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Karp Memorial Meeting Held

On Sunday, June 4, members and friends of the Socialist Labor Party from around the San Francisco Bay Area gathered at a memorial meeting to pay final tribute to Nathan Karp, former national secretary of the party who died on April 22 at the age of 84.

The memorial meeting, which was arranged for by the SLP's national headquarters staff, was held in the A.J. Toppers Room on the top floor of the Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel. The window-lined room on the 21st floor offered a spectacularly panoramic view of the San Francisco Bay stretching from the Berkeley hills in the East Bay to a point far down the San Francisco peninsula.

Speakers at the meeting were Bruce Cozzini, member of the party's National Executive Committee and a former member of the headquarters staff; Ken Boettcher, member of the staff and a former member of the NEC; and Robert Bills, the party's present national secretary and acting editor of *The People*. Cozzini also acted as host at the meeting.

Boettcher, who was the first to speak, opened his statement with the following remarks:

"We are here today to honor the life and celebrate the memory of Nat Karp. That is an easy thing for me to do. I am one of the many—perhaps even hundreds or thousands of—workers who benefited and gained inspiration from his razor-sharp classconscious understanding of the world we live in and the passionate intensity of his conviction that it is the destiny of the working class to remake the world in the shape of a socialist society of peace, plenty and freedom. But I was also among a very fortunate few who knew Nat as a friend. That fact gives me more pride than perhaps anything else I could say about myself."

Cozzini was the next to speak. "For a brief while, to give me a break from working on the paper, Nat had me working as his assistant, helping him with correspondence," he said. "During that time I was continually amazed at his feelings for the membership. He picked up on subtleties in their letters that I missed. He felt deeply for the members and the difficulties they faced both in their SLP efforts and as individuals."

Cozzini also read a statement from NEC member Bernard Bortnick, who could not be present.

(Continued on page 8)

Hunger and Starvation Still Touch All Nations

Hunger and starvation are not problems for the "Third World" alone. They exist right here in "prosperous" America, the heartland of world capitalism. They are global problems that in large measure can be laid at the feet of global capitalism.

If the wretched of the Earth are more numerous in the lesser developed countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, it is only because the imperialist domination of those regions by American and European capitalism is as firmly entrenched as ever. Capitalist exploitation of wage labor in the industrial world and capitalist imperialism in the developing world have many of the same effects—hunger and starvation among them.

United Nations and independent relief officials estimate, for example, that 8 million people face hunger and starvation this year in Ethiopia alone. Millions more in other countries of the Horn of Africa face a similar fate. The last major famine in Africa, in 1984–1985, took the lives of a million people in Ethiopia. Yet the ruling elite of Ethiopia reportedly spent roughly \$1 million a day on its two-year war with neighboring Eritrea. Other African nations have similar priorities. Many actually export food to the advanced industrialized nations, as did Ethiopia even during the last famine.

According to a recent report by an "antihunger" organization called Bread for the World Institute, 31 million Americans—almost half of them children—and 791 million people in poorer countries "face hunger as a regular fact of life." A report issued by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in December said the demand for emergency food in

26 U.S. cities rose almost 18 percent over the previous year.

The United States' agricultural potential could relieve the hunger of its own citizens and provide at least subsistence food for most of the world's hungry millions to boot. Yet U.S. agri-capital has chosen not to cultivate nearly 50 million acres of cropland that could be used to produce the food these people so badly need.

Long drought hasn't helped things in Africa. However, neither the African famine nor hunger in the United States is the result of natural phenomena. It is the result of how food production and the world economy are organized and controlled.

Two factors are particularly relevant in regard to world hunger.

First, in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World big transnational agri-capitalists, sometimes collaborating with local landlords, have dispossessed peasants from subsistence farming. They have turned the best land to the production of cash crops for export. The land so used could be farmed to produce foodstuffs to help satisfy local needs, but it isn't because export crops offer higher profits.

