



# the People

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## Thanksgiving Fund

### 'Freedom Of Choice'

Justin is a one-year-old. Well, he was a one-year-old. No, Justin didn't have a birthday. He'll never have another birthday. One was all he got. You see, Justin is dead. He died in a fire in October. Justina died, too. She was Justin's sister. She was nine. She was in charge while Kim was at work. Kim was Justina's mom. Justin's, too. Now she's no one's mom. Now she may go to jail, and for a long time.

That's nearly all we know about Justin, Justina and Kim—but not quite all. We know the kids had a dad. We know Kim said the dad was supposed to be there. We know he denied it. Someone's wires got crossed, or someone lied, or someone got scared. Who can tell?

But we do know that Kim wasn't one of those welfare moms we hear such bad things about.

No, Kim was saved from the shame of it by two great friends of the people. You'll remember them—Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich.

Well, now we're speculating. For all we know, Kim never was a welfare mom. We'll just say she didn't have the option.

But we do know that Kim wasn't out with her boyfriend. She wasn't doing dope when the fire broke out in her basement apartment there in Brooklyn. She was looking after things. Not her kids. No, she was looking after the cash drawer down at McDonald's.

Kim was a working mom. Her boss must have liked her work, too, because she just got promoted to assistant manager. Bosses are too busy to look after cash drawers and such, so Kim did it. No one said so, but we guess that means the boss thought she was honest and a hard worker. She didn't dip into the till. She was reliable. But she wasn't paid much.

All this we know from a very reputable source. Our source is not one of those unnamed mysterious ones you read about in the newspapers—no anonymous whistle blower. Our source is not shy in that way. In fact, it is a newspaper—*The New York Times*.

Now, newspapers are "objective." That might not count when it comes to editorials. That's where the newspaper gives its opinion. But not in its news columns—unless the facts leave no choice. Oh, yes, choice. We almost forgot about that. We almost forgot that Kim had a choice—Kim and the moms and dads who leave "more than 3 million children—some as young as 5—to care for themselves for at least a few hours a week on a regular basis, according to..."

According to whom? Well, not according to the *Times*. According to some study cited by the *Times*. The *Times* reports the news, it doesn't make it, and it certainly doesn't take any responsibility for it. But it makes its own headlines. And the headline it chose for this story was: "Daily Choice Turned Deadly: Children Left on Their Own."

Look after McDonald's cash drawer or look after your kids—it's a "choice."

Work to feed, house and clothe your kids, or stay with them, play with them, bounce them on your knee, tickle them, and starve with them. It's a choice. Some call it "freedom of choice." Some call it "free will."

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## 'Marshall Plan' for Iraq Meant to Spur U.S. Economy

The debate over the Bush administration's \$87 billion "reconstruction" plan for Iraq and Afghanistan has inevitably invited comparisons to the Marshall Plan of the 1940s and 1950s, just as the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, invited comparisons with the attack on Pearl Harbor 60 years before. The administration itself reportedly sparked the controversy by comparing what its reconstruction package is meant to accomplish to what the Marshall Plan accomplished during the Cold War. As *The New York Times* reported on Sept. 27:

"The Bush administration says its plan to rebuild Iraq is modeled on the farsighted spirit of the Marshall Plan. But lawmakers and historians are increasingly finding flaws in the post-war analogy, many of which are at the heart of the debate over the administration's \$87 billion spending request, which includes a modest amount for Afghanistan.

"The Marshall Plan, they say, required a much larger contribution from its European beneficiaries after World War II than the administration is asking of Iraq. European countries were required by the Truman administration to match every dollar of U.S. aid, and 10 percent of the Marshall Plan's \$13 billion (worth about \$105 billion today) was made up of loans."

It is difficult to take any of these criticisms seriously, however, once it is understood what

the Marshall Plan was meant to accomplish.

When the Marshall Plan was adopted after World War II the mass media depicted it as a humanitarian gesture designed to help the devastated countries of Western Europe recover from the destruction caused by the war. Fact is, however, that the Marshall Plan was a carefully crafted program designed to prevent Europe from falling under the influence of the former Soviet Union, thereby depriving American capitalism of markets it could ill afford to lose.

In addition, the loss of the Europe's markets might easily have plunged world capitalism back into the economic crisis of the 1930s. The economic stimulus the war had provided evaporated with the defeat of Nazi Germany and the nuclear arms race that would take its place had barely started.

The danger that these circumstances posed to U.S. capitalism came out in the debate on the Marshall Plan in the Senate, where it was admitted that the plan was a weapon in the Cold War, a vital weapon whose primary purpose was to defend America's markets in Western Europe. The following colloquy between Senators James Eastland of Mississippi and Joseph Lister Hill of Alabama, from the *Congressional Record* of March 9, 1948, emphasizes this point:

"Mr. EASTLAND. The senator [Sen. Lister Hill,

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## 'Jobless Recovery' Fuels Greater Class Division

By Ken Boettcher

The inability of the U.S. working class to recognize that its material interests are diametrically and irrevocably opposed to those of the wealthy elite that constitutes the U.S. capitalist class stands as one of the greatest ironies in history. That recognition could put the working class, which alone produces all the vast wealth in this society, on the road to solving virtually all the economic and social problems which increasingly plague the nation.

Lacking it, the overwhelming majority in society, the working class, has no hope of escaping the grim economic realities of the present "jobless recovery"—let alone any other of the multitude of worsening social, economic and environmental crises the capitalist system produces.

The litany of economic insults cracking over the collective back of the working class like a bullwhip is a long one.

According to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), "the current recovery is the worst on record since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began tracking employment in 1939. Employment is down over 1 million since the recovery began." (Emphasis added.)

Counting the actual recession, as well as the "recovery," job losses have been even greater. "Since March 2000," noted an article in the *Boston Business Journal*, "some 4 million jobs have been lost." According to the EPI, that is "the worst hiring slump since the Great Depression."

