Glaciology*, combines new satellite mapping of the height of the ice sheets from two European Space Agency satellites. It also used previous NASA airborne mapping of the edges of the Greenland ice sheets to determine how fast the thickness is changing.

In Greenland, the survey saw large ice losses along the southeastern coast and a large increase in ice thickness at higher elevations in the interior due to relatively high rates of snowfall. This study suggests there was a slight gain in the total mass of frozen water in the ice sheet over the decade studied, contrary to previous assessments.

This situation may have changed in just the past few years, according to lead author Jay Zwally of NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md. In February, NASA scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif., reported a speedup of ice flow into the sea from several Greenland glaciers. That study included observations through 2005; Zwally’s survey concluded with 2002 data.

When the scientists added up the overall gains and losses of ice from the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, there was a net loss of ice to the sea. The amount of water added to the oceans (20 billion tons) is equivalent to the total amount of freshwater used in homes, businesses and farming in New York, New Jersey and Virginia each year.

“The study indicates that the contribution of the ice sheets to recent sea-level rise during the decade studied was much smaller than expected, just two percent of the recent increase of nearly three millimeters a year,” says Zwally.

“Continuing research using NASA satellites and other data will narrow the uncertainties in this important issue.”

NASA is continuing to monitor the polar ice sheets with the Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite (ICESat), launched in January 2003. ICESat uses a laser beam to measure the elevation of ice sheets with unprecedented accuracy three times a year. The first comprehensive ice sheet survey conducted by ICESat is expected early next year said Zwally, who is the mission’s project scientist.

—NASA

### Abolition of Poverty

By Daniel De Leon

An examination of capitalism and its philosophical “justifications” as presented by a Jesuit priest. Contrasts socialism’s materialist conception of history with class society’s “idealism.”

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