Second, the legacy of colonialism and the ongoing plundering by imperialism have generally left Africa underdeveloped, with farming particularly primitive. As junior partners of imperialism,

the local ruling classes and their governments have generally failed to carry out land reform that would at least ease the plight of peasant farmers. These pauperized peasants and the exploited, often unemployed wage workers are starving. They are starving not because food isn't available, but because they haven't the income to buy it at world market prices. The many regional conflicts, every one of which stems from some legacy or another of colonialism and imperialism, simply make matters worse.

Africa's famine thus is the product of world capitalism, and within that system there is no viable solution. Even emergency relief given by the imperialist nations is woefully inadequate despite their enormous productive capacities. The United States, after all, has not even solved its own hunger problem despite all its wealth.

Likewise, hunger in the United States or the other advanced capitalist nations cannot be solved under the capitalist mode of production. Hunger here stems from the exploitation of wage labor—exploitation so excessively brutal that the poorest sections of the working class cannot afford housing, clothing, transportation, child care and food all at the same time.

Food is not often distributed free. Doing so depresses the market prices

(Continued on page 2)

Capitalism's Abuse Of the Mentally Ill

By B.G.

One of the major problems that capitalist society has been unable, or possibly just unwilling, to manage adequately is the care of the mentally ill. Medicaid, the federal insurance plan for low-income individuals, specifically covers hospital care for bodily illnesses but excludes mental illness from inpatient care in psychiatric hospitals. This discriminatory provision hits hardest at the most severely mentally ill. Most in this category cannot afford private insurance because so many of them are indigent and unable, because of their severe illness, to obtain employment.

When Medicaid was instituted in 1965, there were about 470,000 persons undergoing inpatient psychiatric care in state hospitals. Today, fewer than 60,000 are receiving such care. For one thing, state hospitals are shutting down and shunting their inmates out the doors and into the streets. The rate of these shutdowns is rapidly accelerating. Between 1990 and 1997, 40 state hospitals closed. This was nearly three times more than the number of

state hospital shutdowns from 1970 to 1990.

Because of federal discrimination against psychiatric care for low-income persons, state hospitals have been pushing these unfortunates out the back door as quickly as possible to end their inpatient status and permit them to become eligible for Medicaid.

There are presently approximately 3.5 million persons in the United States suffering from schizophrenia and manic depression, but 40 percent of them, or 1.4 million, are not being treated.

Medicaid's discriminatory treatment of the mentally ill results in homelessness, victimization, suicide or incarceration in jails for thousands of these unfortunates. About 283,800 mentally ill people are presently inmates of jails and prisons. The most severely mentally ill persons wandering the streets represent not only a danger to themselves but to unsuspecting citizens through unprovoked and random acts of violence. The two largest "mental hospitals" in the country are the Los Angeles County Jail and Riker's Island

in New York City, where the mentally ill who could no longer control their impulses have joined the criminal element.

Capitalism's abuse of the mentally ill is inexcusable. A sane society would not pursue such a foolish method of treating mental illness, or refusing to treat such disorders, merely to save the financial cost while ignoring the social cost.

Under socialism, the mentally and emotionally ill will be cared for in ways that are impossible under capitalism. Socialist government will be industrial government. The mental health industry will be organized and operated democratically by those who work in it. They will be free to exercise their expertise without regard for the profit and tax-saving concerns of a self-interested ruling class.

The socialist economy will be an economy that is based on the principle of providing for human needs and requirements. The Socialist Industrial Union of Mental Health Workers will be free to provide the care and services they are trained to provide, without the financial constraints that capitalism imposes on that industry. Just as production in other industries will be carried on for use and not for profit, all social and health services will be provided in precisely the same way.

HMOs Rapidly Quitting Medicare

By B.G.

The United States is the only major industrialized nation without a national health insurance program. For the private health maintenance organizations (HMOs), this is the way it should be, for any such program would interfere with the profits raked in by these private organizations in the health care business.

