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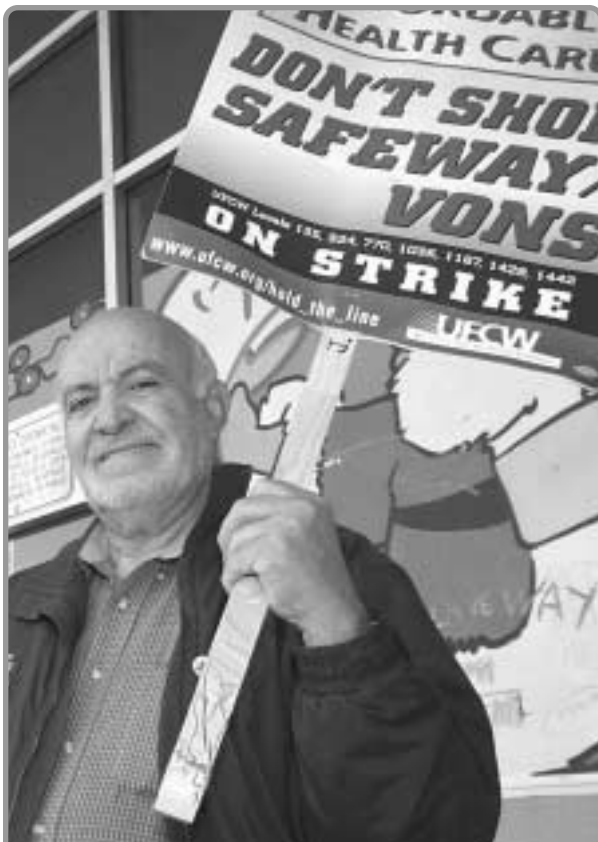
the People

Published by the Socialist Labor Party  Established in 1891

VOL. 113 NO. 5

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2004

\$1.00



Sam Bortnick for *The People*

UFCW picket at an Oakland, Calif., Safeway.

California's Grocery Strike

Five hundred union leaders met in Los Angeles on Dec. 16 to adopt a new strategy to bolster and win a two-month old grocery workers' strike. The best they could come up with, it seems, is to call for a national boycott against Safeway Inc. and its subsidiaries.

The strike that began at Safeway in a dispute over lower health benefits and lower wages for new-hires led to more strikes and lockouts at several other grocery chains. Most of the workers directly involved belong to the AFL-CIO's United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW).

Shelves at Safeway, Albertsons, Vons, Ralphs and other retail grocery outlets in much of southern California were nearly empty as Teamsters supported the striking and locked-out grocery workers by refusing to make deliveries.

According to the *San Diego Union*, workers who normally would buy their groceries at those stores have respected picket lines in "surprising numbers," and have done their shopping elsewhere.

Although the UFCW in San Diego reduced strike pay as its financial resources declined, few workers crossed their own picket lines to return to work. Many went searching for other jobs to see themselves through, however, resulting in fewer pickets on the lines.

Despite the determination and solidarity shown by the striking and locked-out workers, despite the support received from the Teamsters and other unions, and despite the sympathy of other workers, the UFCW had failed to make any significant progress in negotiations with the united front of the grocery chains by Dec. 7, when talks broke off.

The union leaders who gathered in Los Angeles included AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, but according to the Associated Press he had no part in the "strategy session" and seems to have been there merely for window dressing and media purposes. "Shame on them for what they are trying

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THE ECONOMY

Bush Extols U.S. Workers But Ignores Their Plight

President Bush had more to crow about in December than the capture of Saddam Hussein, at least as he saw it. Speaking before an audience of Home Depot workers in Halethorpe, Md., on Dec. 5, Mr. Bush extolled the American worker and heaped praise on himself for his recent tax cut, which he linked to a barely perceptible decline in unemployment in November and touted as a sign that economic conditions are improving for workers.

"Today, the unemployment rate dropped...from 6 percent to 5.9 percent," the president said. "More workers are going to work, over 380,000 have joined the work force in the last couple of months. We've overcome a lot. We're a strong country, a strong economy. A lot of it has to do with the fact that we got the best workers in the world. (Applause) Our productivity is high. I hope some of it has to do—I know some of it has to do, I hope you understand some of it has to do with the fact that the role of government can help create growth. See, when a person has more money in their pocket, they're likely to come to Home Depot."

No, Mr. President, we don't "see." A drop of one tenth of one percent in unemployment is

hard to see. It takes good eyes and quick reflexes to grasp a straw as thin as that. But if by "the best workers in the world" you meant the most productive it would be hard to argue with you. Indeed, American workers produced more goods and delivered more services during the third quarter of 2003 than in any comparable three-month period in 20 years.

Productivity Outstrips Wage Gains

"Productivity—the amount an employee produces for each hour worked—rose at a 9.4 percent annual rate in the third quarter...up from a 7 percent growth rate posted in the second quarter of the year," *The New York Times* reported on Dec. 3, and "output surged at a 10.3 percent annual rate in the third quarter, the biggest increase since the third quarter of 1983..."

In spite of what you said about more workers being added to payrolls, unemployment remained high and wages for the employed barely kept pace with rising prices for food and other necessities. "Hourly compensation of all manufacturing workers rose 4.1 percent," as your Labor Department reported on Dec. 3, but rising

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The Toll of Unemployment

By Paul D. Lawrence

A commentary by Jay Hancock, originally appearing in *The Baltimore Sun*, links unemployment to depression—the mental health sort, not the economic.

It has long been known that unemployment causes a host of social, as well as individual physical and mental health, problems. Nonetheless, Hancock presents some compelling facts about one of these ill effects. "An Australian study published three years ago found that 30.9 percent in a sample of unemployed people suffered anxiety and depression requiring medical treatment, compared with 14.6 percent for an employed group," Hancock reports.

A person who has never suffered clinical depression may find the disorder difficult to understand. Symptoms may range from suicidal ideation, attempted suicide and, sometimes, successful suicide to an inability to get out of bed in the morning and simply to enjoy life. Other symptoms may include an inability to concentrate, irritability, and sleep and weight problems. Hancock rightly notes that "if lacking a job makes you depressed, being depressed fetters your ability to find and keep a job."

Antidepressant medications may relieve symptoms, particularly of endogenous depression—that without an external cause, a brain disorder. But medications don't create jobs, and

workers cast into depression by unemployment remain vulnerable.

Hancock observes that "describing problems is easier than prescribing solutions." The "solutions" Hancock considers demonstrate the accuracy of that observation with a vengeance. They are utopian and idealistic.

Consider what he seems to regard as the most viable: "Layoffs are not inevitable. Corporate bosses invariably portray job cuts as the mechanical result of uncontrollable forces, and often they are. Layoffs are usually a choice, however, not a necessity."

Hancock then laments "the fading of noblesse oblige, the duty of benevolent behavior toward the less fortunate that was once laid upon the privileged." He blames both "the left" and "the right," for various reasons, for its demise. He doesn't consider the possibility that capitalism itself is the problem. However, as Daniel De Leon observed in *The Burning Question of Trades Unionism*:

"Given the private ownership of natural and social opportunities, society is turned into a jungle of wild beasts, in which the 'fittest' wild beast terrorizes the less 'fit,' and these in turn imitate among themselves the 'fit' qualities of the biggest brute."

The capitalist jungle leaves little room for benevolence.

