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## **SLP FINANCIAL CRISIS** **For 'Peace on Earth'**

*"To plunder, to slaughter, to steal, these things they misname empire; and when they make a desert, they call it peace."*—Tacitus

We are approaching that time of the year called the season of peace and good will. But the Christmas season changes nothing under the barbarous capitalist system. The spirit of peace and good will hailed in song and story remains a *fata morgana*—a mirage that only conceals the source of violence and destruction. We know this is true, despite appearances and claims to the contrary. It was certainly true during the violent and tumultuous 20th century, when "peace" was nothing but a brief hiatus between wars. And it already seems that the 21st century will bring more of the same.

Nonetheless, preachers will chant about the peace that surpasses all understanding (which "peace" certainly does under rapacious capitalism) and hold out the promise of rewards "in the hereafter."

Politicians will mouth pretty phrases about the "peace" they are shaping, while they go on creating and using deadly instruments of mass destruction.

The hired "opinion makers" of the capitalist media will spin their yarns about the beauties of this monstrous war- and poverty-breeding system, while capitalism's deadly fruits are being served up with increased fury and frequency.

Reformers will wring their hands in despair and blame their failures on the alleged "stupidity" and "blindness" of "the people," the supposed object of their solicitude and affection. In truth, however, it is they who have contributed to the evil by helping to strengthen the cause that make the people what they are. As John Milton said: "They who have put out the people's eyes, reproach them of their blindness."

Shall we, then, despair of attaining peace, plenty, and the liberty that can only flourish and be secured in a society of tranquillity and abundance? Shall we resign ourselves to a fate that threatens to be more disastrous to humankind than any that has confronted it in the past? Shall we permit the madness of capitalism to drag society, and such poor civilization as we have attained, below the level of a barbarism long since left behind us? The answer of the Socialist

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# **National ID Proposal Threatens Our Liberty**

As President Bush prepared to sign the Patriot Act of 2001 into law in October, *The People* noted that provisions of the newly enacted law "expand previous federal encroachments on civil rights and liberties and further grease the skids toward a police state in the United States." Given the post-Sept. 11 social environment in which Congress found it feasible to pass the draconian act, Bush found it easy to hail its provisions as merely "new tools" to fight terrorism.

Momentum now appears to be building for another "tool" that would be very useful to a police state—a national identity (NID) card system. Since Sept. 11 the public waters have been continuously plumbed for political support for a system of identification similar to the worker ID or "internal passport" systems that once bolstered apartheid in South Africa, fascism in Germany and bureaucratic state despotism in the former Soviet Union and its satellite nations.

Capitalists and their propaganda mills have had a field day with the idea—in the name of antiterrorism. The week after the attack, the Pew Research Center released poll results that it claimed showed "seven of 10 Americans favored a requirement that citizens carry a national identity card at all times to show a police officer upon request." A week later, a *New York Times*/CBS News poll reported 56 percent supported the notion and a CNN/Time poll reported a similar figure.

That week also found Oracle software chieftain Larry Ellison, as a *San Jose Mercury News* report put it, "calling for the United States to create a national identification card system—and offering to donate the software to make it possible" (although he later admitted that maintenance

and updates wouldn't be free).

On Sept. 27, a Bush administration spokesman rejected the notion, claiming "We are not even considering the idea." But an Oct. 7 article in *The New York Times* noted that "at least one company that makes scanners has reportedly said several federal agencies had been in touch about using the devices in connection with ID cards."

By mid-October, Oracle's Ellison said in an interview with the *Mercury News* that he had already "met with U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft and officials at the CIA and FBI in Washington, D.C....to discuss the idea." On Nov. 8, according to a *Reuters* news report, the Bush administration's special advisor on cyber-security, Richard Clarke, conceded "that the administration doesn't yet have a formal position on the concept."

Others have jumped on the national ID card bandwagon—including, of course, the CEOs of other companies that stand to gain financially if such a system is established in the United States. As a *SiliconValley.com* article headlined "Support Grows for Ellison's National ID Card Proposal" put it, one estimate says "the U.S. government could end up spending more than \$3 billion on computer chips, hardware, software and services that go into creating so-called 'smart' ID cards" that

would be used by such a system. Liberals like Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Harvard professor Alan Dershowitz have also lent their support to a NID system.

By the time this issue of *The People* went to press, hearings on the subject were being convened in the House, and a New York State antiterrorism committee had reportedly already called for the creation of such a system.

No matter what the reason for a NID system—as a hedge against terrorism, crime, drugs, illegal immigration or merely against inefficiency in distribution of government services, all of which have been used as rationales for various identification card schemes, workers should lend them no support. Whether the cards are for particular purposes—such as boarding airplanes—or for universal identification, they cannot serve workers' interests.

Proponents claim that everyone will gain personal safety and security, albeit with "a little less privacy." But such schemes actually work to *decrease* individual security while doing nothing to curb the activities of terrorists and criminals. Any NID card system conceivable would do far more for corporate bottom lines and the possibilities for police-state repression in the

(Continued on page 3)

## **NEW YORK FIREFIGHTERS PROTEST**

# **From Heroes to Landfill**

By John-Paul Catusco

Many Americans were shocked on Nov. 2 by the images of New York City firefighters staging a massive and violent protest at "ground zero" in lower Manhattan. Most Americans were unaware of the events of the previous day, which prompted the militant protest. A summary of those events follows:

On Nov. 1, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani announced that more than \$230 million worth of gold and silver bars that had been stored in a huge bomb-proof vault owned by the Bank of Nova Scotia had been unearthed by recovery crews at the ruins of the World Trade Towers. Markets everywhere celebrated the news.

The bodies of five New York City firefighters were also recovered from the rubble on Nov. 1 by their hard-working comrades at ground zero—but it was the story of the gold that made the headlines.

After announcing that all of the gold and silver had been recovered, Giuliani also announced that the recovery crews looking for the still-missing bodies of many of the 343 firefighters and dozens of police and Port Authority

workers who died on Sept. 11 would be reduced to a token crew of 75: 25 from the FDNY, 25 from the NYPD and 25 from the Port Authority. These workers would not be taking a direct part in recovery efforts but would be waiting in holding pens for cranes to dig up the bodies of their comrades.

The cranes have been operating at full speed and have sent the torsos of several firefighters in dump trucks to the Fresh Kills Landfill on Staten Island. The speedup has disgusted the FDNY rank and file and other workers everywhere. The speedup is part of Giuliani's plan to have the site cleaned up before he leaves office to add another credit to his already inflated legacy.

On Nov. 2, the recording secretary for the Uniformed Firefighters Association (which represents New York City's firefighters) said that when Giuliani said that he would leave no brick unturned in the search for the bodies of missing firefighters what he really meant was that he would leave "no brick of gold unturned."

With the gold and silver out it would seem the need to pay city workers overtime so they can recover and pay trib-

ute to their brave comrades has dried up. "Yesterday my husband and his friends were heroes, today they're landfill," said Theresa Regan, the widow of a missing firefighter.

The firefighters and their normally conservative union know this is the case. They know that Giuliani's decision to scale back the recovery operation is not about safety concerns, as the mayor and Fire Commissioner Thomas Van Essen have stated. It is about money.

When firefighters went to the WTC site on Nov. 2, they were banned from entering what to them is hallowed ground. One of them punched a police officer, but union officials were quick to point out that most of the 18 firefighters arrested (including five union officials) did nothing more than chant "U.S.A." and cross a police barricade. When "America's heroes" then marched down to City Hall to protest Giuliani's cutbacks they were met by police in riot gear.

The protests attracted public attention and decided city officials to alter their policy by increasing the FDNY

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# GE Continues to Resist Hudson River Cleanup Plan

By B.G.

The ongoing battle to force General Electric (GE) to clean up the toxins it dumped in the Hudson River over the years has entered a new phase.

For more than 35 years, GE plants discharged millions of pounds of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) as waste into the upper Hudson. That was before the chemicals were banned in 1977.

In 1983, the Hudson was declared a Superfund site. GE has steadfastly resisted both state and national directives to dredge the river to remove the poisons still settled there, saying that the river is cleaning itself. (*The People*, July 2001) GE knows that a loss on this issue could force it to clean up any other polluted sites in the country for which it is responsible.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator Christie Whitman, however, announced that on Aug. 1 the agency would go ahead with the plan to order GE to dredge the upper Hudson to remove the remaining PCBs, and that the nearly half-billion-dollar cleanup be done at GE's expense.

The Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City deprived the regional EPA of its New York office and disrupted its work. Since Sept. 11, GE has met several times behind closed doors with EPA officials in Washington, D.C. These meetings aroused fears that GE is trying to influence the terms of the EPA directive, making the dredging order so difficult, if not nearly impossible, of compliance that the whole project will be undercut.

GE denies there are grounds for these suspicions. The company claimed that its meetings with the EPA were merely "perfunctory." Rep. Maurice Hinchey, a Democrat from the lower Hudson Valley region, thought otherwise. "They're trying to fly under the radar and take advantage of the trade center situation, while people are distracted, to accomplish some nefarious objectives," he said. (*The New York Times*, Oct. 1)

Peter Lehner, chief of the environmental protection bureau in the New York State attorney general's office, is also suspicious. "The state is being kept



B.B. for the People

out of these apparently secret meetings," he said. He also noted that if the EPA is setting standards and goals for GE to meet "without full and detailed consultation with the state, that would violate agreements we have and violate the Superfund law."

According to New York State officials, the EPA in Washington has directed its Region 2 in New York State to rework the dredging plan to meet new performance standards. This directive has caused a rebellion in the regional office, which feels that this new decision from above will "booby trap" the original decision on cleaning up the Hudson.

Rep. Hinchey feels that the Region 2 office is trying to implement the project in a responsible way, but that the EPA in Washington "is trying to do something else." Peter Lehner of the state's attorney general's office agrees, noting that the changing of elements in an agreement "takes years of factual analysis" and cannot validly be done on the basis of a few hasty meetings with a defendant, such as GE.

Environmental groups, after meeting with EPA officials in Washington, agreed with the assessments of Hinchey and Lehner. To insert specific performance standards in the EPA directive

now, rather than during the next three years of analysis, would be a violation of customary procedure. The environmentalists believe GE is behind the plan to insert performance procedures now rather than later to scuttle the operation.

Eileen McGinnis, chief of staff to Christie Whitman, said, however, that it was Whitman who conceived the plan to insert performance standards now to ensure that the operation would be done correctly and would "have some accountability." (*The New York Times*, Oct. 3) Whitman, who considers the project of major national significance, was also considering having the whole dredging plan overseen by EPA headquarters in Washington rather than by the regional office in New York.

The environmentalists who met with the EPA feel, however, that the New York EPA office is far more up to date on the issue and would follow it much more closely in the future than the Washington office.

The Washington EPA office wants to insert in its performance standards the problem of resuspension—how much the dredging operation will stir up the chemicals in the river's sediment. This, by the way, is a topic that GE has constantly brought up to kill the project. For Ned Sullivan of Scenic Hudson, who was present at the Washington meeting, the resuspension issue is reminiscent of an earlier GE propaganda assault. "This is setting up the project for failure" because judgments can be made about "production rate" only "when you have a specific design."

GE angrily denied that it is trying to kill the project. It added a statement telling how much it loves New York and how the company has been trying to help New York City recover from the Sept. 11 disaster by donating both money and equipment to aid in the rescue effort. Although the latter statement of disaster aid is true, it is beside the point. It has nothing to do with dredging the Hudson and involves much less expenditure than the dredging project.

This ongoing struggle is instructive of how a capitalist organization, such as GE, operates to protect its own interests.

## party news

### Houston SLP Group At Antiwar Rally

On Sunday, Nov. 18, an antiwar protest was held in Houston. Comrade Dionisio Villarreal and I participated in the march and the rally that followed. Many groups were represented and about 200 people were present. Even as we gathered for the march, several members of a reactionary group known as the "Freepers" (which I believe is short for "Free Republicans") showed up and began heckling us. One of these so-called Freepers followed the march with a huge banner depicting the head of Osama bin Laden impaled on the torch of the Statue of Liberty. At some points along the march route small knots of people waved American flags and shouted insults at our group, but they were not many. There was a heavy police presence at all times. The march itself covered approximately two miles and ended at Sharpstown Green Park, where the rally was held. I spoke on behalf of the SLP, and my statement was received with applause and congratulatory handshakes afterwards. Comrade Villarreal and I also distributed 80 copies of *The People*. Overall it was a very beneficial experience and the SLP was welcomed in a very positive manner.

Fraternally yours,  
Carl Miller

### 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* 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.

# Union Abandons Meatpackers

By Carl C. Miller Jr.

The SLP has always held that the current trade unions are dedicated to interests that run counter to those of the workers they claim to represent. The present unions are nothing more than bulwarks of capitalism. They have proved this repeatedly by their action, and sometimes by their inaction. For example: Trade unions make many false claims to win the support and allegiance of workers. One of their best sales pitches is the promise of protection from the ever-increasing encroachments of the capitalists. When this claim was put to the test at the IBP-Tyson plant in Amarillo, Tex., workers found out just how empty the promise of protection can be.

According to an article in the November issue of *Labor Notes*, the struggles of workers at IBP-Tyson began around Labor Day when a group of workers took the initiative and approached management to negotiate more money and an improvement in the harsh working conditions at the plant. The company replied that they would do nothing without the union "representing" the workers. But the union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 577, refused to get involved.

The reason behind Local 577's inaction was made clear on Sept. 17. That's when management announced that workers would get "No more money, you're in the middle of a contract." In short, the protection promised by the labor fakers would not be forthcoming as long as the sacred contract was in effect.

Management, realizing that the workers' self-initiated actions could bring trouble, called in the county sheriff's department. The company knew it could count on the "law" for protection, and the "law" came through. Many of those "responsible" for the "trouble" were escorted out of the plant.

On Sept. 18, over 700 of the 3,500 workers employed at the plant walked out, citing concern over safety, understaffing, bad treatment from supervisors and a lack of representation from their union. Sadly, the other 2,800 workers, no doubt fearful of jeopardizing their jobs, stayed on the job in homage to the sacred contract, thereby scabbing on their fellow workers.

Since the wildcat strike began, over 500 workers have been fired and the company has vowed to keep strike leaders out of the plant forever. Where was the union? Where was the protection

that was promised?

"Local union officials are nowhere to be found," *Labor Notes* reported. "No representative of Local 577 has come to visit or support the workers since they were escorted out of the plant. This is not surprising considering that Pres-

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### Abolition of Poverty

By Daniel De Leon

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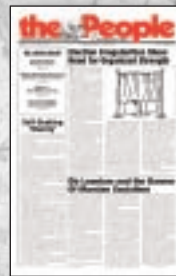
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**SWEENEY'S 'BLANK CHECK' TO BUSH**

# Union Boss Backs War With Pledge of Support

By John-Paul Catusco

Say what you want about the AFL-CIO and its leadership; they can always be trusted to be consistent on at least one point. They have never failed to promise the full and nearly unconditional support of their organization, its membership and all its influence to the wartime activities of the U.S. government, regardless of how those activities have affected the workers they claim to represent.

For instance, a year before the United States entered World War I, the AFL, under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, gave the Wilson administration what became known as a "blank check" by signing on to the Council of National Defense. During World War II, the AFL signed on again under the leadership of Gompers' successor, William Green, and Green's up-and-coming protégé, George Meany.

The current AFL-CIO president, John Sweeney, recently offered the Bush administration similar support for the current U.S. "war against terrorism." According to his own account, Sweeney telephoned President Bush to say that, "We [the AFL-CIO] stand fully behind the president and the leadership of our nation in this time of national crisis.... We will fully support the appropriate American response." Sweeney left no



room to doubt that the "appropriate...response" included anything the Bush administration might decide is necessary to achieve victory in this new war at home or abroad.

This sort of AFL-CIO statement is nothing new—except that this is supposed to be a new AFL-CIO, which, since Sweeney came to power in 1995, has tried to create a new image for itself as progressive and finally willing to accept minorities and women in roles higher than duespayers. Sweeney even allows himself to be considered a "Socialist" of sorts. He is a member of Democratic Socialists of America, a group that descended from the old reformist Socialist Party and functions as

a "caucus" within the Democratic Party.

Sweeney and other AFL-CIO officials hope their unconditional support of the administration's war policies will get them and their members a slightly bigger piece of the pie and some much needed economic relief at home.

In line with this strategy, the AFL-CIO recently took out two full-page ads in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Both ads emphasized Sweeney's previous statements of support for the Bush administration. They also aimed to convince the White House and Congress to give economic relief, not just to the owners of the airlines, but also to the more than 100,000 workers they have

laid off. Many of those threatened airline workers are duespayers who have been, or soon may be, thrown out of work. Many who find themselves out of work will also find themselves empty handed. Apparently certain "emergency clauses" woven into their unions' precious contracts enable the airlines to dump unwanted employees without severance or benefits.

