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EMERGENCY FUND

Future Remains Unsure for SLP

The SLP has received nearly \$35,000 in cash contributions since starting its emergency fund drive last October, plus an additional \$12,000 from other sources (primarily sales and bank interest).

The \$35,000 in contributions came from individual party members and supporters. They are the SLP's sole means of support. There are no foundations or other institutions to supplement their efforts. The SLP is strictly a working class organization.

The combined total of \$47,000 means that the SLP has raised about 38 percent of the \$125,000 it will need to keep its headquarters open and *The People* in print. But it also means that an additional \$78,000 must be raised by Aug. 31, 2002, when the lease on the party's headquarters will expire.

That was where things stood as of Jan. 31. During the preceding four months, monthly income averaged \$11,750 while monthly expenses were held to an average of less than \$10,500.

Last year, however, monthly expenses averaged \$12,000 a month, and although the operating expense this January was the lowest for any month in years (under \$9,800), we cannot count on holding expenses down to that level in the months ahead. Accordingly, we can anticipate an additional operating expense of between \$74,000 and \$84,000 by the end of August.

If the emergency fund-raising effort is to succeed, the same level of monthly income must be sustained through the end of August. Hopefully, sales of *The People* and SLP literature will continue to reduce the burden on the party's members and supporters.

If the SLP does succeed in raising the additional \$78,000 needed to reach its goal of \$125,000 before August 31 its cash reserves should remain stable at their present level. That level (\$101,000) is far less than the \$153,000 we hoped to reach with a successful \$125,000 fund-raising effort, and probably less than will be needed to keep the party's present national offices, or something comparable to them.

Accordingly, it may soon be necessary for the party's National Executive Committee to reassess the situation and to make a determination on scaling down the headquarters
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Enron Scandal Reflects Corruption of Capitalism

It remains an open question whether or not the fall of Enron, reporter of the seventh largest corporate revenues in the United States and the largest U.S. corporation ever to be forced into bankruptcy, will create the kind of wide-ranging political scandal produced by such predecessors as the Watergate affair, the Iran-Contra affair, the savings and loan debacle or even the Whitewater affair.

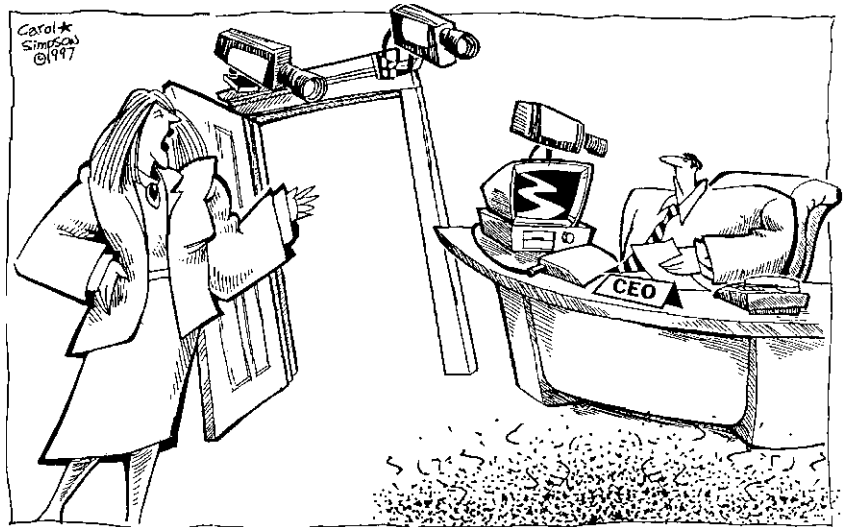
It is certainly replete with many features of the seemingly unbroken string of scandals that perennially rock the U.S. system of production for private profit and its political representatives: secret deals, political influence buying and dealmaking, mysterious "suicides" (or worse), document shredding and victimization of workers or the working-class "public."

But the details of the moral muck into which these particular denizens of the capitalist ruling class were willing to wade for the sake of pulling out higher and higher returns from their paper shuffling and profit mongering have been reproduced at length in the capitalist press.

More important at this juncture is to clarify the essence of the problem so as to avoid in the future the kind of social calamity it produced—with thousands of workers losing their jobs, their health care and planned-for provisions for their old age.

With "reformers" now climbing out of every hole in the woodwork, clarity on the scandal is scarce.

The Bush administration has proposed stricter rules for 401(k) plans



"But sir... you said to install surveillance cameras where there was suspicion of illegal activity."
Carol Simpson

that would supposedly protect workers from the kind of maneuvering Enron executives reportedly engaged in—selling their stock while preventing workers who had company stock in their 401(k) plans from selling theirs, and even encouraging them to buy more.

With demonstrated ties to Enron officials at many levels of the Bush administration, Bush and his cronies aren't saying much about renewed calls for political campaign financing reform also being generated by the scandal.

"Accounting experts and some regulators argue that American companies should report profits in clearer ways and that those who audit the books should be held to higher standards," noted *The Washington Post*.

Even archreactionary Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill—who has perversely characterized the fall of Enron as part of "the genius of capitalism" in winnowing out the corporate chaff—has said that "executives should face harsher penalties for releasing misleading financial statements."

There are those who think the problem is privatization of public services. For Gregory Palast of Britain's *Laborite Guardian*, for example, "Enron, founded in 1986, was the Rosemary's Baby of [a] satanic coupling of free-market ideological hoodoo and electric industry greed.

"Enron played it faster and looser than the others, but it is wrong and dangerous to say Enron was one bad apple.

"It's the whole wormy tree of public
(Continued on page 6)

Poor Pushed Aside For Olympic Profits

By Carl C. Miller Jr.

The Winter Olympics opened in Salt Lake City with typical fanfare, much to the delight of some and with an increase in hardship for others.

Those who had the most to gain from hosting the event—shopkeepers, landlords and the swarm of concessionaires who descended on Utah from all points of the compass—were flush with anticipation over the expected influx of profits to be picked from the pockets of well-heeled visitors from around the world.

On the other end of the spectrum, however, were Salt Lake City's own poor, who endured highly inflated prices for necessities, and in many cases were literally "left out in the cold" when rents skyrocketed.

Landlords, eager to take advantage of a shortage of accommodations, jacked up rents and drove out those who could not pay the inflated prices. "As Utah's billionaires make a killing on the winter games, less privileged citizens are being sidelined," said *The Observer*, a British newspaper.

A prime example cited by *The Observer* was the Utah Hostel. Normally the drab and austere quarters are home to low-income residents who pay \$110 a week for a room without running water, windows or central heat. However, with the tremendous opportunity for profit presented by the Olympic Games and the shortage of accommodations, the owners saw fit to increase the rent to \$2,800 a week. The Utah Hostel's usual tenants were presented with a choice: meet the inflated rent or hit the streets. Another option was offered: renovate the hostel's less than livable attic for no pay and sleep there. So, faced with 14 nights of subzero weather on the streets, the regular tenants pitched in and spent the week before the games opened attempting to make the damp, dark attic habitable. The results, according to the author of the article, Lawrence Donegan, were a "pitifully amateurish effect" given the tenants' lack of skill in renovation.

Trini Russom, the hostel's manag-

er, took Mr. Donegan on a tour of the "renovated" attic. As the tour progressed, Russom said: "You should have seen this place before. I feel bad about it because they [the tenants] have had to work so hard, but they needed the motivation and the self-esteem to do this. It has given them a sense of pride. They have done a really great job. It's been a great example of the Olympic spirit in action." Certainly it was the profit-minded side of the Olympic spirit.

The Olympic spirit also was at work on the other side of town, at Zion's Motel, where the owner jacked up the rent to his tenants by 300 percent, from \$185 to \$735 a week. The tenants were told to meet the increase or get out that night. "I don't run a charity, and every other hotel in the city is doing the same with their prices," said hotel owner John Purdue. When asked where his now homeless guests will go, Purdue replied: "Listen, I feel bad for these people, but the fact is if they are in financial hardship they are there by choice. There are
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Where Do Your Charity Dollars Go?

By B.G.