Unemployment has wavered between an understated official rate of 6.2 and 6.1 percent for the last three months. But as the EPI report noted, "The decline in the growth of the labor force has partially suppressed the growth of unemployment, as an estimated 2 million workers have given up the search for work and are thus not counted" as part of the labor force. (Emphasis added.) "Had the labor force's growth kept pace," the report continued, "unemployment would likely be closer to 7.0 percent."

"So many people are discouraged," observed the *Boston Business Journal* article, and "have stopped looking for work at all, [it has caused] the labor force to experience its largest drop in 40 years."

The EPI report also noted that in July underemployment, "a broader indicator" of what it

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# Massive Unemployment Strikes Southern Mill Workers

By B.B.

Nearly half of all production jobs in southern textile plants have disappeared since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect in 1994, and further losses are almost certain.

Textile capitalists hoped to profit handsomely from NAFTA. The theory ran something like this: U.S. textile mills would supply American garment manufacturers who moved their production plants to Mexico to take advantage of cut-rate wage levels there. From Mexico finished garments would be exported to markets throughout the hemisphere and textile production jobs back in the United States would be secure.

Huge profits were anticipated and, for a time, that aspect of the plan appeared to work. Sales boomed from 1994 to 2000, according to *The Dallas Morning News*, as the market value of U.S. textile exports more than tripled from about \$1 billion to about \$3.7 billion.

By implication the benefits that the textile and garment industries derived from NAFTA during its first five or six years were also to redound to U.S. textile workers. That is the inference that *Dallas Morning News* writer Katherine Yung made in the opening paragraph of her article on NAFTA and the textile industry.

"When the North American Free Trade Agreement burst onto the scene," she wrote, "many of the men who ran the country's textile mills envisioned a dazzling future for their long-suffering industry and its nearly 500,000 workers." (*The Dallas Morning News*, Sept. 28)

Did employment and wages also increase during this same period? Did American textile workers also gain something while mill capitalists rejoiced? Not according to *The Dallas Morning News*. As exports increased the number of mill jobs declined.

One of two graphs printed with Yung's article indicates that the number of production jobs held steady at about 483,000 between 1990 and 1994. Between 1994, when NAFTA took effect, and 2000, however, jobs declined to about 375,000. Since then the decline has continued until reaching the current level of about 260,000. This decline is critical not only because of the impoverishment of millworkers, but because it suggests that textile industry productivity increased as jobs fell, tending to debunk the myths surrounding NAFTA job-creating attributes.

For example: unionized millworkers in North Carolina, where 50,000 jobs have been lost, attribute their plight to NAFTA despite a rise in textile exports to Mexico. One recently fired worker with 35 years at one company said, "I think NAFTA is one of the worst things that happened to a lot of people. It makes you ill." (*The Dallas Morning News*, Sept. 28)

The flies in the NAFTA ointment were many. Mill owners expected a large market in apparel production to open in Mexico that was to serve as a "platform" for exports to the Western Hemisphere. Initially, booming sales by relocated American apparel companies spurred textile growth but then they ended up exporting largely to the American market, not Central and South America.

These troubles were compounded by unanticipated growth and competition from Mexican apparel capitalists and a trade agreement that opened up the Caribbean to U.S. exploiters, drawing capital away from Mexico. An aggressively developing Asian textile industry further eroded NAFTA by capitalizing upon the devaluation of Asian currencies, thus enhancing their competitive edge against Mexican exports.

China lost its competitive edge to Mexico as an exporter to the American market in 1998.

At the time various textile manufacturers, such as Burlington Industries, Cone Mills and Guilford Mills, set up operations in Mexico, some of which began manufacturing clothing.

The euphoria did not last long. China has recently regained its competitive edge as U.S. capitalists charged currency manipulation to "keep its export prices artificially low," and then these free enterprisers demanded that the Bush administration impose quotas on various apparel products being dumped on the market by China.

Similar tactics employed by U.S. capitalists would be viewed as shrewd and strategically savvy. Countermeasures by the Bush administration are bound to evoke retaliatory responses. Whatever the outcome, employment for U.S. textile workers will continue to decline.

Textile workers need to recognize that their interests are not served by clinging to the outmoded capitalist system. What is needed is placing industry in the hands of workers, producing for social needs, not profit, and organizing all industries into a democratic governing body replacing the outmoded political government we currently have. This in its bare outlines is socialism—a system in which innovative technology will not dispense with jobs but will eliminate working hours from the day and in which the working class will enjoy the full benefit of the bounty that it alone produces.

## 255075 100 years ago

### MACHINE REALLY FLEW Ohio Inventors Go Three Miles Against Twenty-one Mile Breeze.

(*Daily People*, Dec. 19, 1903)

Norfolk, Va., Dec. 18.—A successful trial of a flying machine was made yesterday near Kitty Hawk, N.C., by Wilbur and Orville Wright, of Dayton, O. The machine flew for three miles in the face of a wind blowing twenty-one miles an hour and then descended at the spot selected by the navigator.

The machine has no balloon attachment, but gets its force from propellers worked by a small engine.

Preparatory to its flight, the machine was placed upon a platform built on a high sand hill, and when all was in readiness the fastenings were released, and it started down an incline. The navigator, Wilbur Wright, started a small gasoline engine, which worked the propellers. When the end of the incline was reached the machine gradually arose until it obtained an altitude of sixty feet. In the face of a strong wind blowing it maintained an even speed of eight miles an hour.

The idea of the box kite has been adhered to in the formation of the flying machine. A framework of light timbers, thirty-three feet wide, five feet deep and five feet across the top forms the machine proper. This is covered with a tight but light canvas. In the centre is the navigator's car, and suspended just below the bottom plane is a gasoline engine, which furnishes the motive power for the propelling and elevating wheels.

There are two six-bladed propellers, one

arranged just below the centre of the frame, so gauged as to exert an upward force when in motion, and the other extends horizontally to the rear from the centre of the car, furnishing the forward impetus. Protruding from the centre of the car is a fan-shaped rudder of canvas, stretched upon a frame of wood. This rudder is controlled by the navigator and may be moved to each side, raised or lowered.