Oblivious of that, Hancock makes a touching

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Eugene Sue, Champion of Workers

Eugene Sue was a 19th-century novelist whose best known works are *The Mysteries of Paris* and *The Wandering Jew*. Sue considered himself a Socialist, and although Karl Marx regarded him as a sentimentalist and deplored his election to the French Chamber of Deputies in 1850, Marx nonetheless conceded Sue's sincerity, the proletarian quality of his novels and readily acknowledged his great popularity with the working class of Paris.

Sue was born in Paris 200 years ago, on Jan. 20, 1804. Although his understanding of modern socialism was far from perfect, he was unquestionably a great champion of the French working class. His popularity with French workers was established by the two novels mentioned, both of which were serialized in Parisian newspapers before they were printed in book form.

According to a brief biography of Sue that appeared in the *Daily People*, March 29, 1908, the first of these novels was so popular that "When a Paris newspaper...announced that the author of *The Mysteries of Paris* was at work on a story for them, the circulation of the paper increased by nine to ten thousand daily. George Sand said she would not miss one installment. That the rest of Paris felt the same way is borne out by the fact that the newspapers often were not sold but rented at ten sous a half hour—the time required to read the daily installment."

However, it is a lesser known work by Sue—*The Mysteries of the People; or History of a Proletarian Family Across the Ages*—that wins for him an enduring fame.

Although *The Mysteries of the People* is a work of fiction, it is historically accurate in what it depicts. The 13 stories in 21 volumes that make up the complete work provide their readers with a panoramic overview of social development without parallel. It is by far the best work ever written for giving the working class reader an intimate picture of society as it evolved in France from the days of Gaul, before the Roman conquest, to the middle of the 19th century. It is especially valuable for the picture that it provides of the various phases of feudal society, and the growth of infant capitalism within the feudal womb.



Daniel De Leon, with the assistance of his eldest son, Solon, translated *The Mysteries of the People* over several years and serialized them in the *Daily People*. Subsequently, the Socialist Labor Party brought out two editions of the work through its publishing agency, the New York Labor News. The original 21-volume edition and individual titles from the series—especially *The Silver Cross*—were reprinted a number of times. A second edition, complete in three stout volumes, was brought out in 1923. Regrettably, however, Sue's greatest work has long been out of print, and the important project of getting out a new edition has been delayed for many years by a succession of obstacles, chiefly financial.

In spite of his shortcomings as a Socialist, Sue has always been honored by freedom-seeking workers who have some knowledge of his works, and for the same reason he has always been hated by the ruling class and its agents, lay and clerical. Indeed, *The Mysteries of the People* was condemned by the Court of Paris as "immoral and seditious." A capitalist literary critic once wrote: "His [Sue's] work in this spirit consists of long novels printed in cheap newspapers but winning such a hold on the masses, and so swaying public opinion, that the government actually ought to check or divert his activity." But Sue was too popular with the peo-

ple of Paris and the government was afraid to silence him.

Daniel De Leon understood Sue's deficiency as a Socialist and as a writer. "Eugene Sue was not a Socialist," he wrote to one correspondent. "Look up Chap. IV. of the *Eighteenth Brumaire*. Eugene Sue is mentioned there. The connection in which his name occurs shows exactly his shade of radicalism." (*Daily People*, Jan. 12, 1902)

Two years later, in reply to another correspondent, De Leon explained some of the deficiencies of *The Mysteries of the People*, but also its strengths and why he had undertaken the monumental task of translating it into English.

"The stories cover the most interesting part of the history of Europe from the invasion of Gaul by Julius Caesar down to and inclusive of the revolution that threw down Louis Philippe in 1848. The ponderousness of the manner in which Sue executed the great work went far to defeat its purposes. The general title conceals the fact that the heavy tomes contain a score of stories. That no doubt kept many from starting to read them. Then also, between story and story, there is a dry chronology that fills up the period between the social epoch covered by the previous story and that covered by the next. All these circumstances played into the hands of the usurpatory institutions upon which Sue meant to turn the light, and it has been comparatively easy for them to choke off the work. The SLP will publish the stories one after another in *The People* and then in book form, taking each story by itself and dropping the intermediary chronology. There will be no better universal history than that series when completed." (*Daily People*, March 6, 1904)

The bicentennial of Eugene Sue's birth provides an opportunity to salute this champion of the oppressed and herald of their suffering. "Critics may belittle him," said the *Daily People*, "and the ruling class may endeavor to keep the workers in ignorance of his writings; but, do what they will, the great truths Eugene Sue wrote will endure."

Do You Belong?

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

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

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

...Toll

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appeal: "But the duty is there. To whom much is given, Mr. Executive, much is expected. Next time your finger touches the layoff trigger, consider unemployment and the odds of clinical helplessness."

Such a moralistic appeal is Hancock's best solution. He obviously has never read Marx's *Capital*, or, if he has, has failed to understand it. In the brief compass of one article it is, of course, impossible to sum up Marx's analysis. Let two points suffice.

First, unemployment is not necessarily a bad thing for the capitalist class, at least within certain limits. That is so because labor power is a commodity, just like PCs and VCRs. Its price, wages, depends immediately on the law of supply and demand. Thus, more unemployed workers exert a downward pressure on wages; with fewer workers unemployed, workers are better able to struggle for higher wages. Other things being equal, higher wages tend to lower at least the capitalists' share of the wealth created by workers' labor.

Second, unemployment is an inevitable effect of capitalism. Driven by competition to increase profits, capitalists strive to increase productivity and the exploitation of workers. Exploitation means that wages account for only a fraction of the value of the product of workers' labor; the greater share, surplus value, goes to the capitalist class.

Despite the cost of maintaining the political state, socially useless expenditures like advertising, public relations and buying politicians, high

living by the capitalists themselves and the like, workers' restricted buying power means not all commodities workers produce can be sold at a profit sufficient to keep capitalist production going. Production is shut down, causing unemployment and all its woes. Investment in labor-displacing technology to boost productivity, as competition compels capitalists to do, simply worsens the problem.

Pleading with the capitalist class for benevolence is like asking the wolves not to devour the sheep. It won't work. There is an alternative that Hancock failed to consider—socialism. "What Is Socialism?" on page four defines socialism and explains how it would work. It is a real solution, not pie in the sky.

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Illness and Death Among IBM Clean Room Workers Prompts 'Exceptional' Court Case

By Bruce Cozzini

Two workers suing IBM for job-related cancers represent only the latest chapter in problems dating back over decades. That they suffered immediate effects during their years of working with chemical solvents on the job is clear from several articles printed in the *San Jose Mercury News*. Whether a Superior Court jury in that California city will decide that the exposure caused cancer is uncertain. What seems inescapable from the testimony reported by the San Jose newspaper, however, is that the IBM workers' health was put at risk on the job with the knowledge of the company, and that the company hid the risks from them.

The trial is allowed only as an exceptional case under California workers' compensation law. Although such laws are intended to sound like a benefit for workers, their intent is to limit the liability of employers in the injury of workers on the job. Workers are allowed to sue for damages only under specific conditions.

"The law allows employees to seek civil damages under a specific set of circumstances: They must prove that they were injured on the job, that their employer knew of their injuries, concealed that knowledge from them and that their injuries worsened as a result." Some testimony was thrown out because it apparently did not meet these criteria.

Alida Hernandez had a mastectomy for breast cancer 10 years ago. James Moore has been treated for non-Hodgkins lymphoma since 1995, and has gone for radiation treatments during the trial. Both worked in so-called clean rooms on disk drive assemblies and other electronic components. But the clean rooms were clean not for the workers, but for the products they were making, and the protective "bunny suits" they wore protected the product from contamination, but not the workers from the solvents and other chemicals they used.