When a well-meaning individual gives money to charity, he or she expects all, or at least most of it, to go to the object of their charity's supposed beneficence. Think again! While many charities do strive to serve their stated ends as fully as possible, all of them have expenses that cut, sometimes deeply, into the funds entrusted to them.

Consider such outlays as office rent, heat, light, telephone, office furniture, office machines and other supplies, printing and postage, and salaries. Sometimes only minute portion of the budget is left over to give to the needy.

A case in point is the recent negative publicity garnered by the Red Cross over its handling of the huge numbers of donations given to help families suffering as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The Red Cross announced that a comfortable amount of these donations would go to upgrading its office machines and also to be set aside for future terrorist attacks. (Did they have secret information from future terrorists?) The uproar of donors throughout the country caused both the resignation of the Red Cross director and the reversal of the policy. It might be noted in passing that the director of the Red Cross receives an upper-level six-figure salary.

Another charity scandal, this time with the United Way of the National Capital Area, in Washington, D.C., has now surfaced. According to an investigative article in *The New York Times* (Jan. 23), reported by David Cay Johnston, a former United Way board member, Ross W. Dembling, complained of travel expenses "that had little or no relation to United Way" and the alleged misappropriation of \$85,000 "allocated to make restrooms more accessible to the handicapped,"

which instead had been used "to decorate the office of the charity's new chief executive, Norman O. Taylor."

Dembling further complained about a consulting contract for Oral Suer that pays the fortunate Mr. Suer \$6,000 a month for a full year, in addition to as much as \$5,000 a month expenses. Only a small board committee had known of the contract until Mr. Dembling informed the entire board.

When Donna Kloch, a United Way board member and also a congressional aide, learned of this contract and inquired about it at a later board meeting, she was subjected to a ferocious diatribe informing her to mind her own business. Much shaken, she had to leave the board meeting abruptly after this vicious harangue.

Mr. Dembling, who is a partner at one of Washington, D.C.'s most prominent law firms, informed United Way's outside counsel that legally the charity's board had an obligation to pursue these charges of questionable use of funds. Apparently as a result of this interview, Dembling was considered a whistleblower and his term on the board was not renewed.

In reference to the matter of the board's obligation, *New York Times* reporter Johnston emphasized that "federal law requires directors of nonprofit organizations to investigate accusations that charitable money has been misused."

The Washington United Way seems to have had a "kill the messenger" philosophy of operation. Gwendolyn Boyd, chairwoman of the organization, and William G. Tull, the chairman of the administration committee, publicly stated to the full board that their investigation discovered no merit in Dembling's charges. A subsequent investigation of the investigators revealed that neither Boyd nor Tull had

interviewed any staff members or had examined any company documents.

Boyd poo-pooed Dembling's complaints as "hearsay and rumor." Displaying her own indolence as an investigator, she simply stated, "If someone brings proof to me, then I will look into it."

Of course, no employee who values his or her job will make public the charity's financial documents. And as further proof that investigative effort was not appreciated, Mr. Dembling was quickly dropped from the board as a penalty for his curiosity.

Some concerned board members have also complained that the search committee did not make known to the whole board that Norman O. Taylor, the present chief executive, had been dumped from the same position with Baltimore United Way in 1995 for ongoing unsatisfactory performance. Ms. Boyd and Mr. Tull both knew this but said they saw no reason why the whole Washington United Way board should know.

Three members of the board of directors have also requested an explanation of the peculiar financial accounting practiced by the charity. Why, for instance, is there a \$1.8 million discrepancy between the organization's financial statement and its required charitable tax return? We are not talking about piddling amounts of cash here. The Washington United Way raised \$93.5 million last year.

If this convoluted tale sounds like a combination of incompetence and hanky-panky, so be it. Nobody likes to have his or her pocket picked. Workers often give generously to help their fellow human beings who are in distress. Their object in giving is not to make life more comfortable for the comfortable. Let the public beware of opportunistic charities.

'Force and Violence' in Cuba

(*Weekly People*, March 29, 1952)

The real attitude of American capitalism toward the coup d'état of Gen. Fulgencio Batista in Cuba was not expressed by editorials in the press. The press wagged a reproving finger at Batista for taking power illegally by means of force and violence. But this was a line required by considerations of discretion. Behind the finger-wagging, American capitalism was far from feeling dismayed over the violent recrudescence of the Batista dictatorship.

"Privately," commented *Business Week*, "Washington is pleased by Batista's successful revolution in Cuba."

So is Wall Street. The note of rejoicing creeps into news dispatches from Havana. One of dictator Batista's first acts was to crack down on the workers, an action that, according to dispatches, has been widely acclaimed, especially by Cuban and American businessmen. "Labor's demands," says a Scripps-Howard writer, in justifying the suppression of the unions, "have been virtually constant and insatiable." And a spot check by the Associated Press among employers "left the impression that they felt that things ought to be better under General Batista. They predicted greater stability." Meaning, fewer strikes and less resistance to increased exploitation.

A dispatch to *The New York Times*, March 18, reports that the belief prevails among high-ranking members of the deposed Prio Sacarras Administration that "the United States had a hand in the military coup." It is even reported that a U.S. Army officer in uniform was present at Batista's headquarters at the time of the coup and that he congratulated the Cuban officers on their "efficiency" in carrying out an act "long overdue."

Be that as it may—and it is certainly "in character" for American imperialism to take a hand in such a military coup—the important point to note is that American capitalist approval of Batista's dictatorship constitutes a commentary on American capitalist democratic pretenses. American capitalism countenances force and violence when they are used in capitalism's interests.

Poorhouse for Millionaires

By B.G.

The collapse of the Enron corporation, with its sleight-of-hand accounting practices, has not only left its thousands of workers in the lurch and destroyed their 401(k) retirement savings, but has enraged people in general throughout the country and has also affected the pension plans for state workers in a number of states that had invested funds in Enron stock.

Even President George W. Bush, a recipient of Enron's largesse in his gubernatorial and presidential campaigns, has tried to distance himself from his longtime friend, Enron executive Kenneth Lay, or "Kenny Boy" as Bush used to call him, who has now become a political embarrassment for the president.

President Bush recently told the news media he was "outraged" at Enron because his mother-in-law had lost \$8,000 when her Enron stock became worthless. This is probably the first dollar that anyone connected to the Bush family has ever lost.

One week before Kenneth Lay was to be questioned by Congress, his wife Linda launched a public relations campaign. In interviews aired Jan. 28 and 29 on NBC's "Today" TV show, Mrs. Lay assured interviewer Lisa Myers that the Lay family members were actually victims of the Enron disaster. The Lay family has "lost everything" she assured Ms. Myers. Yes, indeed! Never mind newspaper reports about Mr. Lay cashing in his multimillions of dollars in Enron stock just before news of the company failure became public. Undoubtedly he frittered it away or

else he just had a few bills to pay. "It's gone," Mrs. Lay assured interviewer Myers. "There's nothing left. Everything we had mostly was in Enron stock."

The New York Times (Jan. 30) reported that Mr. and Mrs. Lay "took home about \$200 million worth of cash and stock the last four years." They must have been big spenders because Mrs. Lay assured Ms. Myers about her family's heartbreaking struggles: "We're fighting for liquidity. We don't want to go bankrupt. Other than the home we live in, everything else is for sale."

Such an infuriating claim is obviously contradictory. Other than their palatial \$7.1 million apartment in Houston, the "everything for sale" includes at least \$8 million in stock in other than Enron companies, \$25 million in real estate holdings, at least four properties in Aspen, Colo., two of which are on the market for \$6 million each, and extensive Houston real estate holdings.

Obviously, the Lays will not be found in the next welfare line along with their former employees.

Mrs. Lay assured Ms. Myers that her husband was duped and actually knew nothing of what was going on at Enron (even though he was the chief executive officer of the company). "There's some things that weren't—that he wasn't told Lisa," she assured Myers. "Never, not for one second, would he have allowed anything to go on that was illegal. If those people had come back to him and told him there was something wrong, he would have stopped it and fixed it." And she added, "I don't know who to get mad at. I

just know my husband didn't have any involvement."