## Do You Belong?

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



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

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

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**California's Recall Circus**

# The Schwarzenegger-Davis Tussle

On Oct. 8, the day after California's highly publicized special recall election, the *San Jose Mercury News* proclaimed the result a "BLOWOUT!"

"In a stinging rebuke of politics as usual," the *Mercury News* declared, "Gray Davis became only the second governor in American history to be recalled, as a tidal wave of voter anger swept the unpopular Democrat from office Tuesday and carried Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger into California's top job."

The Silicon Valley newspaper was right, but not in the way it meant. The election was a blowout, but not because more people voted to remove Gray Davis from office than voted to keep him there, and not because Schwarzenegger got more votes than any of the other self-proclaimed aspirants after Davis' job. The special election was a blowout because only 8.4 million of the state's 15.4 million registered voters turned out on Election Day, while another 6.4 million who were eligible to register failed to do so before the deadline on Sept. 22. About 13.4 million Californians either failed to register as voters, registered but stayed home on Election Day, or did not get the two hours off with pay to cast their votes that the law requires.

In short, the overwhelming majority of Californians—61.5 percent of the 21.8 million who were eligible—turned their backs and closed their ears despite the millions spent to grab their attention and woo them to the polls. It was a "tidal wave" in the opposite direction from the one that was predicted.

If California's special election attracted worldwide attention it was primarily that of the capitalist media, and then largely because of the celebrity status of Arnold Schwarzenegger. For all that, however, the recall circus (as dubbed by some) might have gone by virtually unnoticed by most Californians if not for the \$80 million spent on campaign advertising by well-heeled candidates and the millions of additional dollars the media splurged on the "news" propaganda it bestowed on a few of the "front runners."

In the end Schwarzenegger, who decided to be a Republican so he could enter the race, succeeded in his bid to unseat and replace Davis as governor of the state. That outcome ostensibly reflected widespread dissatisfaction with Davis' record and "anger" over the state's worsening economic crisis, its rising unemployment rate and Davis' "mishandling" of the energy crisis of two years ago.

The Schwarzenegger campaign also accused the Davis administration of creating the country's "worst climate for business" because of higher taxes, workers' compensation insurance rates and energy bills. He put forward a five-point economic program that could easily be

reduced to one point—lowering taxes on corporations and workers' compensation insurance premiums to entice capitalists to keep their businesses in California and to lure others to return or to relocate to the state.

The special election followed a recall petition drive that had languished for months until a multimillionaire California capitalist politician—Congressman Darrell Issa—saw it as an opportunity to make a name for himself. Issa jumped aboard with the money to hire signature gatherers to collect the 2 million needed to qualify the recall proposal for the state ballot, and he promptly declared



JoinArnold.com

**Schwarzenegger promoted himself as a "man of the people" replete with vague promises of restoring California to its former glory.**

himself a candidate to replace Davis. The ambitious multimillionaire eventually withdrew when a small army of equally ambitious would-be governors also proclaimed themselves candidates and paid the \$3,000 fee demanded by the state to have their names printed on the ballot. Schwarzenegger was only one in a field of 135 when the special election rolled around on Oct. 7.

The voters, angry or otherwise, were asked to vote "yes" or "no" on removing Davis from office and, regardless of how they voted on the recall question itself, to go on and choose one among the 135 would-be replacements.

When it was over media pundits and the politicians stuck to their story about California's voters being angry. However, a look at the official results posted on the Web site of California's secretary of state suggests something different.

The Democratic and Republican political machines made determined efforts to persuade more Californians to register as voters before the special election. According to the secretary of state's office, there were 21,833,141 people eligible to register on Sept. 22. That number was 366,867 more than were eligible to register for the general election in November 2002, despite Schwarzenegger's assertion that capitalists are abandoning the state and that large numbers of workers are following in search of new jobs.

When registration for the special election closed, 15,380,536 Californians, representing about 70.5 percent of those who were eligible, were registered. Last year, 15,303,469, or about

71.3 percent of the eligible population, were registered. In spite of the \$80 million in campaign spending, combined with the propaganda "news" blitz, only 77,067 additional potential voters were sufficiently moved by the hoopla to register, and that increase was insufficient to prevent a decline of nearly one percent in registrations relative to eligibility. And when the voting was over, the results showed that the vast majority of Californians, the vast majority of who are, to repeat, workers, were not impressed by anything the candidates or the circus barkers in the media had to say.

Indeed, of the nearly 15.4 million people who registered before Oct. 7, only 8,408,323 went to the polls to vote "yes" or "no" on removing Davis, and of those only 8,113,033 went on to vote for one of the 135 candidates whose names appeared on the ballot.

The turnout on Oct. 7 represented only 54.5 percent of California's registered voters, which was far less than the 60 percent figure that had been widely predicted by the media and the pollsters, and only 38.5 percent of the 21.8 million who could have voted if they had all registered and gone to the polls.

What those results show is that neither the politicians nor the pundits know what the working class is thinking, unless it is that workers are not looking to Republicans, Democrats, or to their Green and Libertarian spinoffs, for solutions to the problems that plague the state and the country. The working class remains a "sleeping giant" that \$80 million—\$9.52 for every vote cast—plus the media's propaganda "news" blitz could not arouse.

## ...Freedom

(Continued from page 1)

But then we wondered. Who gave Kim that choice? Why didn't she have other choices? Why was her "freedom to choose" so limited? Did we miss something? No, the *Times* didn't say. The *Times* only prints the news that's fit to print. Some things just don't measure up to that standard. Sometimes you just have to think things through for yourself.

This is what we think. We think capitalism gave Kim her "choice." We think a social system that gives hardworking and loving moms like Kim that kind of choice is shameful, criminal. We think the *Times* knows all about it. We think its pages cover it over like a derelict on a park bench. We think it's time that workers thought about making another choice—outside the box, as they say. We'd like to offer them that choice—the choice between the capitalism that squanders our labor, our lives and our children and the social and economic democracy that socialism would mean.

All the Justins and Justinas of the country are children of the working class. The SLP is the party of the working class, and *The People* is its voice. Help us bring the choice the SLP and *The People* have to offer to all the Kims, to all the moms and dads, whose only crime is that they want better lives for themselves and their children.