This strategy, whereby the AFL-CIO seeks to ingratiate itself with the Bush administration and Congress, has already fallen apart. A Bush-endorsed Republican filibuster on Oct. 11 managed to prevent Congress from even considering a modest relief package for 130,000 airline workers who had or soon will lose their jobs.

President Bush has told America to get back to business. From his early actions, proposed legislation and tax breaks, it is obvious that he means business as usual; or, to be more precise, the business of exploitation. The rich will recover their lost plunder and perhaps end up on top while the U.S. working class continues to slide toward new economic depths.

With all of this there is no conceivable reason why 13 million rank-and-file workers in the AFL-CIO should bow their heads and comply in their own exploitation. Tens of thousands of union workers are already fighting back against the positions taken by Sweeney and other union leaders. We urge them to become familiar with the principles of Socialist Industrial Unionism and to put them into practice for the future of all humankind.

All power to the rank and file!

## ... National ID Proposal

(Continued from page 1)

service of capitalist-class control of society than for individual security.

The "Inside Risks" column in the December 2001 issue of *Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery* corroborates that view. "It's instructive to consider the problems of passports and drivers' licenses," says the column. "These supposedly unique IDs are often forged. Rings of phony ID creators abound, for purposes including both crime and terrorism. Every attempt at hardening ID cards against forgery has been compromised...."

Some proponents contend that new "smart" NID cards would provide infallible biometric matches—to face, fingerprint or retinal data, for example. But low-tech human bribery can always provide a workaround. Moreover, *CACM*

contends, the notion of card data without "false positives and negatives is fallacious. Also, such systems will still be cracked, and the criminals and terrorists we're most concerned about will find ways to exploit them, using the false sense of security that the cards provide to their own advantage—making us actually *less* secure as a result!"

"Another set of risks arise," says the *CACM* article, "with respect to the potentials for abuse of the supporting databases and communication complexes that would be necessary to support NIDs.... The opportunities for overzealous surveillance and serious privacy abuses are almost limitless, as are opportunities for masquerading, identity theft and draconian social engineering...."

*CACM* also dispenses with any notion that voluntary cards could be different.

"The discriminatory treatment that non-cardholders would surely undergo," it contends, "makes this an obvious slippery slope—the cards would likely become effectively mandatory for everyone in short order, and subject to the same abuses as other more conventional IDs. The road to an Orwellian police state of universal tracking, but actually *reduced* security, could well be paved with hundreds of millions of such NID cards."

Such observations rest on empirical data. A spokesperson for Privacy International, a London watchdog group, said in an article in *The New York Times* that ID systems already exist in "about 100 countries." PI's spokesperson says "the card is just the visible part of a vast information spectrum...[that] is worthless without some sort of integrated computer system behind it."

Such systems allow governments and their police agencies to more easily assemble dossiers on everyone. Such data can be used to keep track of nonconformists, political dissidents, militant workers and anyone else some reactionary state functionary considers a threat to the state or capitalist rule. It can be an effective tool for domestic spying, harassment, repression and the regimentation of workers in general.

History demonstrates that these possibilities are not far-fetched. When Social Security was set up, its supporters gave solemn assurances that Social Security numbers would be kept secret and would be used only for Social Security purposes. Today, however, those numbers are a virtually universal identifier. One can hardly get a job, open a bank account, apply for credit, rent an apartment, and so on without presenting a Social Security number.

The political state targeted political activists in the notorious COINTELPRO and other operations; it has spied on protesters and assembled extensive dossiers. A uniform, supposedly counterfeit-proof ID card would simply make it easier to conduct such actions, and for capitalists who illegally garner such data to blacklist "troublemakers."

The full repressive potential of such a system may not be apparent. But the reactionary tenor of the ruling class is unmistakable. A national identification system would be one more step toward the police state that a desperate capitalist class could one day resort to in an effort to save its system. —K.B.

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## ... Meatpackers

(Continued from page 2)

ident Rusty Stepp lives more like IBP-Tyson's CEO than like the workers. Stepp makes more than \$104,000 a year, five times as much as his members."

The workers' grievances are highlighted in the *Labor Notes* article. Workers complained about the pace of the work and their treatment at the hands of supervisors. According to the article, up to 410 cows are slaughtered per hour and the pace of the work never slows, even if there is a serious injury.

"The chain runs so fast and you can't keep up," a worker said. "The supervisors treat us like animals, we get injured, the chain runs fast, we are short [of] people and the union has not helped us. We had no choice."

Another worker on the picket line said he had been shot in the stomach with a "bolt gun" used to stun cows before they are skinned, and then was

forced back to work even though his wound had not healed.

Other workers related incidents where fingers had been chopped off by hydraulic scissors because, to save money, IBP refused to install the equipment according to manufacturer's instructions.

The workers at the IBP-Tyson plant continue to strike without any help from Local 577. They continue to stand in defiance of those who would rob them of their dignity and rights as workers.

The working class must reject the false unionism promoted by the Teamsters and AFL-CIO and those of their ilk. They must heed the call of the Socialist Labor Party and organize not only to protect themselves from the encroachments of capital but to rid themselves of the very system that enslaves them. The Socialist Industrial Union program of the SLP offers the means to accomplish this worthy task.

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## Hunger in America

It is a damning indictment of capitalism as a social and economic system that hunger still exists in the world's richest nation. The United States is a country with enough industrial and agricultural capacity to feed, clothe and house not only all of its own people, but much of the rest of the world—were it not for the insanity of an economy based on production for the private profit of a few.

A grim picture of millions of working-class families already living in hunger—as layoffs continue and the economy worsens—was painted in the annual *Hunger in America* report released last month by Second Harvest, the nation's largest system of food banks.

According to a survey of its network of charitable hunger-relief agencies and interviews with more than 32,000 emergency food recipients, Second Harvest's system presently serves "an estimated 23.3 million people" annually. Seventy-one percent of this number are classified as "food insecure." Thirty-seven percent experience hunger at some time during the year. Thirty-nine percent of those served are children under the age of 18. Eleven percent are elderly. Nearly 40 percent of surveyed households have at least one member employed, but they don't earn enough to keep the wolves of food insecurity and hunger away from their doors.

An even worse picture may be assumed if we extrapolate the number of hungry reported in February by the Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy at Tufts University. According to that report, about one in 10 Americans—more 30 million people—lived in food insecure households before the present recession began to hit hardest.

These millions are not hungry or at risk of being hungry because food is unavailable. Food is available. They just can't afford to buy it. The mighty productive forces of this nation can produce whatever every worker needs, whenever they need it.

In fact, the government still pays billions to agri-capitalists every year to keep land out of production, or to produce no more than certain agreed-upon limits, in an attempt to bolster the prices of agricultural products and thereby bolster agri-capitalist profits.

In the face of increasing human needs, what has the capitalist class done? Industrial production has been cut considerably by the capitalist class that owns and controls the nation's industries and services. Even at the height of the so-called "longest economic boom in post-war history," in October of last year, only 82 percent of industrial capacity was being utilized, according to Federal Reserve statistics released last month. By this October, according to the Federal Reserve, the capitalist class had cut back production so far that less than 75 percent of the country's productive capacity was being utilized.

Under capitalism the decision to cut back production and toss more millions of workers into the ranks of the jobless and hungry rests entirely with the capitalist class.

That tiny minority makes its decisions based solely on whether the products workers alone produce can be sold at a profit to add to the wealth of that minority. If they can, production is continued or expanded. If they cannot, production is cut and a recession ensues, with the economy spiraling down as more and more workers are laid off and

fewer and fewer of their products can be sold at a profit.

In short, it is the capitalist system itself, with its private ownership of the means of social wealth production and competition among private capitalists whose sole motive for production is profit, that forces upon society the insane paradoxes of hunger amid plenty and massive human needs amid the productive capacity to alleviate them.

Workers do not have to live with these paradoxes or with the grim reality they impose on the nation. They do not have to put up with hunger, with poverty or with joblessness. They do not have to live with a class of capitalist parasites living off their labor, forcing them to work in often unsafe conditions and to produce often unsafe and sometimes unnecessary products. They have but to organize politically and industrially to remake society with *human needs and wants* as the motive for production.

Such a society is only possible if capitalist minority ownership of the nation's industries and services is *abolished*, and replaced with *collective* ownership and *democratic* operation of the economy by the producers themselves with the goal of satisfying human needs and wants.

In such a *socialist* society, production would be for *social use*. The economy, and the industrial government that would administer it democratically from the bottom up, would be organized for the express purpose of determining what society needs and wants to be produced and how best to produce it. The allocation of resources, including human ones, would be democratically planned by a society with full control of its productive forces.