In other words, the loyal wife was actually trying to prove that her husband, as chief executive officer of this immense corporation, was actually a dummy, a nincompoop, and a babe in the woods and had absolutely no idea what his managerial employees were actually doing. If you believe that, then you believe in the tooth fairy.

Of course, when Mrs. Lay says that her family is now dead broke, we can understand what she means. Any fortunate capitalist who has been accustomed to having hundreds of millions of dollars pouring into his or her coffers

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Global Mine Fires Rage While Capitalism Profits

By B.B.

Forty years ago, Centralia was a mining town of 1,100 people in the anthracite region of eastern Pennsylvania. Today, with only 40 inhabitants, it is a veritable ghost town.

There is nothing unusual about a mining town turning into a ghost town. Western states are dotted with hundreds of them. The "boom towns" of the 19th century came and went as pockets of gold and silver were discovered and quickly played out. That, however, is not exactly what happened to Centralia.

According to an article in the science section of the Jan. 15 *New York Times*, "Smoke and steam now rise from overgrown backyards and cracked, sunken streets, marking the path of subterranean fires that continue to consume buried coal."

It seems that the practice of using abandoned mines as repositories for mountains of trash, the offal of capitalist society, is responsible for the fires that depopulated Centralia. Most people abandoned the town after the trash was set ablaze and ignited unmined coal seams. The fires have been burning for years, and according to the *Times*, they may burn out of control for another century!

That's nothing. In a remote sector of Australia, "Burning Mountain," a peak sometimes mistaken for a volcano, has been on fire for approximately 2,000 years, most likely as a result of lightning, or spontaneous combustion, "when pyrite and other reactive minerals in coal are exposed to oxygen."

The difference between "Burning Mountain" and Centralia is that the latter was the result of human neglect, or, to be precise, characteristic capitalist indifference, ignorance and anarchy, all born of the profit motive.

Centralia is not unique. Similar fires can be found in other parts of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Utah, Colorado, Kentucky and Wyoming, and that's not the half of it. Worldwide, thousands of similar fires are consuming exposed coal seams. They can be found in Mongolia, China, India, Indonesia and eastern Europe.

Most of these fires also are the result of careless mining practices. They are emitting "millions of tons of heat-trapping carbon dioxide to the atmosphere

and baking the earth until vegetation shrivels and land sinks."

The following reveals the magnitude of the problem:

- Seven hundred coal fires are burning in East Kalimantan, Borneo, alone.

- In China's sprawling northern coal regions, hundreds of fires are burning an estimated 200 million tons of coal, which is equal to one-fifth of the country's annual production. China's coal

fires, according to the *Times* report, emit as much carbon dioxide in a year as all the cars and trucks in the United States.

- Hundreds of thousands of poor workers live in impoverished conditions next to those fires.

- In India, once the "jewel" of British colonialism, the Jharia mining complex, rich in low sulfur coal, has been ablaze since 1916. "The region's



Rita Verga for The People

Police guard a Starbucks outlet during the WEF protests.

WEF Protests in New York

By John-Paul Catusco

The clouds and damp weather that had marred earlier World Economic Forum protests finally cleared away for the estimated 5,000-7,000 protesters who assembled at the two southern corners of Central Park on Saturday, Feb. 2. Workers, students and activists from all over the world came together to protest the gathering of an elite club of capitalists, presidents, kings, sheiks and dictators who each year come together to decide how the world shall be ruled.

The first major rally began at 11 a.m. at Columbus Circle and was organized by the group Reclaim the Streets. Hundreds had assembled by 11:30 a.m. and were packed into an area cordoned off by the police. A diverse assembly of different groups and individuals beat homemade drums to marching rhythms, shouted pro-labor chants and took over the statue of Columbus, from which a number of anarchist, socialist and union banners and flags were raised. A hilarious trio of signs was also brought in, bearing the faces of Dick Cheney with an oil mustache and the phrase "Got Oil?" printed on his brow; President George W. Bush with his lips sown shut and the word "Enron" on his forehead; and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld with the words "3,000 Afghani Civilian Deaths" printed across his face in red ink.

Shortly after noon the participants of this rally began to move east to join up with the main protest at the southeast corner of Central Park and 5th Avenue. Thousands had already assembled at this point for the rally and march organized by the Another World Is Possible Coalition. The packed-in crowd listened to speeches by organizers, sung along with British neo-folk-rocker Billy Bragg, and took an active part in an excellent puppet show and piece of guerrilla theater that depicted the suffering workers and peasants of the world arrayed against the capitalists and militaries that hold them down. The production, which was narrated in English and Spanish by an American student and an Argentinean labor activist, was internationalized by the chant "They Are All Enron, We Are All

Argentina!" Participants then began a slow march that cut down several side streets and avenues heading toward the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and stopping to protest various symbols of capitalist exploitation, such as the Gap, McDonald's and a heavily fortified Starbucks. There was a small counterprotest made up of about 12-15 people who waved American flags along with signs that declared, "We Bomb For Peace!" and "Welcome Traitors to New York!"

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly hovered above the rally at 59th Street and Fifth Avenue in a police helicopter, while a second NYPD helicopter circled the area. On the ground was an army of NYPD armed with billy clubs, gas masks, riot gear, thousands of plastic handcuffs and the ever present Glock 9mm handguns. Police made a number of arrests and pepper sprayed several young women. Organizers had asked participants to act in a legal and nonconfrontational manner, and there has been little evidence given to suggest that the small number of those arrested were taking part in any illegal or destructive activity. Organizers expressed some disappointment over the relatively small turnout when compared with the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle. Many of the organizers felt that the post-Sept. 11 atmosphere and the heavy police presence deterred more people from attending.

Arrivers at New York's Penn Station on Feb. 2 could witness police officers ejecting the homeless from the station's waiting rooms onto the cold streets. Meanwhile, participants in the World Economic Forum were being issued free "petty cash" debit cards of \$100 that totaled over \$300,000, while earlier in the week \$100,000 was spent for a private concert by Elton John to entertain the WEF's members.

Such offensive extravagance in the face of a growing and visible number of destitute and dying human beings is just one of a multitude of reasons why thousands marched on the Waldorf-Astoria to protest what amounts to a club for martini-drinking billionaires who wipe their feet on the world's poor.

150,000 miners, truck drivers, train loaders and other workers toil stolidly against a backdrop of orange flames and brown smoke."

Stanley R. Michalski, senior staff geologist for GAI Consultant in Monroeville, Pa., has been devising plans to douse such fires for the past 20 years. He has also surveyed the fires in the Jharia coalfields several times since the early 1970s for the World Bank, which wanted a plan on what to do.

Such a plan was developed. Typically, however, nothing was done. The bank apparently ditched the report and never released a red cent.

This is how capitalism works. Studying a problem gives the illusion that something is being done about it. It's cheaper too.

While conceding that a lot of money was involved, Mr. Michalski said of the Jharia fires: "It's a loss of valuable resource, it's an environmental disaster, it's devastating. But this fire is so complicated and so widespread that India could not really afford to extinguish it."

"Afford"? What this really means is that the profit system always constrains the collective will to solve a social problem. As long as the collective will is harnessed to the ideological framework of the capitalist system even impending disasters that threaten human life on a massive scale will be neglected.

No body of experts, paid consultants, environmentalists, or their organizations, can effectively address this type of environmental hazard. It is a systemic problem.

Organizations with limited goals and imbued with the notion that they can tinker with capitalism and make it socially responsible are dissipating their energies and talents in a hopeless endeavor. However, it doesn't have to be that way.

Bringing those energies and talents together in a single organization that aims to root out the cause of all the problems generated by the profit system would guarantee that they would not be spent in vain.

To undo the horrific damage being done to the country and the world requires the resolve and organizational will of those at the point of production, namely the entire working class.

To rationally address the global mine fires raging throughout the world requires the establishment of a new social and economic system based on the collective power of the working class organized at the point of production to take, hold and operate that which is properly the property of all of society, that is, the means of production.

The Socialist Labor Party is the only organization with a program—the Socialist Industrial Union program—capable of uniting the one power that is great enough to stop capitalism from ruining the planet.

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Common Sense?