Medicare, the health insurance program for the elderly, has been experiencing a steady exodus of these HMOs during the past few years, leaving hundreds of thousands of elderly people in these programs suddenly without health coverage. The HMOs complain that Medicare payments are too stingy and that they are losing money on maintaining coverage for the elderly.

Of the 39 million elderly on Medicare, approximately 6.2 million, or 16 percent, are in HMOs. A big attraction for the elderly is the prescription drug program that Medicare lacks.

The basic drawbacks for clients of HMOs, however, are their restrictions. Clients cannot choose their own physician but must accept a specified physician in the specified HMO. This basic care physician is given financial incentives, i.e., bonuses, by the HMO to keep costs down by not recommending extra or special medical procedures for new patients and by not referring them to medical specialists, even though in the physician's best medical opinion the patient might need these extra services.

In the past two years, HMOs have left Medicare in over 400 counties in 33 states. They dropped 407,000 elderly participants in 1999 and 327,000 more already this year.

The exit trend is accelerating. In June, Cigna Corp. said it would terminate its coverage for 104,000 Medicare recipients in the following areas: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Texas,

Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Aetna Inc. has 676,000 Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in its HMO and has already announced that it will exit certain markets this year, but has not indicated which ones.

For the HMOs, the great problem is that they are not making money, or enough money, on covering Medicare beneficia-



PNS

ries. From their standpoint as capitalistic organizations they are behaving correctly. They are, after all, in business to make profits and not to function as charities. They are mostly publicly traded companies, offering stock to investors who also are seeking profits.

Gary M. Frazier, a leading health care analyst at Deutsche Banc Alex Brown, in a report on the HMO industry said frankly, "We hold little hope that Medicare is going to emerge as an attractive business for publicly traded managed-care organizations in the near future."

The New York Times of June 3 reported an interview with Frazier in which he reiterated his view: "Investors have rewarded managed-care companies that stayed away from Medicare."

The Times further quoted Vice President Charles A. Boorady of Goldman Sachs investment house, who estimated

that the number of Medicare beneficiaries who might be dumped from HMOs in the near future could be "very significant, in the range of 400,000 to 1 million." Another expert, Alan J. Mittermaier, president of Health Metrix Research Inc., stated that he expected "widespread Medicare HMO withdrawals effective January 2001, resulting in displacement of 500,000

to 1 million beneficiaries."

Two years ago, President Clinton commented on the initial HMO Medicare pullout. "These decisions have brought uncertainty, fear and disruption into the lives of tens of thousands of older Americans across the country," Clinton said, and he promised to "prevent another disruption in coverage like the one we are seeing now."

Unfortunately, the situation is only getting worse despite Clinton's presumably sincere desires. The inadequacy of America's health care system is a reflection of the inadequacy of American capitalism. Capitalism is always a system that benefits the few and not the many. It cannot be reformed by tinkering here and there in an effort to create an economy to serve the people at large, but must be replaced entirely by the more humanitarian system of socialism.

...Hunger

(Continued from page 1)

of the agricultural commodities that agricultural capitalists must sell to profit from the exploitation of farm labor. Whether in the poorest areas of the United States or of Ethiopia, free food is seldom distributed before the situation arrives at a state of emergency.

Unfortunately for those in the Third World, the problem is exacerbated in part by bad roads, poor transportation and corrupt political regimes. Delays in distributing what surplus or unmarketable food finds its way into the hands of international relief agencies can mean that many more will die even after such agencies finally persuade the owners of unmarketable perishables to donate to relief programs. The problem is often compounded by repressive governments that frequently are the true beneficiaries of capitalist "charity." It is not uncommon for tyrannical regimes to stand on mountains of donated "surplus" food that they warehouse and use to bribe, by feeding, the armies and police that prop them up. Not infrequently these same repressive governments receive political recognition and military assistance from the capitalist countries whose interests are served by these tyrants' survival.