Hernandez worked in a disk coating room. The compounds used in the disk coating stained her clothes and skin. She used acetone to clean the machinery several times a day, going through about 25 gallons a month. Constant contact with acetone dried and irritated her skin. More seriously, it caused liver damage.

Blood tests by IBM showed that Hernandez had elevated liver enzymes, but she was not informed of test results. She received them in sealed envelopes, which she was to pass on to her supervisor. At one point she was temporarily barred from the disk coating area because of

her liver problems, but was later returned to work there in spite of her ongoing problems.

Hernandez testified that she was never told that exposure to acetone could cause liver problems. She also testified that she was told repeatedly that the chemicals being used were safe.

To insure that workers would not find the

ed by her supervisor.

The former manager, Arthur Diaz, also testified that managers tried to "isolate employee concerns and keep their complaints confidential." He said they wanted employees to get back to work so that they didn't miss production targets.

In response to employees' complaints that the chemicals they used were making them sick, Diaz testified that he gave the

standard IBM response that "it was safe to work in a clean room." At the same time he was reassuring the workers, he was also "participating in a corporate program that required him to track employees whose exposure to chemicals was particularly high." Before he became a manager, he dispensed Freon, acetone and alcohol to workers (including Moore) for use as cleaning solvents.

Dr. Daniel Teitelbaum, a toxicologist, testified that his review of Hernandez's and Moore's medical records showed that they "had received doses of toxins strong enough to trigger illness." He also testified that some of the chemicals they were exposed to

were carcinogenic. In response to IBM lawyers' attempts to blame Moore's and Hernandez's health problems on preexisting conditions, Teitelbaum questioned why "Moore and Hernandez were both sent back to work with chemicals that would have clearly aggravated their conditions."

The likely results of these suits will at best be settlement with appeals extending beyond the lives of the workers. Already long delayed, these cases, filed in 1998, are the first of 257 cases to go to trial.

But the current suits will be fought hard, since their outcomes may set precedents for future trials. And even findings for the workers will not come close to compensating for the injuries to workers. Nor will they change the capitalist practice of cutting corners on safety to maintain production schedules, decrease costs and thereby increase profits.

In a socialist society, there would be no division between managers and workers and no reason to hide potentially harmful substances or processes. With no need to make profits, there would be no need to cut corners on safety and expose workers to risks. With workers democratically managing production, production processes would be designed to isolate harmful substances on the job and in the environment.

At the start of the trial, a group of former IBM workers and family members of workers who had contracted cancer following chemical exposure staged a protest and memorial for those who had died, reading their names aloud. As one protester commented: "We're here today because a lot of our friends died and to us, they were like family."

And so they are to all workers. But lawsuits, protests and memorials are not enough. Workers need to organize to end the criminal system of capitalism that kills their brothers and sisters. As long as capitalism continues, workers will have no guarantee of job safety.



Carol Simpson

truth themselves, the company discouraged them from discussing work conditions with anyone except their immediate supervisors.

James Moore worked in a number of environments at IBM, including the "Red Room," where printed circuit boards were exposed under a light to etch them and then dipped into an open tank of trichloroethylene (TCE) to dissolve the unexposed photo-resist material. While working there, Moore experienced several episodes of color blindness. When he notified his manager, he was told that no one had ever complained of that before, and was never sent to a doctor.

Moore's first reaction to these episodes was panic, "then I got used to it," he said.

Moore also worked with epoxy sealing materials, where he frequently got epoxy on his hands. To clean his hands, tools and his work area, he commonly used isopropyl alcohol and Freon, compounds that can pose health hazards if used frequently. Among the effects he noticed at the time he was working at IBM was that he progressively lost his sense of smell.

The testimony of Hernandez, Moore and a number of witnesses all demonstrated IBM's disregard for safety and concealment of risk and known injury to workers. Witnesses included former IBM employees, a nurse, a manager and an engineer who had knowledge of the plaintiffs' exposure. In addition, a doctor who specializes in toxicology backed their complaints.

The nurse, Audrey Misako Crouch, testified that medical personnel at IBM had "withheld information on chemical exposure from employees to prevent 'mass hysteria.'" Crouch estimated that during a night shift she saw "40 to 60 employees," complaining of "allergies, headaches, dizziness, light-headedness and eye irritation."

Although such symptoms can be caused by chemical exposure, Crouch said there was an unwritten policy to treat symptoms of exposure as "alternative lifestyle events," in other words blame the symptoms on the worker's habits outside of work or existing conditions. She also testified that the few times she recommended that workers who appeared to be suffering from chemical exposure go home, she was reprimand-

the People

Founded April 5, 1891

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

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

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

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

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the People

Published by the Socialist Labor Party Established in 1891

National Secretary: Robert Bills

VOL. 113 NO. 5 JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2004

Scrooge, Then & Now

The holiday season just passed produced among the bourgeois media the normal crop of coverage feigning concern about growing poverty and hunger among U.S. workers. Defenders of the system that itself *produces* poverty and hunger seem unable to resist a yearly opportunity to prove by their “concern” that today’s capitalism is a little less Scrooge-like than that of Dickens’ times.

But for the growing millions of workers and their families whose lives of misery are represented by statistics on poverty and hunger, the daily grind under capitalism isn’t much different from when Tiny Tim experienced it. The reasons why are apparent to them: not enough jobs and poverty-level wages for many of those that do exist.

Data released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in October show that in 2002 “food insecurity” and hunger increased in the world’s richest nation from 31 million people in 1999 to 34.9 million people in 2002. Given that the working class has seen almost no economic improvement from the “jobless recovery” that has turned things around for the capitalist class in 2003, we may safely assume that the numbers are likely even worse for 2003.

Also in 2002, according to *The Guardian*, “another 1.7 million Americans slipped below the poverty line, bringing the total to 34.6 million, one in eight of the population.” The number of Americans on food stamps “has risen from 17 million to 22 million” since 2001, the British newspaper reported.

“In 25 major [U.S.] cities, the need for emergency food rose an average of 19 percent last year,” *The Guardian* observed. America’s Second Harvest, the nation’s largest system of food banks, reports that about 40 percent of food bank recipients have jobs, but can’t make enough to feed their families and pay the bills.

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 built by the workers of this nation can produce whatever every worker needs, whenever they need it.

Indeed, the government still pays billions to agricapitalists 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 agricapitalist profits.

In the face of increasing human needs, what has the capitalist class done? Industrial and agricultural production has been cut by that class, which owns and despotically controls the nation’s industries and services. 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 this capitalist class.

That tiny minority makes its decisions based solely on whether the products *workers* alone produce can be sold at a profit. 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 wages are cut thanks to increasing competition for jobs.

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 poverty and hunger amid plenty, and massive human needs amid the productive capacity to alleviate them.

Workers can end this insanity only by abolishing capitalism itself and building a socialist economic democracy under which the economy is collectively owned and democratically administered, and production is motivated by human needs and wants. Speed the day! —K.B.

Nathan Goldberg

We dedicate this issue of *The People* to the memory of Nathan Goldberg, whose final gesture on this earth symbolized his compassion for the exploited working classes of the world and his special devotion to the program and principles of Marxian socialism as represented by the Socialist Labor Party.

Nathan Goldberg’s bequest to the SLP lifts it out of the financial crisis in which it has languished for several years and restores the party’s cash reserves to the minimum needed to ensure its continued existence for several years, provided it is supplemented by the continued generosity of the party’s many other friends and supporters.