When President Bush announced what his policy on global warming would be last month he did more than confirm his rejection of the so-called Kyoto Protocol. He also rejected as "uncertain" the science that says that global warming is a clear and present danger to the planet and to all the creatures that live on it, including the human race.

Bush based his decision on a report from his Council of Economic Advisers. That report recommended that definite restrictions be placed on power plants that spew such noxious substances into the atmosphere as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury. When it came to the industries that emit greenhouse gases, however, Bush and his council took a different path. Voluntary restraints and a program of "incentives" will solve the problem—if it is a problem.

Speaking before the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on Feb. 14, the president referred to what he called "scientific uncertainties" about global warming and added: "While these uncertainties remain, we can begin now to address the human factors that contribute to climate change."

What "human factors" did he have in mind? He didn't say, at least not directly, but no doubt he meant to imply that the responsibility for environmental degradation—global warming included—rests at the feet of the human species as a whole. But Mr. Bush isn't counting on the species to save itself and its surroundings. What's needed to get the job done is "the power of markets, the creativity of entrepreneurs, and...the best scientific research."

The president said this was "common sense." In truth, it was perfect nonsense. The source of virtually all environmental pollution is industry and its products. But the human species has no more control over industry, its products and their effects on the world than slaves in the Old South had over the cotton industry, its products and the terrible tragedy that combination brought on the nation.

President Bush said that the way to stop industry from polluting the environment is to offer "incentives"—not to the human species, but to capitalists. Apparently the prospect of living in a clean and healthy environment is not enough to induce that subspecies of the human race to clean things up.

In short, if it doesn't pay off in dollars and cents it is unreasonable to expect the capitalist owners of industries to change their dirty habits just so we can fill our lungs with clean air. It is necessary to bribe them so they won't turn our world into an uninhabitable wasteland.

Credit where credit is due. Mr. Bush knows his class.

But why bother with "incentives" if the science that warns about global warming is "uncertain"? Indeed, how did President Bush and his economic advisers reach the conclusion that the science that says that global warming is a real and immediate danger is uncertain and unreliable?

We suspect that they reached no such conclusion. We suspect that the information collected and evaluated by scientists whose background and training in the field qualify them to draw reasonable conclusions from their observa-

tions was not even evaluated by the council. Even if we are wrong about that, however, there can be no doubt that the council was not qualified either to accept, to reject—or even to quibble with—those findings.

What is the president's Council of Economic Advisers and who is on it? A trip to the White House Web site provides some answers.

The three members are Mark B. McClellan, Randall S. Kroszner and R. Glenn Hubbard. The last named is chairman, and all three are "economists." McClellan is also a medical doctor, but that is as close as any of them comes to being a scientist.

The council itself was created by the "Employment Act of 1946." Its duties, according to the act, are—

"1. to assist and advise the president in the preparation of the Economic Report;

"2. to gather timely and authoritative information concerning economic developments and economic trends, both current and prospective, to analyze and interpret such information in the light of the policy declared in section 2 for the purpose of determining whether such developments and trends are interfering, or are likely to interfere, with the achievement of such policy, and to compile and submit to the president studies relating to such developments and trends;

"3. to appraise the various programs and activities of the federal government in the light of the policy declared in section 2 for the purpose of determining the extent to which such programs and activities are contributing, and the extent to which they are not contributing, to the achievement of such policy, and to make recommendations to the president with respect thereto;

"4. to develop and recommend to the president national economic policies to foster and promote free competitive enterprise, to avoid economic fluctuations or to diminish the effects thereof, and to maintain employment, production and purchasing power;

"5. to make and furnish such studies, reports thereon, and recommendations with respect to matters of federal economic policy and legislation as the president may request."

Nothing there about the environment—unless growing concern over global warming and the environment generally might be construed as "trends...interfering, or...likely to interfere, with the...policy..."

From this it is obvious that the Council of Economic Advisers was never intended to advise the president on environmental matters. That being so, "common sense" should have pointed Mr. Bush in another direction for advice on global warming. But bourgeois minds follow bourgeois paths as naturally as migrant herds habitually trudge along old trails.

The question is whether it is sensible to expect bourgeois thought patterns to reach objective conclusions on matters that require a broader view of the world than one bordered by the shallow ridges that build up along the narrow rut of profits and losses. The answer to that should also be obvious. After all, what was it if it wasn't the "creativity of entrepreneurs" that steered us into the mess we are in today?

A De Leon Editorial

Robbers Robbing Robbers



Enron defrauded thousands of workers, but that is not what all the commotion is about. Enron bilked capitalists, too. It was a clear-cut case of robbers robbing robbers. Enron wasn't the first, as this De Leon editorial shows—and it's unlikely to be the last.

'Sacred Property'

(The People, Sept. 11, 1898)

The minority stockholders, of preferred stock, at that, of three corporations—the General Electric Co., the New York and Harlem Railroad, and the Lake Shore Railroad—are just now rubbing their shins; 'tis to be hoped that they may be rubbing their eyes, too. Had they been stopped on the highways, covered with pistols and bludgeons, and their pockets then calmly, coolly, quietly rifled, their experience could not have been rougher; as it is, there is added to their experience a bit of information that can proceed from the capitalist system only—information on the "sacredness of property."

The few holders of the majority of the stock in these corporations decided that the property in the hands of the minority holders was too much for the health of the latter, and that a goodly lump thereof should be placed into the hands of the majority holders. The plan was carried out "according to due forms of law." In one instance, they depreciated the capital, thus causing a shrinkage of nearly 3 percent of the dividends of their "partners"; in the second case, they brow-beat the minority stockholders with threats of all nature into yielding to them \$220,000 a year additional dividends; and in the last instance, they played the blackmail game to perfection, and having the minority holders at their mercy, extorted out of them an "agreement" to yield up a good lump of their havings. All this was done without a strain of the law, in fact, it was done agreeable to "law," "order" and all the other patron saints of capital's tabernacle.

Now what does all this mean?

The "sacredness of property" is one of the most favorite mystifications of the capitalist class. Socialism, say they, violates this sacredness; "the safety of property is the cornerstone of civilization," etc., etc.

That property should be sacred, and that its safety is the cornerstone of civilization is just. Capitalism, however, commits crime behind the mask of righteousness. It is the burden of [the] socialist song that socialism has risen to uphold in fact principles essential to the safety of society, and that capitalism violates. The property of the working class, the product of its labor, does not remain in its hands to enjoy; it is stolen from it by the capitalist class. Thus at the very root of capitalist production there is violation of the sacredness of property: the wealth the capitalist class lives on, and thus the existence of the capitalist class itself, is a flat denial of the property's sacredness.

Yet this wrong, upheld by the whole property-holding class, eventually turns to plague the inventor. The members of the capitalist class have cared little how the working class was robbed; the beneficiaries of the theft, they glorified it by singing the praises of the sacredness of property. They little thought how the poison they injected into the social system would eventually tell even upon themselves. That is what now is happening. The small holders of property (stock and the like) now find themselves hoisted by their own petard. Now they are discovering that the application they have made of the "sacredness of property" is being applied to themselves. To the identical tune that they have robbed others, themselves are

(Continued on page 6)

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.

A PAGE FROM WORKING-CLASS HISTORY

The Paterson Silk Workers' Strikes of 1911-1912

The following article from the *Industrial Union News* of March 1912 is the second in a series of reports on the Paterson silk workers' strikes of 1911-1912. The *Industrial Union News* was the official newspaper of the "Detroit IWW." Its reports were written from the scene by Russell H. Palmer. An introduction giving background to the strikes and their causes appeared in our February issue. The series will conclude with an epilogue on the significance of the strike and the organization that conducted it.

—Editor

STRIKE IN PATERSON

(The *Industrial Union News*, March 1912)

The last incident in the strike of the Henry Doherty Silk Co. weavers of Paterson against the four-loom system that was reported last month in the *I.U. News* was the attempt on the part of the AFL Wappers' and Loomfixers' Unions to stampede the weavers back to work on terms highly favorable to the firm. The attempt, as far as made openly, in the meetings of the weavers, was unsuccessful; but AFL men are not to be deterred by any fine distinctions of honor or parliamentary rules—they called in conjunction with three or four Englishmen among the weavers, a secret meeting in a hall in which the strikers had never met, and without the knowledge of the Executive Board of the strike or a majority of the striking weavers.