Production for profit is all that stands in the way of realizing the abundance for all that the advanced industrial nations have the potential to create, and of rapidly developing the lesser developed nations. What is needed above all else to realize these possibilities is socialist reconstruction of the United States and other industrialized nations.

Unrestricted by the private ownership and control of production and freed from the profit motive, such socialist societies could give unstinted aid to countries in need while helping them develop their own economies. And socialism would eliminate forever the absurdity of people starving or feeling the pangs of hunger at all in a world that can readily feed them.

—Ken Boettcher

letters to the People

Cynical, Cyclical Capitalism

Thank you for an excellent analysis of the phony "boom" that Wall Street is slobbering over. Here in Alamosa we are seeing a side of this surge that others perhaps do not. We have a Wal-Mart and we will soon have a Super Wal-Mart, although that is causing a great deal of controversy. The Wallies claim that new jobs will be created by the trainload, but they have admitted that the "top" jobs (i.e., those that pay more than minimum wage) will go to current Wallie managers that will be rotated in here. Meanwhile, local businesses, some that have been operating for nearly a century, are planning on going out of business. When our current Wal-Mart was built here about 15 years ago only the stoutest local business could sur-

vive. Now, most of those are planning to close. Wal-Mart and the other superstores show one of the very worst sides of capitalism. These stores are filled with items that rely on impulse buying fueled by relentless advertising. No one seems to care that much of that junk is made by sweatshop labor, that overseas profits fuel right-wing regimes, and jobs are lost as runaway corporations flee to the third world with the blessings of Washington. So many people here cannot see beyond their own yards. They are not able to put a face on the products they buy in superstores.

The Wallies are banking on our chronic poverty to supply the minimum-wage workers—and they will find them. Already there are those who seek employment information.

The cyclical boom and bust of capitalism is always in the "bust" phase in rural areas like this, and Wally and the others are eager to cynically exploit it. Thanks for your work. I have been a Marxist since 1967 and I am gratified to see that workers like yourself work so hard to educate their comrades.

Bill Mahan
Alamosa, Colo.

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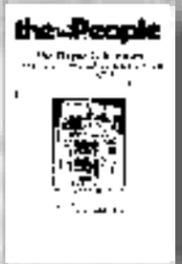
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SLP Bids Farewell to Nathan Karp

The statements that follow were delivered at the Nathan Karp Memorial Meeting held at the Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel in Oakland, Calif., on Sunday, June 4.

By Ken Boettcher

We are here today to honor the life and celebrate the memory of Nat Karp. That is an easy thing for me to do. I am one of the many—perhaps even hundreds or thousands of—workers who benefited and gained inspiration from his razor-sharp classconscious understanding of the world we live in and the passionate intensity of his conviction that it is the destiny of the working class to remake the world in the shape of a socialist society of peace, plenty and freedom. But I was also among a very fortunate few who knew Nat as a friend. That fact gives me more pride than perhaps anything else I could say about myself.

For many years I knew Nat only through the pages of the then *Weekly People*, which I stumbled across as a young hayseed—a student, but nonetheless a real hayseed—during a visit to Portland, Oregon, some 30 years ago. The '60s were so full of questions that seemed to have no answers. But then I found a newsstand filled with copies of the *Weekly People*. Clearly stated, in logical order, crisp and clear, I saw the answers to many of my questions about the world. From that time onward, the beacon of the SLP's Marxist principles gave purpose to my life.

Nat and the rest of those comrades who worked for the party and wrote for the *Weekly People* filled my Oregon hayseed heart with inspiration and awe. Nat's perennial dark glasses gave him an almost mystic air. When I finally met him during a visit to national headquarters in the late '70s, my romanticized vision of the headquarters staff was not moderated much—the visit was too short to get to know them as people. The next time I met him was at the 1979 and 1980 SLP conventions, and his knowledge of parliamentary procedure, his grasp of the events of our time and the respect he commanded on the convention floor merely increased my awe. But his friendliness and mostly gentle encouragement—as well as his patience—toward me made me aware there was a

real human being under those dark glasses and his sometimes stern stare.