Please use the coupon on page 6 to support *The People's* annual Thanksgiving Fund.

## the People

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## OREGON

### Portland

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

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Discussion Meetings**—Section Houston holds discussion meetings the last Saturday of the month at the Houston Public Library, Franklin Branch, 6440 W. Bellfort, southwest Houston. The time of the meetings varies. Those interested please call 281-838-0008, e-mail [houstonslp@frys.com](mailto:houstonslp@frys.com) or visit the section's Web site at <http://houstonslp.tripod.com>.

# the People

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## Health Care & Class Struggle

October's strikes by 83,000 grocery workers in California, West Virginia and Missouri and 2,000 transit workers in Los Angeles underscore the ascendance of health care to a leading position in the class struggle over the division of the wealth produced by the working class. Planned or de facto cuts in health care coverage or benefits figure prominently in the struggles of all 85,000 workers—and promise to figure ever more prominently in the class struggle generally as the capitalist class increasingly turns the screws on workers to boost profits.

According to a September report co-released by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and the Health Research and Educational Trust, "The amount workers pay toward job-based premiums for family coverage skyrocketed 49 percent over the past three years," as an AFL-CIO account noted. The report also noted that the premium cost for job-based health plans rose a whopping 13.9 percent between 2002 and 2003—and 49 percent over the last three years.

At Wal-Mart, the county's largest private employer, more than 60 percent, or 600,000 of its workers, cannot afford the company's health care plan. According to the United Food and Commercial Workers union, over 3,000 U.S. working families are presently losing health insurance coverage every day. During the Bush administration alone, 3.7 million workers have lost their coverage—making the total 44 million today. While 63 percent of U.S. workers had health care plans at work (essentially as part of their wage) a decade ago, only 45 percent have such plans in 2003.

These figures represent in broad outline the scope of the vicious attack the working class is presently attempting to defend itself against. We say "attempting," because the figures show the struggle is clearly not going well for workers. That trend is not likely to change if workers continue to be "organized" as they presently are and are limited to the goals and tactics of the present unions.

Today's procapitalist unions just aren't cutting it for workers because they are based on the idea that the union's role is to cooperate with the owners and reach a bargain acceptable to them. Their whole approach and their main and increasingly seldom-used weapon—the strike, which leaves the factories and services in the hands of the employer—are simply inadequate.

What good does collective bargaining do when the owners you try to "bargain" with say, "Take these cuts or you're out!"—and have the power to enforce that ultimatum thanks in part to the growing army of unemployed their system produces? How effective can a strike be when owners can and do fire and replace strikers en masse or starve them into submission? How far can a union go in protecting or advancing workers' interests if it accepts capitalism and the "right" of capitalists to make a profit, as do today's unions?

Adequate health care—and much more—could be gained by a working class fitted differently for the contest. Suppose that workers organize a different *kind* of unionism with a different form, different tactics and a different goal. Such a union would start by recognizing a basic fact. Since all capitalists are in business to reap as great a profit as possible—or face failure at the hands of some competitor who more closely acts on this principle—the owners of the industries, the capitalists, as a class, constantly strive to keep labor costs as low as possible. That means displacing workers, forcing down wages and cutting benefits to the bone. Workers, as a class, resist as best they can. There is a constant struggle between these classes.

But since capitalists own the industries and therefore have the power to shut them down, move them and lay off or replace workers at will, and workers must sell their ability to work to the capitalists in order to live, the capitalists have the upper hand in this *class struggle*. The more unemployment grows, the more leverage the capitalists have to beat down workers' wages, benefits and working conditions.

Suppose unions aim to challenge the capitalists' power itself—unions that recognize another basic fact: that it is the workers, as a class, that built and run all the nation's industries and services. The industrial property that today's capitalists own is an accumulation of wealth *stolen* from the working class over the years through the process of *exploitation*—paying workers wages equal to only a fraction of the wealth *they alone* create.

Suppose we build a new kind of union—a union that recognizes that workers don't need a minority class of parasitical owners in order to run the industries, a union that aims not to *bargain* with the capitalists but to *dispossess* them.

What workers in every industry need today is a new, revolutionary union movement that aims to organize the entire working class—employed and unemployed, blue and white collar—along industrial lines for the express purpose of taking *control* of the industries, declaring them the property of society and administering them through a collective, democratic process to meet society's wants and needs. Along the road to that goal such a labor movement would force more concessions from the capitalists—and better defend such things as health care benefits—than a procapitalist union ever could.

In the socialist society which is the goal of such a movement, a worker-controlled health care industry would be part of a new social system in which all of society's productive efforts would be democratically planned and administered to meet human needs.

Such a classless industrial society would be able to realize the potential that already exists in advanced industrial nations to provide excellent health care for all. It would be a simple matter of the people voting to allocate the resources and labor needed to do so.

This is the essence of the Socialist Industrial Union program of the Socialist Labor Party—a program through which society as a whole can control the economy to satisfy the needs of all, not to reap profits for a few.

As today's trends toward falling real wages, increasing labor time and accelerating cuts to benefits like health care plans demonstrate, the alternative to such a revolutionary movement is really nothing less than submission to capitalism's own brand of slavery.

—K.B.

### A De Leon Editorial

## 'Capital' and 'Wealth'

Capital and wealth are not the same. Capital is wealth stolen from labor and used to steal even more.



### The Worker's Hope

(Daily People, Aug. 3, 1913)

"The real economic hope of the worker is in greatly increased accumulation of capital. 'Capital, more capital, and yet more capital,' should be his watchword. At every increase of accumulated wealth he should rub his hands and congratulate himself. Instead of capital being the enemy, it is the friend. Instead of the worker wishing to see capital destroyed, it should be his end and aim to see it built up and increased."

This from the aristocratic London *Spectator*, sounds nice and plausible—just as if an oysterman, with a nice fat bivalve on his lap ready for opening, should address it so:

"Now, oyster dear, don't squirm so. Your real economic hope is in greatly increased sharpness of knives. 'Sharpness' should be your watchword. At every improvement of knife blades you should rub your shells and congratulate yourself. The knife that opens you, instead of being your enemy, is your friend. Instead of wishing to see knife blades destroyed, it should be your sole endeavor in life to see them enlarged, thickened and ground ever keener that you may be opened all the easier."