The comedy part of the tragedy is that most of the Englishmen who wished to accede to Doherty's terms were born in the city of Macclesfield, which was slandered most foully by Mr. Doherty through the Paterson papers. Not only were they willing to sell the boss more of their labor power for the same money-average, but they would kiss him for slurring their native birthplace.

At that secret meeting a committee was elected which went to Doherty's office and agreed to accept the terms previously proposed by him and turned down by the weavers, i.e., 10 percent reduction in wages on two looms, 30 percent reduction if a third loom is run, and 40 percent reduction of the fourth loom. All the scabs to be retained and the strikers to be taken back at the discretion of the firm. The morning following the secret meeting a statement appeared in the local morning

paper, over the names of Wm. Mathers, Sidney Avery (two striking weavers), Thomas Morgan, business agent of the Loomfixers' and Twisters' Union, and James Starr, leader of the Wappers' Association, calling the strike off.

The strike executive board immediately repudiated the alleged settlement and the supposed signers of it. The next morning the self-constituted settlement committee published a statement denying that they had signed that statement and signing one to the same effect! From inquiries it seemed that Doherty had taken the liberty of signing their names to it because they had appeared before him in the office.

The second statement had two additional signatures, those of Fred Fox, Jr., and Abe Smith.

Following this so-called settlement which occurred on Monday, Feb. 12, a half dozen weavers, principally English speaking people, returned to work. On the following Wednesday the strikers held a demonstration in the form of a promenade at the Lakeview mill of the company as the scabs issued forth at 6 p.m. Three of the marchers were arrested and later found guilty, two of them being fined and one having sentence suspended.

While all this was going on a conference was being organized by representatives of the various broadsilk mills of Paterson in conjunction with a committee from the Doherty strikers and Local 25 IWW. The conference repudiated the "settlement" of the strike, caused a uniform wage scale to be drawn up for the purpose of presenting it to the manufacturers, and went on record as favoring a general strike if necessary to enforce its demands. Several meetings of the conference were held and as the time drew near for making the demands the conference recommended to its constituency to affiliate with the Industrial Workers of the World.

The wage scale was presented on Friday morning, Feb. 23, at seven o'clock, to about seventy firms, and the weavers walked out at 8 o'clock. The weavers all immediately joined the union, other shops rapidly joined the ranks of the strikers and the union and Local 25 has now about three thousand members. This should spur their fellow workers in other cities on to greater efforts at the upbuilding of the Industrial Workers of the World.

The general strike was taken in charge by the Local and as fast as the shops struck they were organized.

A number of bosses settled immediately and their workers returned to the machines. The firms who have settled are the United Silk Co., Liff & Cohen Co.; Robins' Silk Co.; Abe Rosenblatt Co.; Acme Silk Co.; I. Tannenbaum Co.; Isidor Rutenberg Co.; Belmont Silk Co.; Mohiley Silk Co.; L. Lemieux Silk Co.; Magnes & Farber; Seher Silk Co.; A. Pantel; S. Salzberg Co.; Fidelity Silk Co.; Kaplan & Baker; Diamond Silk Co.

About four thousand weavers are still out; also a large number of winders, quillers, wappers, twisters, etc., not affiliated with the AFL. Nearly every hall in the city is being used by the strikers from

the various shops for the holding of meetings. There has been no disorder; the organizer of the union, Rudolph Katz and the other leaders [are] counseling the strikers to maintain order and not give the police a chance to use their clubs for the benefit of the bosses.

Men and women, prominent in the progressive labor movement and the IWW are busy organizing the workers here and explaining the industrial unionism to them and they are meeting with an encouraging response from the silk workers of Paterson. August Gillhaus, Mrs. Olive Johnson, David Solomon, Kronfeld, David Goldberg are among those who are leading the strike. Louis C. Fraina came direct to Paterson from Lawrence, Mass., where he had been reporting and observing the strike there. A local weaver, Joseph Yannerelli, one of the Doherty strikers, is doing excellent work among the Italian strikers.

Organizer Katz is busy speaking at shop meetings and organizing the strikers. At a monster mass meeting held in the Auditorium on Ellison St. on Saturday, the day after the strike, Katz was given a tremendous ovation when he rose to speak.

The IWW Local, No. 25, has hired a large headquarters at 264 Main St. and intends, after a good organization has been built up, to carry the fight into the silk centers of Pennsylvania and bring the workers there up to the standard of Paterson. The actions of the striking workers in Paterson are certainly inspiring.

The "I'm a Bum" outfit are trying to engender confusion by bringing W.D. Haywood, that misfit in the socialist movement, who with wild talk about General Strike does more to hinder the revolutionary spirit of the working class than all the reactionary forces operated by the capitalist class. Immediately the meeting for Haywood was announced, the strike committee issued the following statement, which puts the situation very pithily, and shows Haywood for what he is.

R.H.P.

Paterson, N.J., Feb. 27, 1912

TO THE WORKING CLASS OF PATERSON

AND TO ALL OTHERS WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Greeting:

A handbill, that is being distributed on the streets and at the meeting places of the IWW broad silk weavers on strike, announces that William D. Haywood is to speak here tonight on the "general strike" and under the auspices of the IWW.

We, the undersigned IWW strike committee, hereby take the earliest opportunity to disclaim and to disown any connection with the said Haywood, and with whatever so-called IWW he may be affiliated with, and we wash our hands from all responsibility for the injury his word may do our strike, and the workers of Paterson generally.

There is only one IWW in the land—the one with which Local 25 of this city, and which is conducting the strike, is affiliated.

The IWW was organized by a convention that met in Chicago in July, 1905, in response to a manifesto which enumerated the ills that the AFL kept the workers of the land subject to. Among the ills enumerated was that the workers were kept divided upon the political field. The AFL policy of opposing the political action of the workers was anarchy in dis-

guise. We have seen the disastrous consequences of that policy in the McNamara affair. The IWW was launched with the express declaration that the workers must unite on the political as well as the industrial field. This is the position of the IWW, and with that body Haywood is not identified.

When this strike first started you were made acquainted through the press with "another IWW." The notice was given in a letter signed by some individuals in this city who sought to sandbag the strike. The same individuals have since endeavored to stampede the strikers back to work under the old scale. These individuals also call themselves IWW, "the true IWW."

This is no time for mincing matters. Out with the facts.

The IWW to which these individuals belong is a body with Chicago for a headquarters, and which expressly cut out from its preamble the clause to unify the workers on the political as well as the industrial field. The theory of that body is that the workers should "strike at the ballot box with an ax." That body repudiates political action, and proposes to bring about the Revolution that is to emancipate [the] working class by violence only. In short, that body is *anarchist*.

The workers have nothing but sorrow to expect from such tactics. Although all the evidences clearly point to the conclusion that last month's riots in Lawrence were engineered by the American Woolen Company, and although Joseph J. Ettor, the leader of the Lawrence strike, throughout advises "order" and "peace," nevertheless the mere fact of his connection with the Chicago outfit has placed in the hands of the Lawrence authorities the weapon with which to scourge the strike. Since Ettor's organization contemplates a social revolution through violence, the district attorney of Lawrence is able to give a color to the false claim that Ettor is guilty of fomenting riot, and has locked him up under charges, while, under the same pretext, the military authorities of Lawrence are now ruthlessly dragooning the strikers, wholly innocent though these be of the history and methods of the Chicago bogus IWW, with which Haywood also is affiliated.

Under all these circumstances, we cannot look upon the move of the Chicago IWW to bring Haywood into Paterson at this time but as a sinister move, boding ill to the strike of the broad silk workers. However honest Haywood may be about his anarchist theories concerning "direct action," that is, physical force only, we cannot afford to wait till he learns better. The labor movement in Paterson cannot afford to suffer because he is not yet abreast of the times. The Paterson silk workers, whose strike has progressed from victory to victory, while Haywood's Lawrence strike has only suffered blow after blow, cannot afford to run any risks.