With no small class monopolizing the means of life, with no extraction of profit and exploitation of wage labor, with no profit motive perverting every social or technological advance to private gain, society would finally be free to make full use of all its resources, and above all its human ones.

The material possibilities for workers to remake society have existed for nearly a century. As Daniel De Leon, America's foremost Marxist, wrote in 1911:

"Today, the excuse, the apology for the involuntary poverty of a single member of society exists no more. Material conditions have changed so radically that, so far from insufficiency, there is today the material possibility of abundance for all. The mechanisms and the methods of production are such today that the leisure, the freedom from arduous toil for the necessities of life, the emancipation from the clutches of the fear of want, all of these prerequisites to mental and spiritual expansion, one-time enjoyable but by some, are today possible to all. Today—all statistical researches combine to demonstrate—man can have an abundance at his disposal with no more exercise of physical energies than is requisite for health.

"Under such material conditions...socialism boldly seizes the archangel's trumpet, boldly places it to its lips, and boldly sounds the call for human redemption—the call for revolution—the call for the *abolition of poverty*."

As the present economic recession worsens, the scope of hunger in America can only widen—until the working people who bear the grim brunt of hunger organize at long last for a socialist reconstruction of society that will enable them to take real control of their own lives.

—K.B.

## Debs' Tribute to Daniel De Leon

*Daniel De Leon was born 149 years ago on a tiny colonial island off the coast of Venezuela, Dec. 14, 1852. He died young by modern standards, while still in his 61st year. Nonetheless, few men of comparable potential and ability who lived longer accomplished as much and left behind as great a legacy for the betterment of humankind than did De Leon.*

*Parental hopes and ambitions aside, no one knows in advance what a man or woman will achieve in life. De Leon's accomplishments, impressive by any standard, were succinctly summed up by Arnold Petersen in his introduction to Socialist Landmarks, an SLP publication that contains four of De Leon's major addresses.*

*"De Leon played a stellar role in the socialist movement," Petersen wrote. "To the immortal Karl Marx belongs the discovery of the role of the class struggle in history, the materialist conception of history, and the formulation of the theory of value, surplus value and its scientific application. But it was the American, Daniel De Leon, who discovered the actual structure of socialist society and laid down the basic tactics for achieving proletarian victory in a highly industrialized society."*

*De Leon was vilified while he lived, particularly by the labor fakers and phony socialists whose disservices to the working class he unflinchingly exposed. Those enemies are to De Leon's credit. Unfortunately, their libels and slanders have been taken up by many historians of the labor and socialist movements in this country and have gained an undeserved acceptance as objective truth.*

*The tribute to De Leon that follows presents a different view. It is all the more remarkable because it was written by a person with whom De Leon was often at odds and whom historians have tried to portray as a "respectable reformer" and consistent opponent of De Leon—Eugene V. Debs.*

*Unlike De Leon, Debs was never a consistent Marxist, and while he sometimes criticized the reformist stands of his own Socialist Party, he "was never able to move decisively to the revolutionary stance of the SLP," as The People put it in 1976.*

*Nonetheless, Debs was a working-class militant, a consistent supporter of labor struggles and a principled opponent of the labor fakers. He endorsed the original Industrial Workers of the World, which De Leon played a major role in establishing. Although Debs drifted away from the IWW even before it was captured and split by the anarchists in 1908, he continued to endorse the theory of revolutionary industrial unionism, or what the SLP calls Socialist Industrial Unionism.*

*Debs' tribute to De Leon's greatness first appeared in the Weekly People of July 11, 1914.*

### On the Death of Daniel De Leon

By Eugene V. Debs

[The below article was sent to us by Eugene V. Debs with this explanation:

"The enclosed tribute to Daniel De Leon was written for the *National Rip-Saw* and should have appeared in the issue just off the press, but unfortunately I was not present when the paper was made up and now I find to my great regret that it was inadvertently left out. I shall see to it that it goes into the next issue without fail; but as that will not appear for another month it will seem rather tardy and so I am sending it to you asking that you kindly give it space in an early issue of the *Weekly People*"]

The death of Daniel De Leon, editor of the *New York People* and leader of

the Socialist Labor Party, marks the passing of a striking figure and an extraordinary character from the stage of revolutionary activity. For a full quarter of a century, De Leon has been a leader of socialism in the United States, head and front of the Socialist Labor Party, making a name for himself that is known throughout the world. Gifted with a mind of unusual depth and brilliancy and educated in the leading colleges both here and abroad, he was fitted, as perhaps no other American Socialist, for great work in the educational propaganda of the socialist movement.

Daniel De Leon was a true disciple of Marx and Engels and one of their ablest and most brilliant interpreters. His editorials in *The People* covered the whole range of economics, sociology, politics, history and philosophy, and his versatile genius appears at its best in these columns.

He was an uncompromising champion of economic and political organization, believing that only through their economic and political solidarity could the workers emancipate themselves from wage slavery. He fought the craft

**Daniel De Leon was a true disciple of Marx and Engels and one of their ablest and most brilliant interpreters. His editorials in *The People* covered the whole range of economics, sociology, politics, history and philosophy, and his versatile genius appears at its best in these columns.**

unions in and out of season, exposing without mercy their weakness and impotency, and he stood with equal insistence for revolutionary industrial organization. He was bold and pointed in his criticism, persistent in arguing his convictions, and tireless in fighting for what he believed to be right.

The speeches and writings of De Leon evince keen insight and rare powers of analysis, clear thinking and lucid expression. He had, in a remarkable degree, the faculty of making the most involved and abstruse propositions clear and understandable to his readers. As an editorial writer of clarity, brilliancy and force he had no equal on the American socialist press and no superior anywhere. His versatility, range of mind and felicity of treatment were, indeed, unsurpassed, and his death leaves a vacancy that never can be filled.

There is not a doubt that Daniel De Leon, with all his wealth of intellectual endowment and his classical education and high culture, could and would have ranked high in any profession he might have chosen. But when the light of socialism came into his life it determined his destiny and he plunged into the propaganda with a vigor and zeal which never abated until his vital powers were exhausted and death put an end to his activities. When the prodigious amount of work he did is taken into account, such as translating the classics of socialism and other standard works, addressing propaganda meetings, holding debates and making speaking tours, in addition to his

(Continued on page 6)

CALIFORNIA—

# Gunderson Eulogized at Oakland Memorial Meeting

The following is the text of a eulogy delivered at the Genevieve Gunderson Memorial Meeting in Alameda, Calif., on Saturday, Nov. 10, on behalf of the SLP by National Secretary Robert Bills.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends:

Everyone here today is here because they were touched in some way, at some time, by Genevieve Gunderson. For some of us the memories are entirely personal. For others they are largely connected to the organization and the purpose to which Genevieve dedicated most of her adult life. For some it is not easy to separate those two aspects of Genevieve's life. I am one of those. My relationship with Genevieve, even my family's relationship with her, was mixed in that way. It is difficult to sort out these two things, not only because Genevieve was so completely devoted to the Socialist Labor Party and our shared view of the world and of humanity, but also because it was the cornerstone on which our personal relationship was built. In the end they cannot be separated. They are inseparable because, in truth, they are the same.

Nonetheless, I am not here to talk about the SLP, what it stands for or what it hopes to achieve. Suffice to say that these things were as important to Genevieve as they are to me, as they have been to thousands of other SLP men and women, among them members of her own family. Indeed, her commitment to the SLP grew out of her own experience, and I must assume out of her relations with her family—particularly her sister, Edna, and her brother, Theo. But I am not qualified to speak about those experiences or that background. Only Genevieve herself could speak with authority about those things.

When I began to assemble my thoughts for this afternoon, I experienced a moment of mild panic when I tried, unsuccessfully, to remember the first time I met Genevieve. I could not find that memory among the many I have sorted through. It was 1972, of that I am certain, but whether it was at the SLP's National Convention in Detroit that April, or during one of her visits to New York City later that year, I cannot say. If it was at Detroit it could have been no more than an introduction and a handshake. There were many such introductions, handshakes and expressions of good luck for Genevieve on that occasion. For that was the occasion on which she was suddenly thrust into the limelight—at least the SLP limelight—in a way I am sure she never imagined and certainly never sought.

She was in Detroit as the convention delegate elected by the SLP members in Minnesota. By the time the convention was over she had been nominated to be the SLP's vice presidential candidate in that year's national election campaign. Knowing Gen as well as I came to know her in later years, I imagine that her mind was filled with thoughts about the responsibility she had agreed to accept. I am certain that is where her thoughts were, and not on the grueling two-month campaign that was in front of her, or how that would tax her energies and test her strength. And I will tell you why I believe I am right about that.