Capital does not, as the folks who live on our backs would like to see us believe, mean wealth. In popular parlance, the sun rises. In scientific language the sun stands still and the Earth dips toward it. In the popular lingo handed down to us from the exploiters' schools, capital and wealth are the identical things. In the speech of science, capital is wealth with one added function—that of exploiting, or wringing surplus value out of labor.

When the tools needed for production were simple and cheap, everyone could employ himself. There was wealth, but there was no capital. In this country, at least, where everyone got an even start, there were no John D. Rockefellers, but neither were there any Henry Jacksons falling starving on the street. Everyone possessed the full value of his labor. He gave none of it up to any master.

As soon, however, as the tool of production became too great for every man to acquire, wealth took on a new power. In the hands of those who possessed it, it became a means of purchasing the tool that all needed; it grew into an instrument of oppression; it became capital. Those who worked for the owner of the tool, the capitalist, no longer enjoyed the full product of their labor. The major part they had to turn over to him. The workman was now, as it were, put through the wringer. Whatever of wealth he could carry with him between the rollers, became his wages. What was wrung out in the process—and this was always the greatest portion—flowed into the boss' tub, labeled "profits." Every increase of capital amounted to a tightening of the screws—more wealth stayed in the boss' tub, less dripped through into the pay envelope.

Hence capital is not the workingman's friend. Its increased accumulation spells for him not cause for rejoicing, but increased suffering. And what he must do to save himself is just what the aristocratic *Spectator* warns him against doing: destroy capital—not wealth, that is, but that especial func-

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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.

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

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

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

# 'Megaburbs'—Another Capitalist Blight On the Social Landscape

By B.B.

"Suburban sprawl" has become so extensive and taken on so many new dimensions in recent years that some new terminology has come into vogue to describe it. Some of the new descriptive terms are "megaburbs," "edgeless cities" and "megalopolitan sprawl."

Russell S. Smith is a well-known architect and writer who is concerned. Writing for a recent issue of *Architectural Record* about this chaotic sprawl of random residential communities, commercial buildings and strangling expressway networks that now engulf the cities of the nation, Russell argued that "Americans have not fully come to terms with the dissonance between the historical suburban dream and what is emerging as a megasuburban reality."

Russell deplores the lack of coordinated transportation and development planning, emphasizes the need for increased residential densities and advocates rigorously enforced bans on agricultural and forest land encroachments.

"Megaburbia is what happens when three-quarters of a 282-million-person nation live in what we are used to calling suburbs," Russell wrote. "Many are places that have grown a hundred or a thousandfold over the past 30 years. They are the places that have nurtured high technology, research and advanced manufacturing. Now the beltway burbs and centerless low-rise cities overshadow the central cities in both population and economic activity. Silicon Valley, in California, the pharmaceutical belt in northern New Jersey, and the bistate suburbs of Washington, D.C., have built economies comparable to entire nations."

Combining his own observations with some of other concerned observers—such as Robert E. Lang whose recently published *Edgeless Cities: Exploring the Elusive Metropolis* has attracted considerable attention within professional circles—Russell added the following:

- "Beltway burbs and centerless low-rise cities overshadow the central cities in both population and economic activity."

- "Sprawling high-density business strips typically dump traffic into 10-lane expressways that endlessly proliferate throughout the land."

- "Edgeless cities," usually lying 15 to 30 miles along sinuous beltways, are places that have no focus and no sense of being cities."

- "Competition is fierce among these townships as they vie to open up more and more land for commercial, industrial and housing developments. They are enticed by the fact that "business picks up much of the tab for government services."

"Edgeless city" is the least definable of the new terms used to describe the latest developments in suburban sprawl. One description comes from the Brookings Institution, publisher of Lang's study.

"Edgeless cities are a sprawling form of development that accounts for the bulk of office space found outside of downtowns," it said. "Every major metropolitan area has them: vast swaths of isolated buildings that are neither pedestrian friendly, nor easily accessible by public transit, and do not lend themselves to mixed use. While critics of urban sprawl tend to focus on the social

impact of 'edge cities'—developments that combine large-scale office parks with major retail and housing—edgeless cities, despite their ubiquity, are difficult to define or even locate. While they stay under the radar of critics, they represent a significant departure in the way American cities are built and are very likely the harbingers of a suburban future almost no one has anticipated."

Russell's list of particulars is woefully lacking in describing the true physical impact of anarchistic capitalist suburbanization. For example, among "megaburbs" debilitating effects, air pollution has been growing at an astounding rate over the past two decades. Sports utility vehicles, Humvees and pickups have emerged as an adjunct to the megaburban lifestyle consonant with the growth of "discount" stores where families are encouraged to "load up." Spearheading into the pristine



countryside and fertile farmland, advancing echelons of road and utilities construction equipment, cement plants and a phalanx of other debilitating sources add to the pollution. There are other monumental impacts too.

Consider the recent collapse of electrical utility services on the northeastern section of the country. Such events underline the growing instability of utilities controlled only by the limits of a profitable development market. Lack of water resources has been stretched to crisis proportions by large acreage lawn sprinkling, commercial properties and industrial uses. They loom large in suburban areas such as Phoenix and Los Angeles, being two of the most acute examples. Waste disposal continues to grow as mountainous landfills are maxed out.

Russell calls for controls and coordination on growth such as those imposed by the city of Portland, Ore., and Vancouver's recently constructed light rail transit system. Isolated examples of coordinated mass transportation and land use are dwarfed by the problems sprawl poses. He also suggested higher density housing projects on infill urban sites. Obviously, despoiling fresh acreage on greenfield sites is far more profitable to a developer; that is why they do it.

Indeed, Russell points to numerous competing political jurisdictions that are "hungry for the tax receipts that development will bring" and that offer various enticements to encourage investments. "Given that aversion to innovation that prevails in the real estate industry," he added, "it's still tough to create new development models that engage suburban fears while lowering land consumption and encouraging greater use of auto alternatives."