For these reasons we hereby solemnly announce that the IWW which is conducting this strike, and whose headquarters are in Detroit, Mich., has no affiliation with the body that is fetching Haywood into our town, and we are in no way responsible for his utterances.

We demand the emancipation of the working class along the paths of civilization—the ballot, the orderly organization of the workers, plain language and no double dealing. No "direct action" or any other anarchist method, veiled or unveiled, is ours. If Haywood comes for money for our Lawrence fellow wage-slaves on strike, we shall gladly give as much as we can afford from our own war chest. If, however, he comes to assist the Helvetia Hall disrupters, better known as the "I'm a Bummery," he need expect from us no treatment other than the treatment that a foe deserves.

Strike Executive Committee,

Local 25, IWW

100th Anniversary 1902-2002

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NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
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... Fall of Enron

(Continued from page 1)

services deregulation mania which is rotten, root and branch."

Scarcely had the reformers begun putting their proposals on the table when more reports of "other Enrons" began to appear. As a Feb. 17 *Washington Post* report put it, "Each day last week brought fresh revelations, or just rumors, of sleights of hand at other companies, while investors and lenders made it clear they wanted nothing to do with any firm engaged in Enron-like behavior." Asset swaps between Global Crossing and Qwest Communications came under fire, and IBM was accused of bolstering a quarterly report with a one-time sale.

"It was a week when everyone suddenly wanted to know who besides Enron had gussied up balance sheets with 'synthetic leases' (Krispy Kreme), or who had used company stock instead of cash to anchor off-book partnerships (Williams and El Paso)," said *The Washington Post* article. "Nvidia, EMC, Edison Schools and WorldCom all announced that they were under investigation by the SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission] on suspicion of booking revenue that wasn't."

In fact, the problem of dishonest information from U.S. corporations is a pervasive one. That is made clear in a report by the Centre for Economic and Business Research Ltd., a British think tank, on a comparison of corporate earnings reports from companies on the New York Stock Exchange with statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. As an article on the report in *The Financial Post* put it last

month, "U.S. corporate profits last year were overstated [by corporations] by...about 27 percent."

The problem is indeed a systemic one. As *The People* noted on an earlier occasion:

"Moral codes and ethical standards are a reflection of material facts and conditions. They are not abstractions that have existed for the entire past and are to be eternal for the indefinite future. For high moral and ethical standards to exist they must flow from a moral and ethical social base that gives them sustenance.

"But the capitalist system provides no such base. Capitalism itself—based as it is upon the exploitation and 'legalized' robbery of the majority working class by the minority capitalist class—is an immoral system. And it has reached the point where it constitutes an obstruction to positive social progress. It holds back the resolution of the most pressing problems of our age—the problems of hunger, poverty, jobs, education and numerous others—all of which could be resolved given the material possibilities of our time."

Reforms cannot change these material realities. To assume that reforms would be enforced by a political state that serves as a bulwark of the very economic system it proposes to monitor and "regulate" flies in the face of history. The practical effect of all reforms is that of window dressing. The worst offenders get their wrists slapped, giving the appearance of enforcement, while the bulk of capitalist industry gets off scot-free.

Moreover, even if ethical stan-

dards or reforms could prevent "other Enrons," what of the consequences of competition, under which it is perfectly acceptable—even desirable—under capitalism for one firm to facilitate the failure of another, thus depriving the workers of that company of their jobs, their health plans and, in many cases, their retirement plans. Whether a business fails by "virtue" of the crimes of its owners, or fails by virtue of capitalist competition, is of no consequence to workers.

The thing that is of consequence is that the business fails—that workers, due to no fault of their own, are put out of work, without health care, without any provision for their old age, with little hope of a retirement from the wage slavery that every member of the working class is born into. The crucial fact is that under capitalism workers have no democratic control over the most important aspect of life—because it provides for all other aspects—the economy. Under capitalism, the economy is directed under an effective dictatorship of the capitalist class.

The solution to the harmful effects of capitalism, whether caused by the crimes of particular capitalists, by competition or by monopoly, is that the corrupt and outmoded capitalist system itself—and all its trappings—must be uprooted and dumped in the ashbin of history. That is a task that can only be accomplished by the politically and industrially organized workers of the nation. No reformer can accomplish it.

—K.B.

...Robbers Robbing Robbers

(Continued from page 4)

now being robbed; and the principle is identical.

How came they to rob others? How came they to have the power to uphold the sacredness of property by violating it?

The private possessor of capital can rob the class that has none because the latter cannot compete

with the former. This is the underlying principle of class robbery. By virtue of this principle, the private possessor of some capital has fleeced and fleeces the working class; but by virtue of the identical principle, the private possessor of bigger capital can and does fleece the private possessor of smaller capital. And this is what is happening all along,

and has lately befallen the small holders of General Electric, New York and Harlem, and Lake Shore stock.

With the distress of these we have no sympathy. Robbed robbers are not a subject for commiseration. We stop long enough before the spectacle to gather encouragement at the sight of the capitalist class strangling its own members.

...Fund

(Continued from page 1)

after August 31. Our aim is to avert that contingency, if possible, and certainly anything more extreme than that.

For now, however, the important thing is that everyone who understands and appreciates why it is important that the SLP

emerge from this crisis to carry on its work digs deep and contributes as generously as their circumstances will permit. To repeat what we said last month:

Please do everything you can to help the SLP overcome this crisis. Contribute, or contribute again, to the SLP Emergency Fund; become a regular monthly contributor to the SLP Sustainer Fund; send for the booklet *Steps You Can Take* to

Provide for the Financial Security of the SLP.

And when you have done all that, turn to the friends, neighbors and coworkers with whom you have shared the SLP's message and urge them to get involved.

If every member and supporter of the SLP will do these things we are confident that the crisis can and will be overcome. *But you must act now.*

...Poor Pushed Aside

(Continued from page 1)

a million people coming to town and only 17,500 rooms. It's a question of supply and demand, and I don't feel guilty about taking advantage. That is what capitalism in America is all about." We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

These and many other examples gave greater voice to those who opposed bringing the games to Utah. Glenn Bailey, director of the Crossroads Urban Center, which provides support to the city's homeless, said: "This occasion has been

used to enrich a small select band of wealthy white men. Thirty percent of Utahans are living below the poverty line. Can anyone tell me how having a world-class speed skating oval in the city is going to help those people?"

The capitalist system has no regard for human dignity, especially when the choice is between meeting human needs and raking in huge profits.

As the SLP has repeatedly demonstrated, capitalism is an antisocial system that has long

outlived its usefulness to society. The logical thing to do is to replace the system that has caused so much misery, capitalism, with a socialist society that will ensure human dignity and the well-being of all citizens.

The Socialist Industrial Union program of the SLP offers the strategy and tactics to make this new society a reality. Study the SIU program, and if you agree with us that this change is sorely needed, join in our fight for such a sane society.

activities

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

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Discussion Meeting—Section San Francisco Bay Area will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, March 9, 4–7 p.m., at the Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Ave. (corner of College & Manila streets), Oakland. Moderator: Frank Prince.

OHIO

North Royalton

Social & Discussion—Section Cleveland will hold a social and discussion on Sunday, March 24, at 9626 York Rd., North Royalton. Begins at 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. For more information please call 440-237-7933.

OREGON

Portland

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

TEXAS

Houston

Discussion Meetings—The SLP group in Houston holds discussion meetings the last Saturday of the month at the Houston Public Library, Franklin Branch, 6440 W. Bellfort, southwest Houston. The time of the meetings varies. Those interested please call 713-721-9296, e-mail houstonslp@lycos.com or visit the group's Web site at <http://houstonslp.tripod.com>.

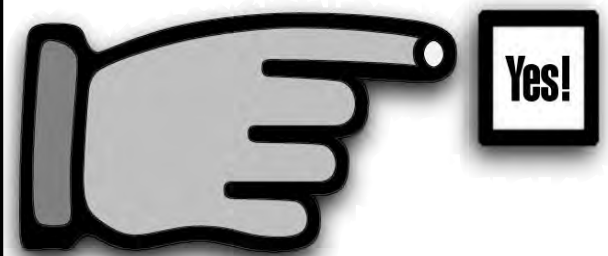
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SLP, Suite 141, 6200 McKay Ave., Box 824, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4M9.