Within a few months after I arrived to work at SLP headquarters almost 18 years ago, Nat, perhaps more than anyone else, made me feel at home—offering encouragement and admonishment, patience and guidance in mostly the right doses at just the right times. I imagine he did this with many folks like myself—often, of course, in the shape of a joke or a funny story—one of the hundreds of tidbits of humor that he stored away for use at the right moment. But he made me feel special, that such a man would treat me in such a way. In the intervening years, he was my mentor, in a sense the kind of father I always wished to have, and despite the difference in our ages, my closest male friend outside good old Oregon. He was not just a comrade, but a true friend—one who helped me through many a tough time and—perhaps more importantly in any friendship—one who accepted help himself at least some of the time his friends offered it.

As old age approached and began to take its toll on Nat, he seemed to epitomize the father that poet Dylan Thomas wished to urge on when he wrote:

“Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

Nat Karp, whom I learned over the years was perhaps even more gentle and kind than he ever was demanding and incisive, would never go gentle into any good night with respect to the fight for socialism.

Thomas Paine once wrote that, “I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death.”

Nathan Karp was such a man.

The window near my desk at the present National Office faces the parking spot Nat used for the last two or three years. Morning after morning I looked up, upon hearing a car pull in, to see him—with a quiet dignity—daily face and overcome the difficulties of a body that had survived stroke and heart surgery, ulcers and partial paralysis. Slowly the driver's side door would open, and out come his arm to grasp it and brace for a slow rise to his feet. A few small steps to the rear door and then out would come his walker. The sight of him coming across the parking lot to the door, down the hall and to his seat day after day made my heart swell with pride and, not infrequently, my eyes lose a tear.

In the words of his beloved Annie—words Nat was fond of quoting: “Old age is not for sissies.” Nat certainly found that to be true, yet he never allowed it to stop him. In the gentle way characteristic of his later years, he did “rage against the dying of the light.” Anyone who by mistake or intention defended the interests of the ruling class learned the rage of this man's intellect and conscience even in his last months.

I'm not sure if I ever told Nat, but I think he knew I loved him—and that many people did. We will miss him, and so will the movement that motivated his life. Death has robbed us of a real working-class champion. If Nat were here today, I can imagine what he might say. “Balderdash,” I can hear him say. “As Woody Allen once said,” Nat would continue, “There are worse things in life than death. Have you ever spent an evening with an insurance salesman?” And Nat would, of course, be



Sam Bortnick for *The People*

right. The thing to fear is an inadequate life—something Nat Karp never ever had to fear.

By Bruce Cozzini

I had the great good fortune to grow up in the Socialist Labor Party and get to know some of the SLP's finest. Joe Pirincin and Jack Quinn often stayed at our home, as did the party's presidential candidates. They were tireless workers for socialism, coming from the working class and self-educated in the movement. Nat Karp was one of that breed, the cream of the crop. They distinguished themselves by the difficult tasks they took on, and Nat took on the most difficult, that of leading the SLP through one of its most difficult times. I had the good fortune to work at the National Office during that period.

When I moved to California in 1977 to write for the *Weekly People*, the party was in a state of ferment as new directions were being explored. They were exciting times, and I was eager to be part of them. My mother and father were concerned about the sacrifices involved in uprooting my family to go work for the National Office at such a time, but what made them feel good about it was that Nat was in charge. They admired his integrity and his grasp of and devotion to SLP principles.

It was an exciting time. We had an outstanding and stimulating staff. However, writing full time didn't come easy for me, nor did the constant deadlines and the continual pressure. Throughout this time Nat was always supportive and helpful, discussing at length the principles I was having difficulty with, and offering pointers on writing problems. I learned a tremendous amount from him. The writing pointers I use all the time in my work now, and I can still hear his voice offering them to me.

For a brief while, to give me a break from working on the paper, Nat had me working as his assistant, helping him with correspondence. During that time I was continually amazed at his feelings for the membership. He picked up on subtleties in their letters that I missed. He felt deeply for the members and the difficulties they faced both in their SLP efforts and as individuals.