There was no more loyal or dedicated member of the SLP than Nathan Goldberg, and very few who were members as long as he had been. He joined the party in 1929 and belonged to Section Los Angeles until it was disbanded in 1998 and he became a member-at-large. He died on April 10 at the age of 98.

Nate Goldberg never lost his optimism. The last time the national office heard from him was a few weeks before his death. He wanted to be put in touch with other members and supporters who could help him distribute the leaflet *Why War on Iraq? It’s Not (All) About Oil!*

Nathan Goldberg was hospitalized the last 10 days of his life, but no one suspected that the end was so near—he was too full of life for that. He had been discharged, and the news that he was to go home had made him very happy. “He was being discharged to go home that day, as he wanted, when he died—literally while ‘dancing with the nurses,’” according to a national office memo.

The SLP and all who support it owe a deep debt of gratitude to this warm and compassionate man—Nathan Goldberg. May he dance with angels.

A De Leon Editorial

Iraq— The Philippines



American imperialism occupied and exploited the Philippines for half a century after “liberating” the islands from Spain. Will it be the same with “liberated” Iraq?

A Return to ‘Appearances’

(Daily People, Jan. 27, 1901)

The recommendation contained in the report, transmitted last Friday to Congress by the president on the situation in the Philippines, may be said to mark an epoch in the war-hurrah policy of the nation; along with that, the recommendation marks the turning point where our rulers return to their policy of “appearances.”¹

The policy of “appearances” is a policy that makes its debut with the overthrow of feudalism and the rise of capitalism. Both feudalism and capitalism, being grounded on oppression, rule with a mailed hand. But there is this difference: feudalism smites with a mailed hand, and wants you to know it; capitalism smites with a mailed hand, but doesn’t want you to know it, it conceals the mail in a glove of velvet. Feudalism, consequently, has an open face, it is frank, it disdains “appearances”; capitalism, on the other hand, is hypocritical, it revels in false pretense, “appearances” is its mask.

This explains the wooden-Indian immobility of face with which the capitalist proclaims zeal for work, while he practices sloth; with which he declaims on his love for the workingman, while he shoots him down in the back; with which he lectures on equality before the law, while he legislates the toilers, out of court; with which he specifies on the “sacredness of the family,” while he rends it in twain and pollutes it; with which he sermonizes on honesty, while he practices chicanery; with which he discourses on peace while he wades through slaughter to rapine. All these manifestations of hypocrisy are established “social institutions” with capitalism: of the last, the world witnessed a glaring spectacle during the last week, when speeches were made, resolutions passed and songs sung to her “peace-loving, humane qualities,” at the bier of a queen, whose long reign literally dripped with human gore, and whose eyes were closed in death to the funeral dirge of her murderous musketry in South Africa.²

It is now nearing three years since one of these “appearances”—the

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¹ A reference to President William McKinley’s recommendation to Congress of Jan. 25, 1901. The United States wrested control over the Philippine Islands from Spain in December 1898. American capitalists were eager to exploit the islands and their people but were restrained by guerrilla resistance to American occupation forces. On Jan. 24, 1901, Secretary of War Elihu Root and a commission headed by future president William Howard Taft reported that the islands had been sufficiently pacified, and on Jan. 25, McKinley transmitted the Root-Taft reports to Congress and “recommend[ed] legislation under which the [puppet] government of the islands may have authority to assist in their peaceful industrial development in the directions indicated by the secretary of war.” Apart from the Japanese occupation during World War II, American capitalism, aided by a string of dictator pawns, continued to dominate the Philippines until 1947.

² A reference to the death of Queen Victoria of England on Jan. 22, 1901, during the Boer War of 1899–1902.

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.

'PATRIOT' ACT**Shredding the Bill of Rights**

By Paul D. Lawrence

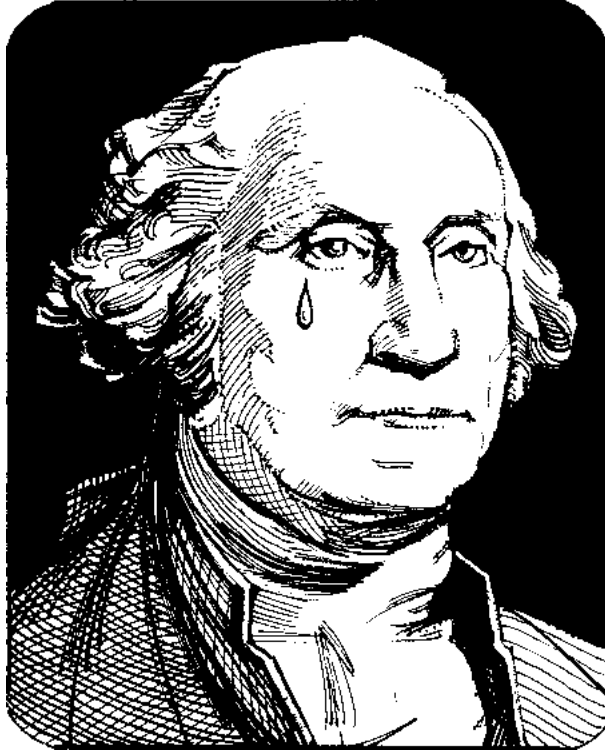
Syndicated columnist Clarence Page has assailed FBI agents for using the so-called Patriot Act to prosecute a political bribery case involving the owner of some Las Vegas strip clubs. That seems a far cry from preventing terrorists from attacking the United States. But it is perfectly legal under the act.

Page wrote: "It turns out that Section 314 of the Patriot Act allows federal investigators wider leeway in obtaining financial information from stockbrokers, banks and other financial institutions on people 'suspected, based on credible evidence, of engaging in terrorist acts or money laundering.'"

As Page points out, the "or" is of critical importance, as anyone familiar with logic or English usage knows. What's more, under Section 314, agents no longer need subpoenas from grand juries to get such records. Their own certification in secret documents does the trick.

According to Page, "The law's powers only begin with suspected terrorists. We have yet to learn how far it extends." Liberals like Page and civil libertarians have decried various provisions of the act. Some bourgeois media have from time to time reported details. A recitation is unnecessary here.

None of this should surprise any Socialist. In "A Mission of the Trades Union," an editorial in the *Daily People* of March 4, 1905, Daniel De Leon observed: "The mission of capitalism...is so to organize the mechanism of production that wealth can be so abundantly produced as to free mankind from want and the fear of want, from

AbCAP for *The People*

the brute's necessity of a life of arduous toil in the production of the brute's mere necessities of life." That mission had been completed in 1905; it has been completed in superabundance today.

Conditions are ripe for a nonviolent socialist revolution in the United States in every particular but one, but that one is essential. Without property, the working class lacks an element that was a drilling force in previous revolutions. To make up for that lack, the working class needs education in its class interests, self-enforced discipline, classconsciousness and organization.

Only then can the working class capture and destroy the state on the political field and take, hold and operate all the useful industries of the land on the economic field. The American working class is nowhere near to doing that. Thus, according to De Leon, there arises "a subsidiary mission of capitalism, to wit, the mission of *keeping order*, while the revolutionary class, the working class, is gathering the needed qualities for itself to assume control." And it will keep order "with a rod of scorpions."

The repressive measures of the current ruling class undermine the conquests of civilization and the constitutional provisions that, at least in theory, allow for a peaceful socialist revolution. With basic civil liberties being eroded, it is appropriate for Socialists to demand that their so-called representatives in Congress repeal the Patriot Act lock, stock and barrel, and not enact piecemeal provisions in which new attacks on civil liberties could be concealed as in the Trojan Horse. It is further appropriate for Socialists, keeping their socialism up front, to join issue-oriented coalitions against the Patriot Act and government repression.