Demanding controls and legislation, holding seminars, developing puny case studies, holding interminable discussions and issuing papers have amounted to little more than handwring-

ing by well-meaning architects and planners over the years as sprawl has gone from bad, to terrible, to intolerable. Architects and planners cannot solve the problems inherent within capitalism that make the infernal system what it is and capitalist cities what they are, massive "machines" for generating profit. All they can do is take orders, not give them.

Despite all the media hype about the "suburban dream," "the American dream" and such rubbish, "megaburban" living was not one that the working class has chosen. It is a contrivance instigated decades ago with the promotion of racist attitudes and "Jim Crow" prejudices to drive white workers from older neighborhoods into new development areas. An unholy alliance of real estate, automobile, appliance manufacturers, homebuilders' associations, oil companies and banking interests—in other words, the entire capitalist class—were participants.

Here is how the selling of the "American Dream" worked. It was simple: The population is told what they will like and then are asked: "Now, what would you folks like?" This is the game of marketing. It is "brainwashing." The "burbs" was a living pattern imposed upon Americans because it represented an immense market for the disposition of millions and millions of tons of commodities. Similarly, in the past maximizing profits determined the living conditions of those workers who festered in impoverished mining towns and in harsh, dense, miserable factory towns within the old city structure.

Historically, capitalist cities arose when the medieval guild system collapsed. Guild masters, incipient capitalists, sought cheap cottage-industry labor in the countryside to undercut the wages of town artisans, while manorial overlords confiscated the common village grounds of the peasantry for sheep runs and the manufacture of wool. The resulting influx of impoverished peasants, the incipient proletariat, into medieval towns provided the basis of the manufacturing era and ultimately the era of modern industry. Workers' consent was not sought then, and is not sought now.

Russell is not oblivious to the capitalist origins of the problems that "megaburbia" causes.

"The suburb had historically acted as a residential refuge from the city, which was the dynamic factory of capitalism, perpetually tearing itself down and building itself up to respond to the market's incessant demand and ever-changing whim," he wrote.

Curiously, his article is accompanied by the question, "How does the architect enter the pitched battles of suburbia—zoning, open space, traffic and transit?"

However, there is no indication that Russell has even considered the socialist alternative, in which informed popular consent will be the basis of all social planning and industrial activity.

How will the working-class majority in socialist society rectify the grave "megaburban" problem capitalism has created? It will do so by introducing a complete change in the mode of production, thus ending production for profit and enshrining production for use. It will also establish the goal of achieving a balance between the natural world and the manufactured world.

This task will be informed by democratic control of production and the most advanced scientific techniques, and planning methodologies toward the goal of safe, healthful human and animal habitats. We can only imagine what socialist communities will look like. However, unlike capitalist cities that are fragmented agglomerations of billboard-like structures, where discord reins supreme and that compete with one another for sales identity, socialist cities and communities will reflect harmony and integration.

## ... De Leon Editorial

(Continued from page 4)

tion of wealth which consists of opening and sucking the juice out of him as an oyster is opened with a knife.

That he only can do by organizing industrially and politically for the overthrow of capitalism, and the establishment of socialism. That, and that alone, is the worker's hope.

# ... 'Jobless Recovery'

(Continued from page 1)

called "labor market distress" (the misery of millions of workers) "was in double digits, at 10.2 percent."

"For the second consecutive year," an article in the *Chicago Tribune* reported in October, "the number of Americans living in poverty has gone up. Almost 1.7 million fell into poverty last year, the U.S. Census Bureau reports, which pushed the official poverty rate up to 12.1 percent from 11.7 percent in 2001." The new (and also understated) official total is 34.6 million, including 12.1 million children.

Moreover, real wages are again falling after a few years of small gains in the late 1990s that failed to make up the previous two decades of fall. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, "more than 30 million (or one in four) American workers now work in jobs that pay poverty wages, provide little or no health benefits and allow little flexibility in family-leave time for quality child care." The Census Bureau also reported in October that 43.6 million Americans had no health insurance in 2002, up 2.4 million from 2001.

Such figures show the U.S. working class is under serious attack; its living standards are undergoing a vast change for the worse thanks to the choices—most of which are being forced by competition and the profit motive—of a tiny class that owns and controls the means of life.

That tiny ruling class, on the other hand, is raking in more wealth than ever. The net wealth of the nation's richest 400 persons, for example, "rose 10 percent to \$955 billion this year from 2002," according to *Forbes* magazine. And, as the October *Boston Business Journal* article noted, "With 88 percent of companies in the S&P 500 reporting so far, average profit growth has come in at 13.1 percent" over the same quarter (ending March 31) last year.

This vast shift is taking place at the same time as, and thanks to, a many-faceted attack on working conditions that has employed U.S. workers working longer hours than those in any other advanced industrialized country while millions more languish in unemployment. With the capitalist class siphoning off not only the bulk of any increases in the value of the goods and services produced by workers due to increased productivity—and U.S. workers are the most productive in the world—but also the bulk of the total product of their labor, it's no wonder the capitalist class is getting richer while the working class is getting poorer and poorer.

The division between the two classes has never been more apparent. Yet there are few signs that many workers recognize it. In the coming months, the exploitation of labor by capital will intensify, but will more workers begin to recognize that this class division cannot be resolved without a fundamental change in how our society is organized? Hollywood, preachers, academia and pundits in the media can be counted on to promote the illusion that the growing disparity between the wealthy and the working class can be mitigated by tinkering with such things as the tax laws or with the regulations governing foreign trade.

As in the past, these defenders of the capitalist system of exploitation will continue to work tirelessly to promote the idea that the government can be altered in ways that will ease the effects, or even resolve, the economic crisis that capitalism has created. Such nonsense undoubtedly will continue to deceive a majority of workers unless it is countered by a more vigorous and determined effort by members and supporters of the SLP.