I was continually impressed with Nat's brilliance as a Marxist. On the spur of the moment, he could analyze social problems more clearly and coherently than most people can after long study and contemplation. And to top it off, he expressed himself with wit and humor. It seems strange to wax nostalgic about collection talks, but Nat made them not only painless, but truly entertaining. If Nat were speaking to-

day, he would have found some appropriate funny story. I searched for one, but just couldn't find it. We'll miss you Nat.

By Bernard Bortnick

I first met Comrade Nathan Karp at the May-June 1975 National Executive Committee Session in New York. I had been newly elected to the committee, replacing Comrade Elizabeth Schnur. I was seated among those whom I had always considered the towers of the revolutionary socialist movement in America for at least a quarter of a century past. Among them were Comrades G. Cozzini, J. Pirincin, A. Albaugh and G. Taylor, all on the NEC, and of course, Comrade Nathan Karp. Accordingly, I felt somewhat like a “novice,” a bit intimidated and out of place.

Comrade Nathan Karp held the post of national secretary and was also burdened with editorial obligations in the publication of the *Weekly People* since the precipitous departure of the former editor, John Timm, in 1973.

The party had recently completed the move of the national headquarters from Brooklyn, New York, to Palo Alto, California, in September 1974, and that effort involved changes at many levels in the operation of the national headquarters, not the least of which was giving up ownership of the Party press and having the *Weekly People* published commercially.

The issue of the composition of the NEC Subcommittee remained to be clarified. A vacancy in an assistant to the national secretary and the uncertainty of the composition and tenure of the editorial staff were additional problems lurking in the background.

These and a number of other issues were aired during that session, and only then did I develop an appreciation for the depth and complexity of what the party faced and, in particular, the multiple key decisions and coordination strategies that bore upon Comrade Karp and the National Office staff. I groped to make a useful contribution to the session. I had voted either in favor of or against a proposition, apparently to the frustration of Comrade Karp. During a recess he approached me and in the kindest terms asked me why I had voted as I had. I explained my thoughts and we discussed the issue for 10 minutes or so, after which I came away considerably enlightened and very impressed with the clarity of his thoughts and by the logic of his comments.

Clarity and logic I came to realize were emblematic of Comrade Karp's thought processes. It was during that NEC session that I was for the first time repeatedly exposed to Comrade Karp's keen analytical mind and accuracy of his judgments. He had “instant recall” of facts and figures, a quality which reflected his exceptional intelligence. This, coupled with the depth of his knowledge of Marxism and party history, and the speed and energy with which he passionately expressed himself, gained him the reputation of having a mind like a “steel trap.” His guidance was like that of a helmsman, correcting the course of the SLP vessel as it moved through the treacherous waters of capitalist society.

In considering the kind of verbal tribute one might pay this giant of a man, suitable words are not easily found. But he was to all of us a teacher, conveying the benefit of his wise counsel and his depth of knowledge. His contributions to the Socialist Labor Party were immeasurable and covered a vast range of writings, speeches and involvement in the whole

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Daily People Centenary

This issue of *The People* commemorates the 100th anniversary of the first and only Marxist daily newspaper ever published in English on the American continent, the *Daily People*.

For nearly 14 years, the *Daily People* was the official newspaper of the Socialist Labor Party. It was launched in New York City on Sunday, July 1, 1900, and following a politically stormy and financially precarious career, suspended publication on Sunday, Feb. 22, 1914.

Some readers may wonder why we would devote space to commemorating the centennial of a paper that has not been published for 86 years. There are several reasons, among them the Marxist nature of the *Daily People*, the qualities and devotion of its editor, and the fact that the period covered by its existence marked a turning point in the labor or socialist movement.