Without vigilance and protests, it will be much easier for the capitalist class and its political minions in Washington to run the Bill of Rights through a paper shredder. However, Socialists do not aim simply to make it more difficult for the ruling class to destroy the Bill of Rights. They do not aim at simply postponing the inevitable, but at abolishing the means, motives and opportunities that prompt and assist the ruling class to undermine those rights.

The '\$18 Quadrillion Question'

By Ken Boettcher

Dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous period didn't know what hit them. According to the currently accepted theory in today's scientific community, that's when a giant asteroid struck Earth in the Gulf of Mexico, bringing rapid climatic change and perhaps even igniting the atmosphere itself as massive amounts of methane were released by shock waves from the impact. Of course, even if the dinosaurs had some warning of the cataclysm, they wouldn't have been able to do anything about it. They had small brains and lacked the ability to wield tools to build any kind of defense against the catastrophe.

Humans, on the other hand, have relatively large brains and hands that can fashion tools—even tools that can warn them of an approaching cataclysm that holds the potential for their extinction, but how such a warning would be acted upon depends wholly upon how human society is organized.

Take the case of global warming, for example. Even the best-case scenarios have taken on near-cataclysmic proportions, with increased flooding and complete inundation of many islands, ports and low-lying areas around the world; tornadoes, hurricanes and other violent storms; heat waves, further parching of desert areas and drying of many temperate regions over the coming century.

Two recent reports make it plain that humanity could be facing a cataclysm of far greater proportions than any other we have previously faced. As *The People* reported in its July-August issue, "Some scientists now worry that rising temperatures may cause a 'runaway greenhouse effect' that cannot be stopped. In this worst case scenario the polar ice caps and even Arctic tundra melt, oxidizing organic matter previously frozen in the ice, and releasing vast amounts of carbon dioxide and another greenhouse gas, methane." Whether this release could mean a fiery end for humanity similar to that which may have brought extinction for the dinosaurs is now

apparently an open question.

The latest estimate from the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the potential cost of curbing global warming is \$18 quadrillion. "Eighteen quadrillion dollars is almost 600 times the 2002 world gross domestic product, estimated by the World Bank at \$32 trillion," as a November Reuters report put it. Astronomical and thus almost incomprehensible as that figure is, the \$18 quadrillion figure reinforces the conclusion that global warming could hasten humanity's Waterloo as a species.

It would be reasonable to assume that this possibility would galvanize all the governments on Earth into action. The United States has so far refused to ratify the Kyoto Treaty, which the Reuters report describes as "a tiny first step towards reining in human emissions of nontoxic carbon dioxide from fossil fuels blamed for blanketing the planet and driving up temperatures."

If Russia also fails to ratify the treaty—reportedly a distinct possibility—the accord could collapse altogether. And the failure here is, remember, merely to ratify the taking of "a tiny first step" that would still leave nearly all the work on what Reuters calls this "\$18 quadrillion question" yet to be done.

In short, if an observer from some other planet had to judge by what human governments are doing today to prevent a cataclysm that could wipe out humanity and most other species on Earth, they might easily assume that despite their brains and their hands, humans may not have all that much over the dinosaurs.

Much could be done to reduce greenhouse emissions. Coal- and gas-powered electric power plants could be converted to safe and clean wind, water, geothermal and solar power. Automobiles could be converted to run on hydrogen, and mass transit systems could be developed that run on clean-source electric power to reduce the need for automobiles.

But the capitalist class-dominated govern-

ments of the world, primarily of the United States as the most dominant capitalist nation, regard these and other steps as too costly. The Bush administration has flatly refused even to ratify the "first step" Kyoto accord. Under capitalism, profit is the motive for production, not human needs and wants—and the profit interests of some dominant elements of U.S. capitalism are at stake in such changes.

The resources to make such changes certainly exist. In the United States today, industrial capacity utilization stands at only 75 percent, millions of workers are unemployed and millions more are only employed part time but need and want full-time work. These and other resources could be put to work on the necessary conversion processes—and the sooner the better.

But this will not happen unless the overwhelming majority that built and operates the massive productive apparatus of the nation—the working class—successfully takes, holds and operates the industries and services to serve human needs and wants under a new social and economic order.

The Socialist Labor Party is fighting to build a movement of the working class to abolish the economic dictatorship of capitalism that leaves workers out of all significant decisions about what is to be produced and under what conditions it is to be produced.

The socialist goal is the building of an economic democracy under which production will at long last serve the needs of humanity, as it will be collectively owned and democratically administered by the workers themselves.

Only under such a system can all possible solutions to the global warming crisis emerge and be acted upon—before it is too late and we go the way of the dinosaurs. The fight to avoid the catastrophe of global warming—the possibility of our own extinction—and the fight to build a socialist economic democracy are, accordingly, one and the same fight.

...Bush

(Continued from page 1)

prices wiped out most of the increase. "When the increase in consumer prices is taken into account, real hourly compensation for all manufacturing workers rose 1.7 percent in the third quarter." Did you "see" that report, Mr. President?

'Crushed by Debt'

Workers don't have "more money in their pocket," Mr. President, and even if they did much of it would be going to pay off their debts while trying to stretch their lagging wages to keep up with rising prices. Many are lucky to have any pocket at all—left, right, front or back—to put anything in. Did you "see" that debt-ridden workers traipsed into bankruptcy courts in record numbers last year? No? Well, then, you should look at this:

"Total bankruptcy filings rose 7.4 percent to a record 1.66 million in fiscal 2003," bizjounal.com reported on Nov. 24, and "personal bankruptcies grew 7.8 percent in the year that ended Sept. 30, to 1.63 million."

"These problems are growing in Arizona" where "nearly as many bankruptcies were filed through November as were filed in all of 2002, which had been the worst year for bankruptcies," the *Arizona Republic* reported in Dec. 14. "A vast majority are personal bankruptcies..."

Many Arizona workers are being "crushed by debt," the newspaper said. "Pressures mount as households try to delicately balance bill payments so they don't lose their homes, cars and furniture," the Phoenix-based newspaper added. "Arguments about who's at fault

tear families apart as letters and phone calls from bill collectors bombard them."

Arizona, as the national figures suggest, was not the only state where workers found themselves hard pressed to pay the bills and prevent their cars, homes and other possessions from being taken away.

In Missouri, for example, the *St. Louis Business Journal* of Nov. 20 reported that personal bankruptcy filings during the year "increased 16 percent...to 21,113."

It was worse in Alabama. "During the first nine months of the year, 31,965 Alabamians filed non-business bankruptcies, up from 30,483 in the same period a year ago," the *Birmingham News* reported on Nov. 6.

"Last year, a record 41,478 personal bankruptcies were declared in Alabama—one filing per 48.1 households in the state," the *News* continued, and added that things were even worse in other parts of the country. "Only Nevada, Tennessee and Georgia had a higher bankruptcy-per-household ratio than Alabama."

The Birmingham newspaper went on to draw a connection between the rise in personal bankruptcies and the state of the economy. "Personal bankruptcy filings in Alabama have been climbing each year since 1999, when they totaled 30,130. During those three years, Alabama's economy has been hit by losses in industries such as steel, paper and apparel. Meanwhile, Alabama residents have had to contend with rising consumer debt loads and increasing medical costs."

Did these reports make it into your daily press briefing, Mr. President?