Although my memory of precisely when, where and under what circumstances Genevieve and I first met is obscure in my mind, my earliest impression of her has not been lost. Indeed, the

reason I cannot pinpoint the moment of our first meeting probably has something to do with that first impression and what it says about her, as much as it does with it having been so long ago. The reason I can speak with confidence about what that impression was is that it was written down and printed in the *Weekly People*. She had been given the assignment of standing on a Manhattan street under a sign inviting passersby to stop and "Meet the Candidate," while other party members spread out to distribute SLP leaflets, sell copies of the *Weekly People* and SLP pamphlets, and, of course, to urge people to stop and talk with Genevieve. And I was given the assignment of reporting on that experience. What I wrote was that "Genevieve Gunderson brought her vice presidential campaign into New York City with the same display of quiet energy and determination that have characterized her entire national tour."

"Quiet energy and determination" not only characterized her conduct throughout the 1972 campaign. In many ways it characterized her entire life.

Genevieve was not a person to make a fuss. She certainly never desired to be fussed over, and never did anything that was calculated to draw attention to herself. But those who knew her will affirm that she was a woman of remarkable energy and determination.

Nothing that happened over the next 29 years that I knew Genevieve would cause me to think that my first impression was incorrect. On the contrary, it was as accurate in September 2001 as it was in September 1972.

Another phrase that found its way into the *Weekly People* but several years earlier than my report on her campaign visit to New York, underscores the first, at least in my own mind. I did not write it, and it wasn't written about Genevieve. I came across it when I went to the back issues to assemble some facts about her activities as a member of the



Sam Bortnick for The People

SLP. The phrase I came across was written about someone else—about a party organizer who had just spent a week in Minnesota. It was in a report written by Genevieve herself. What she wrote about that SLP organizer's week of activities in the state was that he had—and I quote—"performed a feat of human endurance (and of socialist endeavor) that few people would have been able to survive."

If that was true of the man upon whom Genevieve had bestowed such lavish praise it was a thousand times more true of Genevieve herself, particularly during the last nine or 10 years of her life.

Genevieve Gunderson was unquestionably devoted to the SLP with all her heart and soul. It would take the better part of an afternoon to tell you all the services she performed for the SLP. The list is long and it spans a period almost as long as her membership, which began in 1945.

## NEC Members Salute Genevieve Gunderson

Genevieve Gunderson, vice presidential candidate of the Socialist Labor Party in 1972 and for 26 years a member of the party's national headquarters staff, died on Sept. 25. The national secretary of the SLP reported her death to the members of the party's National Executive Committee on Sept. 26. In response to his letter, the national secretary received the following tributes and expressions of sadness and regret from the members of the NEC:

From NEC member Stephen Raper:

I will miss Comrade Gunderson. I met her at the annual convention, and she was a real comrade. I enjoyed speaking to her and she really helped to make the convention a pleasant experience. The stories she told me, her pleasant wit and her charming demeanor made her the type of person you never forget. And I will never forget her; she will reside in my memories as the example of a truly dedicated Socialist, and I hope all members of the SLP will take the example she set to heart. Working for the interests of the working class to the very end, Comrade Gunderson was truly one of the best role models any young Socialist such as myself could ever have.

From NEC member Carl Miller Jr.:

I am very sorry to hear about Comrade Gunderson. I am deeply saddened by her passing. She was a wonderful lady and I regret not having the chance to get to know her better. Her determination and dedication to the SLP will be sorely missed. If there

is anything I can do, please don't hesitate to let me know.

From NEC member Chris Camacho:

Please accept my most heartfelt condolences on the death of Comrade Genevieve Gunderson. The party and our class have lost a true heroine of the class struggle.

From NEC member Bruce Cuzzini:

I am greatly saddened at the death of Comrade Gunderson. Comrade Prince called me this morning with the news. It is hard for me to put into words all she has meant to the SLP and to me personally, from my youth in the Midwest until the present. The news came as little surprise after seeing her at the discussion meeting on the 15th. Her physical condition had deteriorated to the point where she could barely complete a sentence without stopping for breath, yet her spirit and enthusiasm for the emancipation of the working class was as strong as ever. She is irreplaceable in both her work and her spirit.

I want to thank you and Donna for your caring and attention to her in working with and looking out for her during her physical decline. It is a special acknowledgment that she gave her all to this organization.

Genevieve earned not only our respect and thanks, but our love. We all shall miss her.

From NEC member Diane Secor:

I received your e-mail with the news of

(Continued on page 6)

For example: Genevieve was extremely proud of the time and effort she put into the SLP booth at the Minnesota State Fair. The booth was an annual event for many years, and I know that she devoted many of her vacations from work entirely to those fairs. One report in the *Weekly People* states that she put in 12 to 16 hours a day on that activity alone, and she did it year after year. But she did much more.

She serviced newsstands in which the *Weekly People* was displayed. She gathered signatures to qualify SLP candidates for the ballot, not only in Minnesota, but in Illinois where she traveled to help when the need arose. She distributed SLP leaflets by the thousands, and I can only imagine how many thousands that must have been. She not only did these things herself, she did what she could to encourage others to emulate her example. She opened her home to other SLP members who came from other states to collect signatures in Minnesota to qualify SLP candidates for the ballot in her own state.

She was the organizer of Section Minneapolis for many years, from 1953 to 1959, from 1962 until 1967, and again from 1970 to 1975.

She was a member of the SLP's Minnesota State Committee. She was instrumental in making the practical arrangements for holding state conventions, and she served as recording secretary at more than a few of those conventions. She contacted newspapers and television and radio stations to arrange for news conferences and interviews with state and national candidates of the party.

Genevieve had a fondness for radio call-in programs that may date back to those state conventions. There were several Minnesota state conventions where radio stations set up their equipment and broadcast SLP talks right from the convention hall. A feature of some of those broadcasts was that listeners could call in and ask questions for answer on the air. Genevieve was certainly involved in making the arrangements for those broadcasts, as she was in making other arrangements for the state conventions.

But Gen was not always the one in the background who made things happen. Occasionally she was thrust into the front lines. In 1969, for example, she was the party's candidate for mayor of Minneapolis, and as already mentioned, she was elected to represent Minnesota at the SLP's 28th National Convention in 1972.

It was there, at Detroit, that she accepted the party's nomination for vice president of the United States. I don't know if you can imagine what a grueling ordeal that can be. It means weeks of constant travel, of living out of suitcases, of being shuttled to places and engagements about which you have no warning to do things for which you often have no time to prepare. It means being prepared to speak in public at a moment's notice, to have microphones thrust into your face and to be sat down in front of television cameras. It means being challenged and sometimes verbally abused by hostile and cynical reporters and radio and television personalities. It means having to think on your feet, not only to contend with attacks designed to catch you off your guard, to embarrass you and to cause you to think simply of defending yourself, but to keep your composure, to deflect and counteract antagonism, arrogance and ignorance that distorts your message before you have a chance to deliver it yourself. Genevieve met and overcame those challenges in ways that made every SLP man and woman proud that she had been chosen to represent them in that campaign. And she did it repeatedly from the day after Labor Day, when the campaign began, until it ended on Nov. 5. Her success as

(Continued on page 6)

# Funds

(Sept. 8–Nov. 16)

## *Genevieve Gunderson Memorial Fund* (Thanksgiving Fund)

Genevieve Gunderson Memorial Meeting (\$2,540): \$500 each Section San Francisco Bay Area, Daniel D. Deneff, Louis Lipcon; Bruce Cozzini \$200; \$100 each Harriet Dolphin, Bill Kelley, Gretchen Storer, Dale Birum; \$50 each Bills family, Michael Rooney, Brette McCabe, Lois Reynolds; \$40 each Steve Littleton, Manuel Luevano; \$25 each Ken Boettcher, Mary & Frank Prince, Paul L. Wolf, Jennie Seekford; \$20 each Denise Jacobsen, Jill Campbell; F. Paul Kelly \$10; \$5 each Diane Secor, Edmund Light.

Minneapolis SLP Group Memorial Meeting for Genevieve Gunderson (\$425): \$100 each Irene Schelin, Karl Heck; \$50 each Donald Donaker, Ross & Norma Schelin; Lila Holmdahl \$35; Rudy & Aune Gustafson \$25; \$20 each Harvey Rodich, Jane Christian, Alphonse Eiden; John & Pearl Flipovich \$5.