The *Daily People* was unique in several important respects. Unlike most other "socialist" periodicals of its day, for example, the *Daily People* was entirely owned and controlled by the membership of the SLP. It may seem obvious today that an organization should own and control any publication published in its name. Nonetheless, "party ownership of the press" was a principle that had to be fought for in the socialist movement before it was firmly established 100 years ago.

In those days there were only two organizations that claimed to represent the socialist movement in the United States, the SLP and the Socialist Party. Most of the newspapers that aligned themselves with the SP were privately owned. The membership of that party had no control over who would be their editors or what news and editorial policies would be followed by their publishers.

By contrast, the *Daily People* was under the complete control and direction of the SLP's membership. Its editor was an elected officer of the party with a fixed term of office. The *Daily People*, through its editorial columns, was expected to reflect the party's policies and the positions the party took at its national conventions and through the referendum vote.

Obviously not every decision on how to report or interpret events on a daily basis could be subject to the immediate control of the membership. Much depended on the moral integrity and intellectual capacity of the person elected to fill the editor's chair. The SLP was particularly fortunate in that regard.

Daniel De Leon, who was elected to four consecutive terms as editor of the *Daily People*, in 1900, 1904, 1908 and 1912, was not merely trustworthy as a party official and competent as an editor, he was the most distinguished Marxist of the era.

De Leon's concept of socialist journalism was to "weave socialist theory into the events of the day." As a result of this concept, many of his editorials retain their essential freshness and illustrate timeless principles and lessons. Many are Marxist classics that are as hard-hitting and spirited as they are profound.

Then there are De Leon's terse, often pungent and penetrating "Letter Box" answers to correspondents, and a remarkable column consisting of a colloquy between "Uncle Sam" (representing the

sound American Marxist) and "Brother Jonathan" (alternately the personification of the eternally confused and misled worker or of the self-deluded petty bourgeois, or small capitalist).

The *Daily People* files are also rich in important translations of Marxist speeches and essays, and hundreds of original articles that, though often written by unlettered workers, prove the capacity of workers to grasp, articulate and apply important concepts of economics, politics, history and sociology.

Finally, the period covered by the *Daily People* witnessed the most significant development ever to take place in the American labor or socialist movement—the rise of classconscious industrial unionism. It does not matter that the organization that embodied the industrial union principle, the original Industrial Workers of the World, succumbed to anarcho-syndicalism and repudiated political action, and with political action the genius of the age. The important thing is that this principle was enunciated and that the American working class was given the goal of the industrial union government and a tactical program for reaching that goal.

It was in the columns of the *Daily People* that the principles and program of Socialist Industrial Unionism were formulated and their Marxist logic demonstrated. And it was through the *Daily People* that the idea was spread to inspire and arouse workers throughout the nation.

The files of the *Daily People* are a veritable treasure-trove of Marxist wisdom, Marxist lessons and Marxist history. They are rich in the material that captivates the interest of the intellectually alert, classconscious worker.

Regrettably, however, much of that treasure is still locked away in those files and is accessible to only a few. Only a small fraction De Leon's daily editorials and other works have been brought together and made available to workers in such books and pamphlets as *As to Politics, Industrial Unionism, Two Pages From Roman History, The Burning Question of Trades Unionism* and *Socialist Reconstruction of Society*. Although much as been done in recent years to prepare larger and more comprehensive collections of De Leon's works, financial and other considerations have kept the work from progressing as fast as we would like.

Nonetheless, the pamphlets that are available provide indisputable proof of De Leon's undying contributions to the socialist movement, and to the cause of social progress and human enlightenment generally.

The *Daily People* was suspended in February 1914 because the revolutionary socialist movement entered a period of ebb tide, and the drain on the resources of the SLP threatened the party's existence. But the SLP retained its English-language weekly, founded in April 1891, and as a monthly today *The People* carries on as the advocate of De Leonism, the unflinching champion of the workers in all their struggles and the herald of labor's day. When the tide of the class struggle finally turns, as turn it must, a new *Daily People* will appear to take its place as the tribune of an aroused working class.