Worse to Come

What the higher productivity figures

reported for the third quarter of 2003 really mean, Mr. President, is that fewer workers were pressed to produce more commodities in less time for wages that weren't much better than they were before. Some workers may think that these are only signs of better times to come, as you do, but they are deluding themselves. As former undersecretary of commerce Everett Ehrlich, wrote for the *Los Angeles Times* on Dec 5:

"The problem is that productivity growth does not automatically turn itself into economic growth. Productivity tells us our potential to grow, but not the actual result. Consider an economy spilling out 9 percent more 'stuff'...every year without any need for new hires. Who will consume the fruits of this abundance? Incomes would need to rise by a like amount (or prices fall like a son of a gun) in order to snarf this stuff up."

"We are told to think of the jobless as indolent, or unlucky in some self-fulfilling way," Ehrlich added. "In fact, they are the victims of our country's economic fecundity..."

In short, Mr. President, the harder workers work the sooner they work themselves out of their jobs. The *San Jose Mercury News* put it this way on Dec. 4:

"More economists are starting to think businesses have scored large productivity gains the old-fashioned way: Paring down their workforce, sending some jobs overseas and driving the remaining employees to work harder."

No, Mr. President, we don't "see," and we think the misguided workers who applauded you on Dec. 5 would see things differently if they took a closer look at the facts.

...Strike

(Continued from page 1)

to do,' he said of the grocery chains involved in the dispute. 'And shame on us if we don't stop them.'

To "stop them" union strategists decided to call for "a boycott of North American stores owned by Safeway Inc. to show support for 70,000 grocery workers involved," the AP reported.

"We want to empty those stores," said Doug Dority, international president of the UFCW. "We want to make sure these cash registers are empty."

But that's just it! Safeway Inc. and its allies weren't relying on daily receipts as an antistrike fund. They had millions or billions of dollars stashed away to draw on as a war chest, and we doubt that even one of its corporate executives or major stockholders will cross to the workers' side of the picket lines to yell, "uncle."

Insofar as other unions and workers generally have supported the strike and respected picket lines it can be said that a boycott was in place before the conference and that sympathetic workers didn't need 500 union leaders to suggest one. Indeed, support for the strike had spread north to the San Francisco Bay Area before the strategy session was called, but with no discernible effect.

The SLP and *The People* support the grocery workers in their struggle, but we reserve the right to criticize the "strategy" it took 500 of their inept "leaders" to devise in a future issue. Suffice to say that strikes and boycotts are puny and primitive weapons for fighting a corporate behemoth such as Safeway Inc. Calling for a national boycott to supplement the grocery workers' strike was just another way of announcing that one of the AFL-CIO's largest and most "militant" affiliates doesn't have what it takes to protect its members and to win the strike on its own. That "announcement" spoke volumes, not only about the UFCW, but about the strategy, the tactics and even the structure of the AFL-CIO as a whole.

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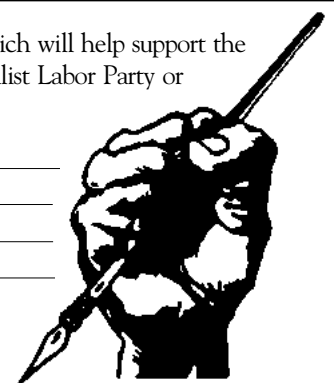
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The People's Press Security Fund

This is my contribution of \$ _____ for The People's Press Security Fund, which will help support the SLP's official journal. (Please make checks/money orders payable to the Socialist Labor Party or The People and mail to P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218.)

Name _____
Address _____
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(Political contributions are not tax deductible.) Acknowledgments will be made in *The People*. Please indicate if a receipt is desired: Yes No



OHIO

Independence

Discussion Meetings—Section Cleveland has scheduled discussion meetings for Sunday, Jan. 25, and Sunday, Feb. 22, 1-3:30 p.m., at the Independence Public Library, Meeting Room #1, 6361 Selig Dr. Light 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.mind-spring.com>.

TEXAS

Houston

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

...De Leon

(Continued from page 4)

"appearance" of love for peace while practicing carnage—was here temporarily suspended. A war-hurrah policy was given the right of way. The nation was made to swagger in military uniform. The exigencies of capitalism temporarily required the fanfare of war. The people had to be intoxicated to their own undoing. The rattle of arms alone was thought efficient. And so it went on for nearly three years. The public mind was treated every morning to a grid-dle-cake plate of fried Filipinos, and every evening to a dessert of "American processes." But this could not continue. The Filipinos refused to accommodate our American capitalists; on the other hand, our own people got tired of "processing" with their blood for the benefit of valorous absentees. This change in the public mind had been noticed by our rulers; they are now acting upon it. And thus it comes that now, right upon the heels of the passing of a bill for an increased army to put down the "Filipino rebellion," with the American government in possession of just 420 military posts on the islands, and the whole territory, outside of those 420 small posts, ablaze against our domination,—now and under these conditions the president, with wooden Indian immobility of the face, speaks of "peace being restored on the Islands" and recommends legislation for "civil" instead of "military control."

The war-hurrah game having run its course, our capitalist government now re-dons the mask of peace, and resumes the policy of "appearances."

Rule by "civil government" will be talked; rule by carnage will be acted.

...Blair

(Continued from page 8)

present at least, to hitch its wagon to American capitalism. In this circumstance there is no way in which the present political representative of British capitalism, Tony Blair, is going to upset his pal George Bush, however many violations of human rights take place in Uzbekistan or other allies of the United States.

The alleged "ethical dimension" of Tony Blair's foreign policy clearly is a sham. It only demonstrates that fake labour parties and their programs and posturing are no part of the solution to capitalism's wars, human rights abuses, poverty and exploitation.

On the contrary, they are part of the problem. They help to prop up decadent capitalism and divert the working class from recognizing the urgent need to organize politically and industrially for a genuine socialist reconstruction of society.

letters to the People

Sept. 11

Today [Sept. 11] is the second anniversary of the attack on the USA by Islamic fundamentalists and the 13th anniversary of the military overthrow of the Allende government in Chile.

Both events remind us of the need to build a world of socialist emancipation. In that spirit, please accept my contribution to the Press Security Fund.

Matthew Rinaldi
Albany, Calif.

Impressed

I was impressed with the article written by Jill Campbell for the *Forestville Gazette*. Her paragraphs say so much in so few words. For example:

"It is inconsistent to subscribe to and support a particular system and then protest its defining characteristics and effects. Capitalism is what it is and is inherently programmed to do what it does. No amount or form of pleading with governments or demonstrating against individual corporations or their representatives will alter the nature of the beast. And, anyway, why would we expect change to come from the establishment that benefits from the status quo?"

I like the title to the article written by Paul D. Lawrence, "Capitalism Is Organized Crime." I think adding the word legalized before organized would make it a better title since it would indict the politicians who make the crime legal. On page seven \$2 trillion was divided by \$363 billion to get 551 percent. That 551 percent is defined as the rate of surplus value? Should it not be defined as the rate of value since in 2000 the value produced by labor was \$2 trillion. Surplus value was \$1.64 trillion for 2000.

John M. Lambase
San Pedro, Calif.

Respect for the Constitution

One of the things I like about the Socialist Labor Party is its respect for the Constitution and the Founders of the Republic. It would be nice if the president had similar respect. Declaring war is a power delegated to Congress, with the exception of the situation described by your quotation from James Madison when a war has been "actually produced by the conduct of another power." Yes, the atrocities of Sept. 11, 2001, were such a case! But the war against Iraq was not a legitimate part of such a defense!