PUERTO RICO

SLP Group of Puerto Rico, Calle 415, NA-28, 4ta Ext., Country Club, Carolina PR 00982. Call (787) 757-5951.

UKRAINE

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Communards at a barricade pose for photographer.

Remember the Communards!

When the workers of Paris, "amidst the failures and treason of the ruling classes," took over the governmental power and established the Commune of 1871, the capitalists of all lands trembled in their stolen boots. In every country, including our own, the rulers took vicarious satisfaction in the vengeance wreaked upon the Commune's defenders. They vied with one another in their vilifications and fabrications.

Why were the ruling classes of Europe and America so fearful of the Commune and so malicious in attempting to discredit it in the eyes of the world's working classes? Why was the ruling class of France so brutal and pitiless in crushing the Commune and massacring the workers of Paris? It was, as Karl Marx wrote, because the Commune was "essentially a working-class government." It was because the Commune—despite numerous follies

and mistakes—proved that the working class could administer their own affairs "modestly, conscientiously and efficiently."

It would be a mistake to dismiss the Commune as simply another half-forgotten tragedy of a remote and distant past. Our modern rulers have lost none of the ferocity that has always been instinctive to ruling classes.

Indeed, that ferocity is intensified by the rising threat to their interests implied in the growing number of "surplus workers" for whom capitalism has no use. It is this massive growth in working-class discontent that chills the hearts of our modern rulers.

In pausing to pay homage to the valiant Communards of 131 years ago, we are inspired by their fortitude and enlightened by their tragic experiences. We draw strength and inspiration from the knowledge that, here in America, relent-

less, consistent revolutionary agitation must ultimately bring the working class to acknowledge the revolutionary integrity of the Socialist Labor Party and to build the Socialist Industrial Union that alone can give life to the principles of universal human freedom aimed at by the Commune.

...Poorhouse

(Continued from page 2)

regularly every year would look upon a mere \$50 million or so left over as small change—just the way the rest of us would look at 50 cents. The leftovers could scarcely pay for the lifestyle to which he and his family had become accustomed.

The whole Enron debacle is an example of what President Theodore Roosevelt, himself no Socialist, many years ago called "the malefactors of great wealth."

on the Web

Twenty-five new titles were added to the SLP's official Web site in February. All 25 are works of Daniel De Leon. They include several from the period before De Leon joined the SLP in 1890. Also included are 20 editorials, most of which have not appeared in any form since originally published in *The People*, and a major speech that has been out of print for many years.

The pre-SLP works of De Leon have been grouped under a heading of "Early Works." Included is a political tract circulated by the "Mugwump" dissidents of the Republican Party who opposed the presidential nomination of James G. Blaine in 1884. Another on a

conference of European colonial powers held to discuss their plans for carving up western Africa dates from 1886. Two works from the period when De Leon was associated with the Bellamy movement round out the selection of early works added to the Daniel De Leon Online section of the SLP Web site.

Eighteen of the 20 editorials added last month are among the earliest that De Leon wrote for *The People*. One is "The Encyclical," about half of which can be found in the SLP pamphlet, *The Vatican in Politics*. The online version includes the complete text as originally printed in *The People*.

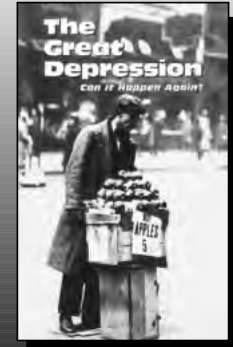
The out-of-print speech that has been added is De Leon's 1908

address on *Unity*. This addition was made possible by SLP member John-Paul Catusco of Section New York City, who transcribed the text.

The February additions bring to 145 the number of articles, debates, editorials speeches by Daniel De Leon on the SLP's Web site, and more will be added in their future.

However, there is much more to be found on the site than the works of Daniel De Leon.

There is information about what the SLP is and what it stands for, about its history and about its views on the world as it is today. If you have not visited the site we urge you to do so—and to return often as we continue to expand its scope and content.



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FUNDS

(Jan. 12–Feb. 14)
SLP Emergency Fund

Joan M. Davis \$400; Section Cook County, Ill., "In memory of Louis Fisher" \$359.64; Jay Aiken \$250; \$200 each Jim & Mary Buha, Chris Dobreff; Stanley Prorok "In memory of Louis Fisher" \$188; Mike Ogletree \$150; Anonymous \$101; \$100 each William M. Barry, Walter Vojnov, S.W. Andrick, Ruth R. Hall, Michael Preston, Gretchen Storer, George S. Taylor, Rubinoff Brunson, David Wurdeman "In memory of Etta Wurdeman"; Clifton Field \$75.

\$50 each Timothy Sweeney, Steve Littleton, Robert Ormsby, Lit S. Han, Frank Burdua, F. Beedle, Dr. L. Miles Raisig; Anonymous \$40; Robert Varone \$30; Rudolph P. Sulenta \$27; \$25 each Randolph Petsche, L. Minkwic, Joseph T. Longo, Edwin Samples, Blake Bearden.

\$20 each Thomas A. Harvey, Joseph Viditch, Joseph T. Longo, Jim Lehner,

Harry Gibson, Chet Hensley, Aaron Robertson; John Houser \$18; George E. Gray \$16; \$15 each Rosemary & John Gale, John-Paul Catusco; Mary & Frank Prince \$12; \$10 each Marotte, Frank Rudolph, Brian Daniel Lazarus; David Mohle \$9; David Melamed "In memory of Genevieve Gunderson" \$8; Earl L. Shimp \$3; George T. Gaylord Jr. \$1.
Total: \$3,662.64

SLP Sustainer Fund

Robert Burns \$300; Section Cook County, Ill., \$120; \$100 each Chris Dobreff, Karl Heck, Bernard Bortnick; Donald J. Donaker \$75; William Tucker \$60; John-Paul Catusco \$57; Lois Kubit \$40; Carl C. Miller Jr. \$35; Margaret & Frank Roemhild \$25; George E. Gray \$20; \$10 each Section San Francisco Bay Area: William Kelley, Section Wayne County, Mich.
Total: \$1,052.00

Press Security Fund

Joseph L. Bregni \$1,000; Tom Puszykowski \$90; Majkus Severino

\$50; \$25 each Nicholas York, Stephen Holoviak, Gloria Olman; Robert Burns \$15; William O'Mahoney \$12; \$5 each Stephen Isabirye, Berenice Perkis; Matthew Rinaldi \$2.
Total: \$1,254.00

Leaflet Fund

John S. Gale \$8; Harry Buskirk \$2.
Total: \$10.00

Genevieve Gunderson Memorial Fund
Jim Lehner \$20.00 (Total)

Christmas Box

Bernard Bortnick \$300; B. von Wandruszka \$40; \$25 each Albert Evenich, Pauline Norton, J. Blessington, Richard D. Ernstein; Patrick McSweeney \$20; \$10 each Charles Lundquist, John Filipovich.
Total: \$480.00

Socialist Labor Party Financial Summary (January 2002)

Expenses.....\$9,760.45
Income.....7,212.62
Deficit for Jan.....2,547.83

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

A Tribute to Afghan Women

By B.G.

In March, we observe Women's History Month and on March 8 in particular, International Women's Day. It is a time to recognize the historic struggles of women for equality and to honor those sisters who are still struggling to right the wrongs that keep women in oppression.

This year we want to honor the women of Afghanistan and to show our solidarity with them in their strivings for dignity and equality.

News reports over the past years have graphically depicted the contempt with which Afghan women were treated by the Taliban regime. In accordance with the Taliban's severe and radical form of Islam, women were no longer permitted to work outside the home. Girls over age 8 were henceforth denied education and educated women were confined to the home, forbidden to practice their former occupations. Also, women were forbidden

to be on the streets unless accompanied by a male relative.

In keeping with this most puritanical form of Islam, women walking abroad were required to be clothed in a head-to-toe garment known as a *burka* so as not to tempt men with their femininity. The religious police regularly beat women on the street if so much as their ankle were publicly visible. The *burka* strips a woman of her identity and is a symbol of her powerlessness.