Workers more than ever need a voice that can help them begin to fight back against the capitalist system that exploits and oppresses them. Under that system, workers have produced the means to liberate all of society from want and the fear of want. But those means—the facilities of production—are owned by the minority class that parasitically lives off workers' labor.

That class makes all the important economic decisions that rule workers' lives. The capitalists decide who to hire or fire, whether to keep a factory open, shut it down or move it elsewhere, what will be produced and how it will be produced, all according to their own profit interests. Driven by the profit motive, they are incessantly forced to reduce labor costs to the lowest possible levels.

This irrational, decaying system keeps growing millions in dire need of the goods and services they need, even as the facilities that could provide those goods and services are kept idle because not enough goods or services can be sold at a profit for the owning minority. In short, capitalism itself is the major impediment to the economic security of the great majority in society, the working class.

More than ever, workers must recognize that they, as a class, are the ones who built up, and now run, the industries and services. The industrial property that today's capitalists own is an accumulation of wealth stolen from the working class over time through the process of exploitation—paying workers only a fraction of the wealth they alone create. Workers must recognize that they don't need these parasitical owners to run the industries.

If they are to escape the downward spiral into ever greater unemployment and poverty that capitalism promises, and all the social evils that flow therefrom, 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 administer them 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. It is knowledge of that program that must be imparted to the working class if workers are to have a real recovery, a real alternative to the certain malaise of capitalism. Join us to make sure the voice of socialism can reach more workers!

## Abolition of Poverty

By Daniel De Leon

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# ... 'Marshall Plan' for Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

of Alabama] has spoken of the loss of these markets [of Western Europe]. Of course, if Russia takes over Western Europe, we shall have permanently lost these markets. But does the senator think for one moment that if we lose our historic markets in Western Europe, we shall be able to maintain the private enterprise [capitalist] system in the United States....

"Mr. HILL. I do not think so. I support the Marshall Plan....

\*

"Mr. EASTLAND. American industry could not profitably operate with the loss of these markets, as it cannot profitably operate unless it can run at capacity or near capacity. Foreign markets are essential to that....So when we support this [Marshall Plan] program and follow it by armed force if necessary, we are saving the capitalistic system in the United States, because Russia knows that she could destroy our economy and our system without firing a shot simply by refusing to do business with us."

American capitalism today is confronted by new competitors, such as China, Japan and the European Union, and with a new and potentially greater economic crisis. Although few have ventured to compare today's situation with the Great Depression of the 1930s or to the Cold War, the parallels are there.

The crisis that threatened world capitalism with total collapse before the Second World War, for example, was fundamentally a crisis of "overproduction." The working classes of the industrialized nations had produced too much for markets to absorb and production ground to a virtual halt. The attack on Pearl Harbor and the war that followed changed all that. American industries were placed on a war footing and the widespread unemployment of the depression years quickly disappeared. Millions of workers were drafted into the military and the ensuing "labor shortage" was met by drawing millions of women into industrial jobs.

Something similar is occurring today. As a front-page article on industrial "overcapacity" in *The New York Times* of Oct. 19 summed it up:

"Not since the severe recession of the early 1980s has capacity use in manufacturing stayed so low for so long, government data show. Production as a percentage of total capacity fell precipitously in the aftermath of the last recession, which ended in 2001, and 23 months into the recovery, the upturn has still not come. On average, manufacturers are using less than 73 percent of their capacity.

"Struggling to get rid of this costly glut, many companies continue to shut plants and lay off the workers, as the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company is doing in Huntsville, Ala., where it is closing a tire plant that employs 1,100 people. Or they have consolidated operations in one or two sites instead of a dozen, as Procter itself has done in the production of detergents, eliminating workers in the process. Other companies, notably the nation's automakers, have discounted prices and offered rebates to sustain production at respectable rates of capacity — a tactic that squeezes profits and discourages hiring."

Democratic opponents of the Bush administration's "reconstruction" program for Iraq claim that it cannot be compared to the Marshall Plan, not because of any difference over the "humanitarian" pretenses, but because Congress was not consulted to the same extent as the Truman-era program for rebuilding Europe. However, it is neither the pretenses nor the method that makes

them similar, but their purpose. As the *Times* added in its article of Sept. 27:

"Bremer [Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator in Iraq] and other administration officials say Iraq's needs are immediate and desperate, and the investment is necessary to prevent Iraq from returning to the kind of tyranny that can breed terrorism.

"But Larry Bland, the editor of General George Marshall's papers, said the primary purpose of the European reconstruction program was not a guarantee of safety or pure altruism but rather American and global economic needs.

"The primary emphasis of the Marshall Plan was on restimulating trade," said Bland, who has produced four volumes of the former secretary of state's papers for the Marshall Foundation.

"The countries of Europe...had no money to buy anything from us, so trade was dead. The idea was to stimulate their economy so they could buy goods again," he said.

"Some Republicans, like Senator John Warner of Virginia, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, said the comparison to the previous plan was apt, predicting that the reconstruction of Iraq would eventually pay for itself many times over."

It remains to be seen what the Bush administration's \$87 billion package will do to help U.S. capitalism out of its current economic predicament. What is certain, however, is that economic crises that bring economic insecurity to millions of workers and that multiply the chances of new conflicts over markets, sources of raw materials and strategic advantage will continue as long as capitalism is permitted to survive.

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(Aug. 16—Oct. 10)

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### Socialist Labor Party

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17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

Robert Bills  
Acting Editor

## CALIFORNIA

Readers and their friends are invited to attend the following public meetings sponsored by Section San Francisco Bay Area. For more information please call 408-280-7266 or e-mail slpsfba@net-scape.net.

### Campbell

**Discussion Meeting**—Saturday, Dec. 6, from 1:30–3:30 p.m., at the Campbell Public Library, 77 Harrison Ave. (from Hwy. 880, exit at Hamilton Ave.). Moderator: Bruce Cozzini.

### Oakland

**Discussion Meeting**—Saturday, Nov. 22, beginning at 4 p.m., at the Rockridge Public Library, 2nd floor community room, 5366 College St. (corner of College and Manila sts.). Moderator: Frank Prince.