Raymond Solomon
Rego Park, N.Y.

Correction

The last two sentences in the sixth paragraph of my article, "Capitalism Is Organized Crime," September-October issue, were misstated. They should have read:

Funds

(Oct. 11—Dec. 12)

The People's Annual Thanksgiving Fund

Joan Davis \$800; \$500 each Marie & Ray Simmons, Mary Buha; Jack Radov \$477; Chris Dobreff \$400; \$300 each Anonymous, Section Cleveland; \$150 each Bernard M. Presser (In memory of Joseph & Mary Pirincin), John Walbridge; Anonymous \$111; Henry Coretz \$103; \$100 each F.P. Cruikshank, Gloria Grove Olman, Irene Schelin, Ruth R. Hall, Section San Francisco Bay Area (In memory of Dale Birum), Stanley W. Andrick, Walter Vojnov; Mildred Killman \$78; Frank & Betsy Kennedy \$75; \$55 each Bill Kuhn, Frank Cline.

\$50 each Albert Bikar, Bessie Gabow, D.G. Mackintosh, Diane M. Giachino, Dimitre Eloff, Harvey Fuller, Jack Blessington, John S. & Rosemary Gale, Kay Lewis, Lois Reynolds, Robert Ormsby, Tony Marsella; \$40 each Anonymous, Joseph T. Longo; \$35 each Ben Kraft, Joseph C. Massimino, Lloyd A. Wright; \$30 each Gene Schelin, John Hagerty, Matt Casick, William R. Collar; \$25 each Barbara Graymont, Bob Bastian, Carl Archambeau, Dawn J. Moore, Edwin Samples, Ewald Nielsen, Harley G. Selkregg, Henrietta Lasher, Jeffery T. Andrews, Joseph Viditch, Judith Zaccaria, Leonard S. Minkwic Jr., Lois Kubit, R. Hofem, Robert Jensen, Robert Varone, Rosemary Gale, Rudolph P. Sulenta; \$24 each Lawrence Hackett, Marshall G. Soura; F. Paul Kelly \$21.

\$20 each Annie Malivuk, Anonymous, Bill Conklin, Bob & Donna Bills (In memory of Dale Birum), Donald L. Scott, Herb Snitzer, James McHugh, Olaf Mend, Orville K. Rutschman, Richard H. Cassin, William B. Scanlan; \$15 each Ann F. Anderson, Richard Callen, Robert A. Nash; \$12 each Clayton Hewitt, Harry E. Gibson; \$10 Alphonse Eiden, Andrew Valladares, Costanzo A. Rufo, Dagfinn Sjoen, Daniel Brian Lazarus, Daniel Harrington, Dora Ruggiero, Edmund J. Light, Gregory M. Mijares, Gregory Stark, Harold W. Bauer, Harry C. Segerest, James Lehner, Jane Cacharelis, John Gertz, John M. Lambase, Joseph Bellon, Juliette Jackson, Kenneth E. McCartney, Leonard Kitts, Michael Stone, Paul L. Wolf, Paul Rowlandson, R.L. Vobornik, Sid Rasmussen, Steve Williams; David Geier \$8; Paul D. Lawrence \$7.50; Tom McEvoy \$7; \$5 each Donald F. Cuddihee, George E. Gray, James Freeley, Jim Pandaru, John Filipovich, Kenneth Frisbie, Randy Fleming, Ray Paquette, William Prinz; \$2 each Calvin Slack, Marian

"That is the figure of value added by manufacture as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, minus the \$363 billion in wages paid to workers whose labor produced that value." The fault is mine. Although the correct figures are given in part in the subsequent paragraph, the misstatement produces at least confusion and should be corrected.

Paul D. Lawrence
Fresno, Calif.

New Subscriber

I read your paper in the library and really liked it—I want to subscribe for a year. Enclosed is a check for \$5.00, and thank you.

Mildred Meisel
Oshkosh, Wis.

Special Election Returns

Your recent issue says only 8,408,323 California voters voted on whether to recall Gray Davis. Actually, the state is still counting votes. The secretary of state's Web page today (Nov. 1) shows that the total who voted "yes" or "no" on the recall is now 8,880,475. It will probably top 9 million before the counting is done. The reason it is taking so long is that absentees and provisional ballots involve a great deal of checking.

Richard Winger
San Francisco, Calif.

[The figures given in The People were correct when the article was written a day or two before we went to press on October 22. We realize that the numbers change. The total as of Nov. 5 stood at 4,972,524 for and 4,006,021 against the recall, or 8,978,545 in all, and 98,070 more than on Nov. 1 when you wrote. That's still a long way from the 15.4 million who were registered and from the 21.8 million who were eligible. It's still less than 59 percent of registered voters and less than 42 percent of all eligible Californians.]

[Our only point was that the turnout seemed poor given all the hype—the tens of millions spent by parties and candidates, the "debates" and the "news" about the contenders, their doings and their digs at each other. No doubt bigger and better points could have been made about why so many people didn't vote, about why others did and about why those who did voted as they did. Perhaps we will return to the numbers and to the other things in a future issue.—Editor]

Small, but the Right Ideas

May I add my compliments for your fine paper. You issue a very wonderful little newspaper; small, but it really hits the high points with stories that the mainstream media reject from publishing! The world needs socialist controversy, and you have the right ideas!

George Gaylord Jr.
Tustin, Calif.

Shaw, Philip Sullivan; George Gaylord \$1.

Total: \$6,811.00

Daniel De Leon Sesquicentennial Fund

Anonymous \$110; Bernard Presser \$105; \$100 each Gloria Grove Olman, Irene Louik \$100; Jim Plant \$80; \$50 each Donald Rogers, Jeffery T. Andrews, Melvin Chapman, Richard Deshaies; James G. McHugh \$30; \$25 each Lawrence Keegan, Paul Edward Gillis, Philip Colligan; \$20 each Albert Evenich, Randy Fleming, Raymond Solomon, Richard Mack, Valery Zaytsev, William C. O'Mahoney; Daniel Goodsaid \$15; Ron Ingalsbe \$11; \$10 each Harry E. Gibson, Richard Wilson, Sarah Rotman; \$5 each Costanzo Rufo, William J. Prinz; Paul D. Lawrence \$2.50; K.M. Davis \$2.

Total: \$990.50

SLP Sustainer Fund

Bernard Bortnick \$450; Robert P. Burns \$300; Chris Dobreff \$200; Carl C. Miller Jr. \$140; Section Wayne County, Mich. \$110; \$100 each Lois Reynolds, Michael J. Preston; Archie Sim (to represent his 69 years of SLP membership) \$69; Richard Aiken (In memory of John W. Aiken) \$45; Clayton Hewitt \$30; Archie Sim \$25; \$20 each Jill Campbell, Steve Littleton; Bill Oldfather \$15.

Total: \$1,624.00

SLP Leaflet Fund

Richard Wilson \$12; Joseph J. Frank \$5; Walter K. Bagnick \$2; R.C. Moody \$1.

Total: \$20.00

Press Security Fund

Wendel Wettland \$25; Roger Stoll \$20.