The refusal to let women physicians continue to practice meant that Afghan women were denied proper health care, for it is the custom in much of the traditionally oriented Middle East to forbid a male physician to treat or even touch a woman patient.

Afghan widows led a particularly tragic life. Forbidden to work, and without men to support them, they had to beg for scraps of food from passers-by or else turn to prostitution to support them-

selves and their children.

The downfall of the Taliban regime and the establishment of an interim government in Afghanistan has encouraged former women's leaders to come forward to support women's dignity and the role of women in the new Afghan society. At the suggestion of Ms. Sima Wali, a Ministry of Women's Affairs has been established. A Hazara woman, Sima Samar, has been chosen as a deputy in the cabinet and as minister of women's affairs.

Ms. Wali stated that, "We have many women who are very competent. The world has seen Afghan women only as victims."

One such outstanding woman is Shafiqia Habibi, age 56, formerly one of Afghanistan's best-known broadcasters. Now back on the air, she is anxious to educate women and help train journalists.

Habiba Sarabi, age 44, a pharmacist and biologist, used to work in a Kabul hospital before being forced to flee to

Pakistan. Now home, she sees much work ahead in the area of health services. "For more than 20 years of war," she said, "women have been forced into a very primitive state, a lot of basic information and knowledge has been lost." (*The New York Times*, Dec. 8, 2001)

The task of reconstruction in Afghanistan is just beginning. It was an underdeveloped country before the Soviet invasion in the 1980s and before the U.S. bombing raids began. Now it is a bombed-out country devastated by war, terror, imperialism, warlordism, banditry and oppression. Tales of misery are everywhere. Among that land's greatest victims and sufferers were its women and children.

Afghan women must and will be a part of the rebuilding of a new society. We have no illusions about what that implies—about what is possible and what is not. That new society will not, cannot, be socialism. But, to paraphrase Karl Marx:

"When our Western reactionaries, on their next flight through Asia, reach Kabul, who knows, perhaps they will read the following inscription scrawled on the walls of its ruins:

*République de l'Afghanistan.
Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité!"*

Dissenting Reservists Rattle Israeli Leaders

By John-Paul Catusco

More than 200 Israeli army reservists and combat veterans have publicly declared their refusal to participate in any further military operations to protect Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Most of the 200 responded to a petition signed by 52 reservists and placed as an advertisement with the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*. The petition, which appeared in January, also gained the attention of the army's top brass and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

The *Baltimore Sun* of Feb. 9 reported that the initial group of 52 signed the petition because of disgust over what they considered "illegal and immoral" military actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The *Sun's* report also contained the following excerpt from the petition:

"We hereby declare that we will no longer take part in the war for the settlements' safety," the petition said. "We will no longer fight beyond the Green Line [Israel's pre-1967 border] with the purpose of occupying, deporting, destroying, blockading, killing, starving and humiliating an entire people. The price of occupation is the loss of the Israel Defense Forces' semblance of humanity and the corruption of all of Israeli society."

The soldiers said they received orders to fire randomly with heavy caliber machine guns into densely populated Palestinian towns and villages, while knowing that their unaimed fire was ripping indiscriminately through the homes of families.

They have also described firing live ammo on groups of stone-throwing Palestinian children, who at over 300 yards away posed no threat whatsoever.

Lt. David Zonshein, a software engineer, army reservist and one of the two originators of the petition, explained his objections during an interview on an Israeli radio talk show.

"I stopped ambulances at checkpoints as a paratrooper officer," he said. "I stripped areas clean of groves and trees that are people's livelihoods as a paratrooper officer. I entered houses and threatened fathers as a paratrooper officer, and I fired at neigh-

borhoods as a paratrooper officer, and, as such, I signed the letter, to say: Enough."

Sensing trouble, leaders of the Israeli military and government were quick to respond. Speaking over army radio, for example, army Chief of Staff Lt. Gen.

Shaul Mofaz said:

"If there is someone who is organizing a campaign on an ideological basis, in my eyes this is more than refusal to serve. This is incitement to rebellion. There is no act more serious than that."

Question Period

Under socialism, would the people still have the right to keep and bear arms (Article II, Bill of Rights); or would this right be restricted as it is today?

This, of course, is a question for the Socialist Commonwealth to answer. We do not know what the answer will be, but we can anticipate how the decision will be made. First, however, we should be clear on why "the right to keep and bear arms" was included in the Bill of Rights and what relevance it has today under vastly different circumstances.

When the Bill of Rights was adopted, the United States was still a frontier nation where the people associated their right to keep and bear arms with liberty because arms had been essential to them in resisting tyranny. This "right," of course, has atrophied under capitalism. We can still possess arms, and to a certain extent we can "bear" them. However, whatever these arms are for—sports, hunting, personal protection—they long ago ceased to be associated with liberty.

The reason is obvious. The vast changes that have taken place with the elimination of the frontier and the industrialization of the nation have not only altered the role of arms; they have also created conditions that eliminate arms as potential instruments for resisting tyranny or for achieving freedom. For social and economic evolution has created new weapons and placed them in the hands of the people, which is to say, of the workers, the useful members of society. These "weapons" are economic in character, and consist of the indus-

trial organization of the workers.

The right to keep and bear arms, even if not restricted as it is, would have no meaning for us today in terms of winning socialist freedom. To win socialist freedom we must first use our numerical superiority on the political field. We must vote capitalism out, so to speak, and socialism in. We must have the Socialist Industrial Union prepared to wield the consolidated economic might of the working class by taking, holding and operating the industries. For this task we need, not arms, but organization and an appropriate program.

Once established, socialism will confer on the people a power far greater than could ever be ensured by the right to keep and bear arms. It is the power that inheres in collective and democratic control of the nation's economic life. Indeed, the "right" to bear arms ultimately depends on their being available.

Under socialism, the people will determine what to produce and what not to produce. They may, for example, decide not to produce automobiles that depend on the internal combustion engine and consume fossil fuels because they pose a threat to the environment and to their own health and safety. They may exercise a similar judgment regarding certain guns or guns in general.

Whatever that decision is, however, it will be reached democratically, and as with all truly democratic decisions it will be subject to reconsideration, adjustment and even reversal on reasonable grounds.

Sharon chimed in with an attempt to intimidate those Israelis who may harbor similar sentiments. "It will be the beginning of the end of democracy if soldiers don't carry out the decisions of the elected government," he said.

These words have a hollow ring coming from a man who faced possible indictment as a war criminal by Belgium. Prosecutors in that country were preparing charges stemming from Sharon's actions during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. During the invasion, a Christian militia allied with the Israeli Army massacred hundreds of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps near Beirut. An Israeli commission found Sharon, Israeli defense minister at the time, "indirectly" responsible for the slayings. The finding led Sharon to resign as defense minister in 1983.

Last month, however, the International Court of Justice ruled on another case that may force Belgium to drop its charges against Sharon. As *Ha'aretz* reported on Feb. 16:

"Belgium cannot try former and current world leaders for war crimes because they enjoy diplomatic immunity, the International Court of Justice ruled yesterday. The landmark decision is expected to halt several genocide trials currently pending in Belgian courts, including the one against Prime Minister Ariel Sharon."

The initiators of the petition printed in *Ha'aretz* reportedly hope to convince at least 500 reservists and veterans to add their signatures. Some observers view that number as significant, even though it represents only a tiny fraction of the thousands of mostly working-class Israelis conscripted into the army reserves.

"Peace Now grew out of a similar letter from 348 reservists in 1978," James Bennett recalled in *The New York Times* of Feb. 10. "Those soldiers did not refuse to serve, but they criticized the government for building new settlements while it weighed a peace agreement with Egypt that would force Israel to withdraw from Sinai."

Regrettably, whatever real effect the Peace Now movement of 28 years ago had, it obviously was not a lasting one. Nonetheless, and without exaggerating the possibilities the latest sign of disenchantment in Israel may hold for bringing an end to the violence, any initiative in that direction taken by Israeli workers can only be welcomed.