### San Jose

**Discussion Meeting**—Saturday, Nov. 15, from 1:30–4 p.m., at the Joyce Ellington Public Library, 491 E. Empire St. (at 10th St.). Moderator: Bruce Cozzini.

# The 'Silk Road of Oil' And the U.S. Occupation of Iraq

By Diane Secor

“Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.”

This presidential pronouncement of Oct. 7, 2002, and other Bush administration warnings of Saddam Hussein’s “weapons of mass destruction” were widely reported throughout the U.S. capitalist media as a justification for the invasion and occupation of Iraq. The administration now is on the spot, since no such WMDs have been found.

Why was the administration so desperate to sell this war and to take over Iraq? Is it just to get Iraq’s oil?

There is much more at stake than just the oil found in Iraq. Iraq is a key segment along what some have called the strategic cross-continental “Silk Road of oil.”

This was summarized in an Aug. 18 report for euasianet.com by Mevlut Katik.

According to Katik, “an official with Botas, Turkey’s state pipeline company,” explained that the port of Ceyhan in Turkey is the “junction of Middle Eastern and Caspian energy basins” along the vast “Silk Road of oil,” stretching from Azerbaijan to Iraq.

Ceyhan is also the junction of two major oil pipeline routes. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline will begin in Azerbaijan, pass through Georgia, and terminate in Ceyhan. This pipeline is under construction. The Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline transports oil from northern Iraq to Ceyhan.

U.S. control of key portions of this huge “Silk

Road of oil” means windfall profits for American capitalists. This also would secure overall U.S. strategic advantages in the global struggle for raw materials and markets.



The Workbook/cpf

There is a considerable amount of evidence that U.S. military operations have been aimed at securing control of segments of these two large “Silk Road” pipeline routes. For example, long before the U.S. invasion of Iraq was officially announced on Aug. 15, 2002, Fran Shor of commondreams.org reported that U.S. Special Forces and 5,000 Turkish troops were already

fighting to seize the oil-rich Mosul and Kirkuk regions of northern Iraq. The Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline passes through this territory.

Shor also noted that “U.S. oil companies, such as Chevron and Exxon-Mobile, have been purchasing crude oil from Kirkuk through various Russian sources for the last few years.”

A total U.S. takeover and direct military occupation of Iraq would totally change this picture and put the United States in control of this Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline, in addition to the rest of Iraq’s oil infrastructure.

Moreover, U.S. military forces have moved into other countries along this “Silk Road” path to defend the route of the projected Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

“The most important mission of the U.S. military deployment will be the enhancement of the security of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route, analysts say,” according to the *Turkish Daily News* (March 7, 2002).

There have been numerous attacks on the infrastructure in U.S.-occupied Iraq, including the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline. There have also been guerrilla attacks on U.S. troops, who have not exactly been idolized as “liberators” by the Iraqi people, notwithstanding such statements from Washington propaganda mills. But with substantial U.S. capitalist material and strategic interests on the line, it is unlikely that the troops will be coming home any time soon. American workers and their sons and daughters will be sacrificed as pawns in these ruling-class chess games to defend U.S. capitalist interests as long as this system exists.

## Slave Labor in Puerto Rico

By B.G.

The socialist contention that the ugly and exploitative nature of capitalism is much the same everywhere it is found is continually borne out by independent studies of the world’s workers and now receives additional confirmation in the 2002 annual report of Amnesty International of Puerto Rico, which describes “slave-like conditions” for undocumented Dominican workers on Puerto Rican farms.

“People might think that slavery was abolished, but the truth is that it is happening on our island,” said Amnesty International activist Carlos Muñiz Osorio. “Dominicans working in farms are being treated like slaves,” he emphasized. (*The San Juan Star*, March 28)

Common examples are farm owners’ refusals to pay undocumented immigrants for their labor, and failures to provide decent housing and adequate food for these workers.

The owners well know that these undocumented immigrants have no recourse at law because of their irregular status and so feel at liberty to exploit them and to squeeze every bit of profit out of them possible. Humanity has nothing to do with the treatment of these workers who are enriching the employers by their labor.

Amnesty International has sought redress of these conditions by submitting a proposed bill to the legislature that will amend the penal code by “creating a mechanism to process any person engaging in actions to enslave.” Also, the organization has submitted a draft of a bill that will further amend the penal code by bringing to justice persons “involved in acts of torture and forced disappearances.”

The United States abolished the slave trade in 1808, and chattel slavery itself went by the boards in 1865. What applies in the United States applies also in all its territories and dominions, Puerto Rico not excepted. But laws are inanimate things. They are meaningless unless enforced, and they are enforced only if it serves the interests of the ruling class. Accordingly, people may think that laws meant to protect capitalism’s interest in maintaining the wage system of slavery over the chattel system of slavery would be enforced. And so they are, for the most part.

But the ruling class is not a crystal. It is cracked and split against itself by many conflicting private interests. The one thing that holds it together is the fear that all capitalists have that the working class will come to recognize its potential political and economic might

to present a united opposition to the economic tyranny that capitalism represents. That unity does not exist today; hence there are many laws—laws imbedded in the highest law of the land, the Constitution—that are ignored.

No wonder, then, that lesser laws proposed by well-meaning reformers cannot keep up with the machinations of the merchants of greed who are tied to a capitalist system that stresses production for private profit. It is the economic system of capitalism itself and the psychology of oppression that it fosters and promotes that are at fault. Starvation and repression of one part of the population to enrich a privileged few who have economic power are criminal. A democratically organized and controlled socialist production by the producer-workers themselves is the logical and humanitarian way to ensure plenty for all.

### OHIO

#### Columbus

**Discussion Meeting**—Section Cleveland will hold a discussion meeting on Sunday, Nov. 23, beginning at 1 p.m., at the Columbus Main Library, Conference Room 1, 96 S. Grant (at Oak Street). For more information please call 440-237-7933.

#### Independence

**Discussion Meeting**—Section Cleveland will hold a discussion meeting on Sunday, Nov. 30, from 1–3 p.m., at the Independence Public Library, 6361 Selig Dr. Light refreshments served. For more information please call 440-237-7933.

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