Total: \$45.00

SLP Emergency Fund

R. Hofem \$20.00 (Total)

Genevieve Gunderson Memorial Fund

Paul D. Lawrence \$10.00 (Total)

Socialist Labor Party

Financial Summary

(October-November 2003)

Bank Balance (Oct. 1)	\$63,015.69
Expenses (Oct.-Nov.)	18,405.01
Income (Oct.-Nov.)	10,163.71
Bank Balance (Nov. 30)	54,774.39
Deficit for 2003 (as of Nov. 30)	\$31,864.72

BRITAIN—

Tony Blair's 'Ethical Dimension'

By Jim Plant

When Britain's "Labour" Party came to power in 1997 after 18 years of Conservative Party rule it issued a series of postelection declarations of intent setting out how its policies would differ from those of its Conservative Party predecessor. Since then the Labour government, headed by Tony Blair, has experienced a number of embarrassments, particularly in the field of foreign affairs, as its policies have been exposed as virtually identical to those pursued by the Conservatives.

When Mr. Blair became prime minister Robin Cook became the new foreign secretary, and it fell to Mr. Cook to enunciate one of the new Labour government's postelection declarations of intent in a "Mission Statement" on May 12, 1997.

"The Labour government does not accept that political values can be left behind when we check in our passports to travel on diplomatic business," Cook declared. "Our foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other peoples for the democratic rights on which we insist for ourselves. The Labour government will put human rights at the heart of our foreign policy..."

Cook did not claim that Britain's foreign policy and actions would be *completely* ethical. Nonetheless, there would be an "ethical dimension," and Cook talked about such things as "support [for] demands of other peoples for...democratic rights." But Cook's declarations did not prevent the Labour government from supplying weapons to extremely repressive regimes, just as the Conservative government had done.

Within months of Cook's speech, for example, the Labour government approved export licenses for the delivery of military aircraft to Indonesia. Mr. Blair's government took that decision while the authoritarian Suharto regime was busily crushing demonstrations for democracy in Jakarta and brutally suppressing the East Timor independence movement. Some of the aircraft sent had ground attack capability and eventually found its way to East Timor, where Indonesia fought not only armed insurgents but also where its army, police and paramilitary gangs were conducting a murderous campaign of intimidation and terror against an unarmed civilian population.

Apparently none of this disturbed Mr. Cook very much before he "shuffled" to another Cabinet post in 2001; but last March, when Mr. Blair decided to apply an "ethical dimension" of Labour's foreign policy to Iraq, he resigned from the Cabinet and delivered a speech in the House of Commons in which he said:

"Iraq probably has no weapons of mass destruction in the commonly understood sense of the term—namely a credible device capable of being delivered against a strategic city target. It probably still has biological toxins and battlefield chemical munitions, but it has had them since the 1980s when U.S. companies sold Saddam anthrax agents and the then British government approved chemical and munitions factories. Why is it now so urgent that we should take military action to disarm a military capacity that has been there for 20 years, and which we helped to create? Why is it necessary to resort to war this week, while Saddam's ambition to complete his weapons program is blocked by the presence of U.N. inspectors?"

During Britain's buildup for war with Iraq, Mr. Blair and his government echoed pronouncements of the U.S. administration and sought to justify an invasion on at least three counts. The first was to extend the "war on ter-

rorism." The second was to destroy the "weapons of mass destruction" that ostensibly posed a real and imminent threat, despite the doubts expressed by Cook and others in and out of government circles. The third was that it was necessary to remove a brutal regime that tortured and murdered its own people, even though no such compunctions prevented Mr. Blair's government from bolstering the equally brutal Suharto of Indonesia.

"The moral case against war has a moral



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answer: it is the moral case for removing Saddam," Mr. Blair declared last February. "Ridding the world of Saddam would be an act of humanity. It is leaving him there that is in truth inhumane." And in his address before the U.S. Congress last July, Mr. Blair stated: "We are fighting for the inalienable right of humankind, black or white, Christian or not, left, right or merely indifferent, to be free." Thus did Mr. Blair, on these and many other occasions, proclaim and confirm an "ethical" stance in foreign policy.

No evidence has ever surfaced to indicate that the theocratic terrorist group al Qaeda had a significant presence in Iraq, or that it had any meaningful or viable links to Saddam Hussein's regime. No evidence of weapons of mass destruction has ever turned up, and it now seems apparent that such weapons did not exist, however plentiful they may be in the hands of British and American capitalism.

Nonetheless, at least one British diplomat continued to take the Labour government's moral and ethical pronouncements seriously. That was Craig Murray, on his first important diplomatic assignment as Britain's ambassador to the former Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan in Central Asia. Mr. Murray caused an international sensation in ruling-class circles in October 2002 when he delivered a speech in Tashkent from which the following is an extract:

"World attention has recently been focused on the prevalence of torture in Uzbek prisons. The terrible case of Avazov and Alimov apparently tortured to death by boiling water, has evoked great international concern. But all of us know that this is not an isolated incident. Brutality is inherent in a system where convictions habitually rely on signed confessions rather than on forensic or material evidence. In the Uzbek criminal justice system the conviction rate is almost 100 percent. It is difficult not to conclude that once accused by the prokurator there is no effective possibility of fair trial in the sense we understand it."

Given the supposed moral and ethical stand

espoused by Tony Blair, one might expect the British Labour government to uphold its ambassador's reports and investigations, and argue for tough measures against the Karimov regime. When Mr. Murray returned to Scotland for "medical treatment" several months after his speech it was widely assumed that he had been removed from his post. He was subjected to personal attacks and charged with a series of "shortcomings." As *The Guardian* reported a few weeks before Mr. Murray resumed his duties as ambassador to Uzbekistan:

"Mr. Murray upset the regime of President Islam Karimov [of Uzbekistan] with his blunt remarks on torture. His comments also began to accentuate the differences in the [British] Foreign Office's supposed ethical foreign policy and its support for U.S. actions."

"Mr. Murray sent numerous reports to London about human rights abuses, and his dispatches became increasingly heated during the buildup to the Iraqi invasion," *The Guardian* continued. "He argued Uzbekistan's human rights abuses were as bad as those being used as ammunition against Baghdad. Yet Washington was financing Uzbekistan, rather than invading it, he said."

Mr. Murray "became personally involved in exposing torture, commissioning a forensic report on the bodies of two political prisoners...which concluded that they had probably been boiled to death," *The Guardian* added.

The Murray incident was sufficiently embarrassing to Mr. Blair and his government, however, that they felt constrained to return Mr. Murray to his post last November. Apparently Mr. Murray either buckled under, felt sufficiently secure after the protests over his presumed removal, or has plans to step aside quietly at a more propitious moment. Time will tell.

The different attitudes taken by the British and American governments to the dictatorships of Saddam Hussein and of Islam Karimov stem from the fact that Uzbekistan is a staunch ally of the United States and that Uzbekistan is important to U.S. plans for an oil pipeline from the region—the "Silk Road of Oil" reported on in some detail in our November-December issue. Uzbekistan is such a close ally of the United States that Karimov allowed it to establish a military base at Khanabad, near the city of Karshi, as a center for operations in Afghanistan. The United States moved right in, even though its State Department has reported that the Uzbek security services use "torture as a routine investigation technique." This did not deter Washington from giving Uzbekistan \$500 million in aid in 2002, \$79 million of which was specifically for the "law enforcement and security services" that routinely use torture.

The invasion of Iraq had nothing to do with defending human rights. Mainly it was for the control of Middle East oil. Not primarily for ensuring that Iraq's oil flows to the United States, or that American oil companies will make vast profits from such control, although both these things may happen. Iraq is a vital segment in the "Silk Road of Oil," and the central point is that control of most of the world's oil will give the United States a tremendous advantage and great leverage over its main industrial rivals—Europe, Japan, Russia, China—who will be ever more desperate for supplies.

The British capitalist class, which has demonstrated a very ambivalent attitude towards being involved in complete European political and economic integration, has decided instead, for the

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