\$1,000 each Marty Radov, John O'Neill, Irene Schelin; Joan M. Davis \$800; Glenn Schelin \$600; \$500 each Anonymous, Section Cleveland, Michael Preston; \$300 each Section Philadelphia, Karl Heck (tax rebate), Archie Sim, Anonymous; \$250 each Richard A. Weimer, Lois Reynolds, George S. Taylor; \$200 each Roy K. Nelson, Joseph Bregni, Chris Dobreff, Jim McHugh; Robert P. Burns \$150; Jim

Plant \$140; Anonymous \$101.

\$100 each Steve Littleton (one-third tax rebate), Section Cook County, Ill., Richard Aiken, Mildred & Richard Woodward, Joseph Massimino, Joseph J. Frank, Jill Campbell (one-third tax rebate), Harvey K. Fuller, Frederick Vogelgesang, Edith Mautner, Earl L. Shimp, Clayton Hewitt, Barbara Graymont; John-Paul Catusco \$75; Anonymous \$68.

\$50 each Tony Marsella, Margaret & Frank Roemhild, Alan Taylor, John & Mary Brlas, Harley G. Selkregg, James J. Schiller, Fred Didomenico, Dimitre Eloff, Robert Hofem; Henry Coretz \$42; Sid Fink \$40; Robert Rink \$30; George E. Gray \$26; \$25 each Jennie Seekford, John S. Gale, Blake Bearden, Rudolph P. Sulenta, Albert Evenich, R. Brunson, Carl Archambeau, John-Paul Catusco; \$20 each Thomas A. Harvey, Joseph T. Longo, Joseph Viditch, John Hagerty, Aaron Robertson, Harry Gibson, Dagfinn Sjoen, Joseph W. Wood, R. Collins, Monroe Prussack; David Mohle \$19.23; Thomas McEvoy \$15; Keith Wood \$14; \$10 each Frank Rudolph, Joseph Wood, Sarah Rotman, Milton Poulos, Harry Maran, Frank Bell, Frank Rudolph, Kenneth E. McCartney; David Melamed \$8; Phillip White \$5; Anonymous \$2.

Total: \$14,580.23

### *SLP Sustainer Fund*

Angeline Kleist \$500; \$200 each Al Mitch, Bernard Bortnick; Robert P. Burns \$150; \$100 each Chris Dobreff,

Carl C. Miller Jr., Nathan Goldberg, "In memory of Genevieve Gunderson"; Chris Camacho \$96; \$50 each Donald J. Donaker, Karl H. Heck; Lois Kubit \$30; Section Wayne County, Mich. \$25; \$20 each George E. Gray, Section San Francisco Bay Area: William Kelley, Richard Aiken, "In memory of John W. Aiken"; Richard Cassin \$10.

Total: \$1,671.00

### *Press Security Fund*

Jack Radov \$400; Joseph Bregni \$300; Michael Preston \$100; William Barry \$75; Phillip Colligan \$20; \$10 each Donald L.H. Scott, Lila Holmdahl, Irving Hulteen; Ed Light \$5; K.M. Davis \$1.

Total: \$931.00

### *Leaflet Fund*

Michael Preston \$100; John Gale \$8; Joseph Frank \$5.

Total: \$113.00

### *2001 National Convention Banquet Fund*

Bill Cozzini \$200.00 (Total)

### *Nathan Karp Memorial Fund*

Deborah Menkart \$50.00 (Total)

### **Socialist Labor Party**

#### *Financial Summary*

(Oct. 1–31, 2001)

Expenses .....	\$10,925.32
Income .....	12,017.48
Surplus for Oct.....	1,092.16
(Jan. 1–Oct. 31, 2001)	
Expenses.....	122,540.11
Income .....	67,904.35
Deficit as of Oct. 31 .....	\$54,635.76

# activities

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

### **CALIFORNIA** **San Jose**

**Discussion Meeting—**  
Section San Francisco Bay Area will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, Dec. 1, 1–3:30 p.m., at the Empire Branch Library, 491 E. Empire St., San Jose. Moderator: Bruce Cozzini.

### **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](mailto:houstonslp@lycos.com) or visit the group's Web site at <http://houstonslp.tripod.com>.

### **OHIO**

#### **North Royalton Social & Discussion—**

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

## ... From Heroes to Landfill

(Continued from page 1)

detachment at the WTC site from 25 to 50, which was small consolation to the rank and file and the bereaved families of those whose bodies are still buried under the rubble. The city also dropped the charges against 17 of the 18 firefighters arrested during and after the Nov. 2 protest. Firefighters and their union still remain dissatisfied

with the recovery operation and say that the effort to recover the bodies of those who lost their lives has been turned into a "scoop and dump" operation.

This is capitalism pure and simple. It is a case of money over human beings. The city rushed to get the gold and silver, but now it is willing to turn over the recovery of the bodies of New York City's bravest

workers to the cold metal teeth of the cranes to save time and money.

The words of Theresa Regan should serve as a warning for all those who would give their lives in service to a state that cares more for money and business than it does for the people to whom it pays so much lip-service in the capitalist press. Those words are: One day you're a hero and the next day you're landfill.

## ... Tribute to Daniel De Leon

(Continued from page 4)

editorial work on the *Daily* and *Weekly People* it is not strange that he broke down prematurely and that, sad to tell, he literally worked himself to death.

Whatever fault may be found with De Leon, his personality, his methods or his tactics, it cannot be gainsaid that his zeal, his energy, his very heart and soul were all with the

working class, and that with a singleness of purpose as exalted as it was inspiring, he consecrated himself to their emancipation. He had his faults, as all men have, but these will fade away in the light of his monumental services to the cause. He fought the good fight to the end without flinching, and left the world a heritage of light and hope and inspiration that will keep his

name bright and his fame secure, through the coming ages.

With deep regret and with sincere appreciation of his masterly services and his loyal devotion to the cause, we note the passing of our valiant comrade from the field of conflict to the realm of rest, and to his stricken widow and family we tender our heartfelt sympathy in their great bereavement.

## ... Salute to Gunderson

(Continued from page 5)

Comrade Genevieve Gunderson's passing away. I knew when I saw Genevieve a few weeks ago at Jennie's that her condition had taken a turn for the worse. But somehow even when we think that we are prepared to face the loss of a beloved comrade, we are never really prepared for the shock and grief of the loss.

Comrade Gunderson had all of the qualities that I admire in a person. She had a lovely and generous spirit, with a great sense of humor. Her years of selfless hard work and courageous dedication to the principles of the Socialist Labor Party were a deep inspiration to all of us. I really am grateful to have known her.

My condolence to her family and

the national office staff.

#### *From NEC member Ken Boettcher:*

To me she was and remains a lion-hearted defender of socialism, despite her diminutive stature and ill health. I will miss her, as will many.

#### *From NEC member Bernard Bortnick:*

I was saddened to hear of Comrade Gunderson's death. She was a remarkable woman, and a remarkable Socialist who set a standard for commitment and dedication.

I don't know her full story while she was a member of the SLP, but I do know that seldom if ever was there a party task that had to be done where she was not in the front ranks of volunteers.

Her many years of selfless work for the organization should be made known in an appropriate tribute, and I am sure this is what you were referring to in stating you will have more to say about her later.

## ... Gunderson

(Continued from page 5)

the party's vice presidential candidate is a testament to that inner strength that was so much a part of her makeup. Genevieve Gunderson was a woman of substance.

Genevieve returned to Minneapolis and her job as a dispatcher for the Minneapolis fire department after the campaign; but, as it turned out, for only a few years. In 1975, she was called upon a second time to assist with a national campaign of the SLP, not as a candidate, but to act as the treasurer for the upcoming campaign of 1976. She never returned to Minnesota to live again. She stayed on as a permanent member of the party's national headquarters staff, and she remained here with us for the rest of her life.

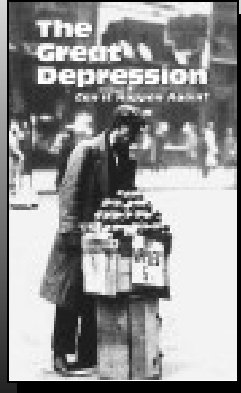
Here in California, Genevieve was as active and dedicated to the SLP as she had been in Minnesota. As the party's bookkeeper, she kept a close watch on the party's funds. She was treasurer for the party's National Convention and National Executive Committee Session banquets. In 1983, the membership elected her the party's financial secretary, a post that she filled with the same diligence and care through two terms of office that she gave to every SLP responsibility she ever undertook. In

addition, she was a member of the SLP's National Executive Committee from 1981 to 1983, and again from 1989 to 1991.

Outside the office, Genevieve did many of the same things in our Bay Area section that she had done in Minneapolis. She was the section's financial secretary, its newsstand committee, its mailing committee, and she was always the treasurer at our local social and fundraising affairs. Apart from being the caretaker of the party's finances on the national and local levels of organization, she was always a consistent and generous contributor to party funds.

To my family and me, however, Genevieve was something more than a dedicated and hardworking member of the SLP. She became a close personal friend, and in many ways it was as if she became a member of our family. She was affectionate with children, and the children who knew her—my children, certainly—had a great affection for her. Genevieve and my family celebrated birthdays and holidays together for many years. Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas mornings and family birthdays were not complete without Genevieve being a part of the festivities. And letting one of her birthdays

(Continued on page 7)



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## USA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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

## ALBANY, N.Y.

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

## ATHENS, TENN.

E-mail: iluvhumanity@yahoo.com.

## CHICAGO

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

## CLEVELAND

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

## CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX.

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# letters to the People

## Marx on Islam

Your commentary to the two-page spread of Marx and Engels [October issue] was very good and I found Engels' analysis of the incessant tribal conflict among the Arabs very enlightening. It is very much a revolt of the peasantry against the city bourgeois throughout Central Asia and Pakistan. I also think that Ahmed Rashid's analogy to the "lumpen proletariat" has a grain of truth in it considering the destruction of Afghan communities over the past 20 years.

B.B.  
Dallas, Tex.

[For a review of Ahmed Rashid's Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia, see our June issue.]

## Afghanistan and Oil

The premise of Diane Secor's timely article in the November issue of *The People* that the Afghan war is in reality another war over oil, receives interesting and telling confirmation in the British daily newspaper *The Guardian* in its issue of Oct. 23. *The Guardian* article aptly commences by quoting the words of President Woodrow Wilson just a year after the end of the First World War: "Is there any man, is there any woman, let me say any child here, that does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry?"

The article, by George Monbiot, notes, "Afghanistan has some oil and gas of its own, but not enough to qualify as a major strategic concern. Its northern neighbors, by contrast, contain reserves which could be critical to future global supply. In 1998, Dick Cheney, now U.S. vice president but then a chief executive of a major oil services company, remarked: 'I cannot think of a time when we have had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian.' But the oil and gas there is worthless until it is moved. The only route which makes both political and economic sense is through Afghanistan."

The article observes that piping all the Caspian basin's fossil fuel through Russia or Azerbaijan would greatly enhance Russia's political and economic control over the central Asian republics, hardly an attractive proposition for U.S. capitalism. Piping it through Iran would also not be to the liking of the United States, and sending it the long way through China would be prohibi-

tively expensive and unwise strategically. Transporting the fuel through Afghanistan to the growing and ever more profitable south Asian markets is the most viable proposition from the U.S. point of view.

*The Guardian* continues, "...In 1995 the United States oil company Unocal started negotiating to build oil and gas pipelines from Turkmenistan, through Afghanistan and into Pakistani ports on the Arabian Sea. The company's scheme required a single administration in Afghanistan, which would guarantee safe passage for its goods. Soon after the Taliban took Kabul in September 1996, the [London] *Telegraph* reported that 'oil industry insiders say the dream of securing a pipeline across Afghanistan is the main reason why Pakistan, a close political ally of America's, has been so supportive of the Taliban, and why America has quietly acquiesced in its conquest of Afghanistan'..."

*The Guardian* reports that a U.S. diplomat told the author Ahmed Rashid in 1997 that "the Taliban will probably develop like the Saudis did. There will be Aramco [the former U.S. oil consortium in Saudi Arabia] pipelines, an emir, no parliament and lots of Sharia law. We can live with that."

However, as noted by Diane Secor in her *People* article, it eventually became clear that the Taliban was an unreliable partner and even an obstacle to U.S. plans, and this became particularly evident after the bombing of U.S. embassies in Africa, apparently carried out by Islamic militants based in Afghanistan and protected by the Taliban.

*The Guardian* observes that American foreign policy is governed by the doctrine of "full-spectrum dominance," meaning that the United States should control military, economic and political developments worldwide. Naturally, Russia and China have taken steps to counter such U.S. worldwide dominance. In June, Russia and China pulled four central Asian republics into a "Shanghai cooperative organization," its purpose in the words of Chinese leader Jiang Zemin being to "foster world multipolarization," meaning resisting U.S. full-spectrum dominance. *The Guardian* comments that: "If the U.S. succeeds in overthrowing the Taliban and replacing them with a stable and grateful pro-Western government, and if the United States then binds the economies of Central Asia to that of its ally Pakistan, it will have

crushed not only terrorism, but also the growing ambitions of both Russia and China..."

*The Guardian* goes on to state that it has "argued [in its pages] about whether terrorism is likely to be deterred or encouraged by the invasion of Afghanistan, or whether the plight of the starving will be relieved or exacerbated by attempts to destroy the Taliban. But neither of these considerations describes the full scope and purpose of this war."

Once again innocent civilians will be bombed and subjected to starvation and other hardships. Once again young men and women of the armed forces of the United States and its allies will lose their lives, or be horribly mutilated. All this ostensibly to defeat terrorism, but in fact to ensure raw materials, markets and continued profits for the capitalist class, while at the same time very likely creating fertile conditions for the growth of future terrorist movements.

Jim Plant  
Sawbridgeworth, England

## Behind the War in Afghanistan

I think Diane Secor's article on the real reasons for the war in Afghanistan, which appeared in your November issue, captures the dynamics of U.S. foreign policy in the region. Like the Gulf War of 10 years ago, this is a war in pursuit of oil—and like the Gulf War and its aftereffects, which are primarily blamed for the recent terrorist attacks, the current hostility could trigger deadlier attacks down the road.

Stephen B. Isabirye  
Flagstaff, Ariz.

## 'Patriotism'

Whenever "the last refuge of a scoundrel shines" the brightest, as it has since Sept. 11, the voice of *The People* is needed the most. To add to that, we have the economy slipping (or skidding) steadily downward. Enclosed is my Thanksgiving contribution to help our voice stay alive.

B.B.  
St. Augustine, Fla.

## Doing His Part

My bank account and savings say no, but to make a contribution is the least I can do to honor Genevieve Gunderson's years of toil and determination to the cause of working people the world over.

R.H.  
Carlsbad, Calif.

# ... Gunderson

(Continued from page 6)  
slip by unnoticed by my family was unthinkable.

If Genevieve was all business where business was concerned, she also knew how to have a good time and how to bring a smile and a bit of happiness into other people's lives. She was subtle and sweet and blessed with a good sense of humor. She knew the difference between work and play; she understood the value and the necessity of both, and she knew that there were occasions when the two could overlap.

Genevieve was also well read and well informed. A personal library can tell you a great deal about its owner. Genevieve's library was no different. It was not large by some standards, and it included things you would expect. There were works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in her bookcase. There were plenty of SLP pamphlets, and there were books about men, women and movements that have affected the country and the world we live in. But there was more. There was Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, the poetry of Shelley, the essays of Thomas De Quincey and the adventure stories of Jack London.

During the last years of her life, Genevieve battled

against ailments that have overwhelmed, demoralized and defeated many. I know it was difficult for her; but I also know that she would not allow herself to be overwhelmed by any of them. She loved life, she fought hard to cling to it, and in doing that she "performed a feat of human endurance that few people" could match.

That same "quiet energy and determination" that impressed me 29 years ago impressed me until the end. I am very sad to lose my old friend, my comrade, my co-worker and someone who came as close to being a member of my family and a grandparent to my children as anyone could be who was not those things by blood. She was a sweet and gentle woman whose disarming smile did not conceal so much as it complemented a noble heart, a keen intellect, extraordinary competence at almost any task she undertook or goal she set for herself, and an undying faith in the goodness of the human species. Indeed, that is why she was a Socialist, a life-long member of the SLP, and someone who was loved and cherished by everyone who could claim the honor of having known her and of having called her comrade and friend.

# ... 'Peace'

(Continued from page 1)

Labor Party is a ringing: no!

We know that the evils of the modern world are the byproduct of the antisocial system we live under. The antisocial evil of capitalism can be conquered, but it cannot be overcome by pious wishes, by idle dreams, or by wistfully yearning for peace, for material security or for the restoration of our rapidly disintegrating environment.

The working class, through its genius and unlimited resourcefulness, has created the conditions needed to secure all these things. We of the Socialist Labor Party are pledged to carry on the struggle to achieve that goal to a successful conclusion. and though all the

powers of class rule be arrayed against us, we mean to redeem that pledge!

But—and there is a but—we cannot do so unaided, or by mere individual adherence to principle. We need the support of those who share our views and our solidly founded hopes. In particular, we must restore the SLP's financial strength to carry on the struggle. To do that, however, it is essential that we raise at least \$125,000 before the end of August 2002. If that goal cannot be achieved it is a virtual certainty that the SLP will have to close its headquarters, dismiss its staff and discontinue *The People*.

Your contribution to *The People's* Christmas Box will greatly aid us in reaching that \$125,000 goal—and perhaps in going over it!

Do then, for *The People*, what

you would do for yourself and yours—send a Christmas gift that will help us to carry on the work that will eventually lead to a new world in which the "spirit" of peace and good will will be an everyday feature of our lives and those of all the generations yet to come.

Help us carry on the fight for a new society where wars and poverty will be but faint memories of an evil age—for the new day envisioned by the poet, when

"War in men's eyes shall be  
A monster in iniquity  
In the good time coming.  
Nations shall not quarrel then,  
To prove which is the stronger;  
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake;—

*Wait a little longer."*

Please use the Xmas Box coupon on page 6.

## Bin Laden Family Cuts Its U.S. Financial Ties

By B.G.

International capitalism suffered a minor embarrassment after Sept. 11 when the Saudi Binladen Group, a construction and investment company, felt compelled to cut its financial ties to the Carlyle Group.

The Carlyle Group, as recently described by *The New York Times*, is "a private investment firm known for its connections to influential Washington political figures." (Oct. 26) Its chairman is Frank C. Carlucci, former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency and former secretary of defense. Former President George H.W. Bush and former Secretary of State James A. Baker are also prominent members of the group.

Carlyle invests in buyouts of military and aerospace companies, among other things. For this reason, the bin Laden family faced criticism after

the Sept. 11 attack that it might profit from the increase in U.S. military spending during the present war.

One of the greatest embarrassments to the family has been its scapegrace son and brother, Osama bin Laden, one of 53 siblings, whom the family disowned in the 1990s and claims never to have had contact with since. The bin Laden family has also publicly condemned the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

The family's main company, the Saudi Binladen Group, is a huge construction company headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It also has vast global investment interests.

The Binladen Group first established its connection with the Carlyle Group in 1994 with an investment in a Carlyle buyout fund. Since then, Frank Carlucci, former President Bush and James Baker have all, in recent years, visited the family's headquar-

ters in Jeddah and have developed a cozy and profitable relationship with the family. Other prominent American businessmen have also made trips to Jeddah to make contacts with this important capitalist firm.

When criticism of the bin Ladens arose after Sept. 11 because of their capitalist relations with an American firm, the Carlyle Group willingly helped the family to sever its ties with Carlyle by buying out the Binladen Group's investment stake with its American partner. One hand washes the other.

Surely the Carlyle Group will not suffer financially from this departure because their ties to the Saudi Binladen Group are still strong and can be revived whenever the political situation is more auspicious. Also, the Carlyle Group will find the current war very profitable for their investment program.

## Political Parsimony Threatens California's Mentally Disabled

By Mary Prince

One feature of a caring society is the way it treats its mentally disabled. The society we live in cannot be called caring.

It is proposed to close down some, if not all, of California's treatment centers and transfer 3,000 patients into a "community-care system," which critics believe would not be able to adequately serve those patients. The existing facilities are not the answer, of course, particularly since many are dilapidated and considered structurally unsafe; but shunting patients to less adequate facilities just to save money is not the answer either.

A bill introduced in the state assembly last February by Berkeley Democrat Dion Aroner would phase out at least three of the five remaining centers for the developmentally disabled and trans-

fer those patients into the so-called community-care system. The bill passed the assembly in June by a vote of 47 to 24. Since then, however, it has been stalled in a committee of the state senate.

"Though it is not the only motivation," according to the *San Jose Mercury News*, "one aim of the legislation is to save money—using the \$600 million the centers get to provide more care in the community, where costs are lower." (July 23)

The other motivation ostensibly is to do away with the state's "dual system" of providing care for the mentally disabled. But the state deliberately divided its system years ago by moving some patients out of facilities it decided were too costly to maintain. Even then, however, it was done under the guise of giving patients a choice or, as the *San Jose* newspaper put it: "It was also the result of a heightened awareness of the right of the disabled to choose where they want to live. Over the past decade, many have opted to move to a community setting."

The option was not for the humanitarian reasons that the *Mercury News'* wording would have its readers believe. Indeed, the same article went on to note some of the problems that have arisen because of the lack of funding, services and monitoring of the "community-care system," which is neither communal nor particularly caring.

A study by researchers at the University of California-Riverside cited by the *Mercury News* found that patients had a much greater risk of dying prematurely in community-care homes than in the centers where they are now. The article went on to boast that, in 1993, "the *Mercury News* uncovered the deaths of nine children within a month at a care center in San Bernardino that was the state's first attempt at providing community care for retarded and medically fragile children. Four years later, the *Orange County Register* identified at least six mentally disabled persons who had died since 1991 as a result of preventable incidents."

Sunny Maden, president of the California Association of State Hospital

Parent Councils for the Retarded, said: "To thrust our children into the community would kill them." In other words, parents would not be able to care for their mentally disabled children in a community-based scenario in the manner they have been able to in the past. And this from Santi Rogers, former executive director at Agnews Developmental Center and now executive director at San Andreas Regional Center in San Jose: "The majority of people in the community say we should look at other alternatives. Options are what this bill talks about."

As some wit once said, "Money talks!" If there was money to find for disabled patients to receive treatment at adequately funded hospitals, someone would be sure to find that that money could be better spent somewhere else. Needless to say, these patients cannot speak up for themselves. They are at the mercy of those people who wield more influence in society.

This is the way capitalism treats its more vulnerable members of society. Everything that does not turn a profit and anything that might eat into profits is expendable under capitalism, and bureaucrats are not to be outdistanced in safeguarding the profit interests of the ruling class.

If this is capitalism's response to the outworn, outmoded system of caring for its helpless then it clearly is an entirely unfeeling and uncaring response. A society that really cared about its mentally disabled would build modern, well-equipped and well-staffed centers for their rehabilitation, allot the resources needed for their proper operation and provide caregivers with an income commensurate with their humanitarian service to society.

Only socialism can provide the necessary conditions to effect these changes. Only by working class control and transformation of the productive forces into Socialist Industrial Unions can workers call for the abolition of capitalism and ultimately the solving of the social question. Until then, the fate of the mentally disabled hangs in the balance.

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years ago

The Real Champions of  
Democracy

(*Weekly People*, Dec. 22, 1951)

"The plain fact," said Stewart Alsop in his *New York Herald Tribune* column, Nov. 12, "is that this is an essentially revolutionary situation."

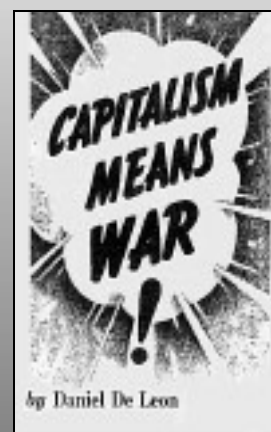
Mr. Alsop was speaking of the situation in Egypt. "The structure of society here—the ruthless exploitation of the many by the very few who own all the land and therefore all the wealth—simply cannot stand up indefinitely. For all sorts of technological and political reasons, some sort of basic and probably violent change is inevitable here."

Traditionally America is the friend and champion of the oppressed who are seeking freedom from feudal oppressors. The American milieu has taught contempt for pashas, beys and monarchs. And the American people have everywhere encouraged the struggles of democracy.

*Autres temps, autres moeurs* Other times, other manners. This is the age of "Realpolitik" and the American people must learn to give up their silly ideals. Thus, Mr. Alsop says "we ought to stop talking nonsense about democracy" in countries "like this, where the great majority of the population lives rather below the level of their animals." What is needed in Egypt, the columnist argues, is "a reasonably enlightened dictatorship," the model for which is Turkey's Kemal Ataturk.

Mr. Alsop says "it comes hard for any American to find himself advocating authoritarian rule anywhere." We disagree. On the contrary, for the American ruling class, a class that has embraced such dictators as Spain's Franco and Portugal's Salazar, advocating authoritarian rule comes rather easy—when it protects and promotes their imperialist interests!

It is only the workers, who instinctively associate their own well-being with democracy, who recoil from schemes to enthrone despotism, "enlightened" or otherwise.



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