A De Leon Editorial

When Reforms Work —And When They Don't

When a social system such as capitalism has outlived its usefulness, efforts to improve it are a waste of energy and only postpone the desirable features of the improvements sought after.

Reforms and Reforms

(*The People*, Jan. 5, 1896)

"Dr. Parkhurst is a good man and a good citizen," remarked Mayor Strong recently, and then added after a moment's hesitation: "but he is a good deal of a radical. I want to say that I am not opposed to radicalism, for I believe that it has brought about many of the reforms which have made the world better. The results were never reached by the methods advocated by the radicals, though, not at the time of their advocacy."*

That Dr. Parkhurst's proposed reforms will not be reached by the methods he advocates is quite certain, and as far as that goes, the mayor talks sense. When, however, he generalizes upon that, and says that reforms were never reached by the methods advocated by the radicals, nor at the time of their advocacy, the mayor talks nonsense.

There are "reforms" and "reforms."

One class of the changes called "re-

forms" are of a superficial nature, however estimable they may be. Such reforms do not contemplate any fundamental change. A three-story house may be reformed by raising it two stories higher, or a yellow house may be reformed by painting it green, and that could be done without any change in the original house or its fundamental plan. Similarly, there are political and social institutions that can be altered for the better without affecting the whole social structure. Such reforms have always been accomplished by the "reformers" both with the methods they advocated and at the time of their advocacy. For instance, the vice presidents of the United States were at one time the presidential candidates that came out second best; again, the tariff was found at one time to be too high, at another time too low; in both these instances a change was deemed advisable and it was carried out by those who advocated it, at the time that they did, and by the methods they adopted. Already in this the mayor's generalization is wrong.

There is, however, another class of "reforms"—"reforms" that go to the root of questions. In such cases it is not like putting an additional story to a house or changing its color, in such cases the "reforms" demanded imply the overthrowing of the house and the building of a new. Say, for instance, that a house whose foundations have been eaten up by rats, whose walls bulge and threaten to tumble down, and whose roof, by reason of the structural decrepitude of the house, lets in the water freely. In such a case, two different sets of reformers will spring up. Both are agreed that the house is leaky, both are agreed that the water should be kept out, both recognize the

(Continued on page 6)

what is socialism?

Socialism is the collective ownership by all the people of the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land and all other instruments of production. Socialism means production to satisfy human needs, not, as under capitalism, for sale and profit. Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and social services by the workers through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization.

Under socialism, all authority will originate from the workers, integrally united in Socialist Industrial Unions. In each workplace, the rank and file will elect whatever committees or representatives are needed to facilitate production. Within each shop or office division of a plant, the rank and file will participate directly in formulating and implementing all plans necessary for efficient operations.

Besides electing all necessary shop officers, the workers will also elect representatives to a local and national council of their industry or service—and to a central congress representing all the industries and services. This all-industrial congress will plan and coordinate production in all areas of the economy. All persons elected to any post in the socialist government, from the lowest to the highest level, will be directly accountable to the rank and file. They will be subject to removal at any time that a majority of those who elected them decide it is necessary.

Such a system would make possible the fullest democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the most primary freedom—economic freedom.

For individuals, socialism means an end to economic insecurity and exploitation. It means workers cease to be commodities bought and sold on the labor market and forced to work as appendages to tools owned by someone else. It means a chance to develop all individual capacities and potentials within a free community of free individuals.

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

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

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

... Farewell to Nathan Karp

(Continued from page 3)

spectrum of party offices and activities.

The key role Comrade Karp played in freeing the party from what can best be described as a sectarian logjam, which came to a head at the 1977 National Convention, will ever remain engraved in my memory. This was a struggle against what became known as the "New York Tendency," a certain confusion of thought that ossified into the notion that all past party decisions were inviolate and in the best tradition of Marxism-De Leonism. Comrade Karp remorselessly exposed the shallowness and rigidity of this attitude, despite the animosity and acrimony this evoked from some members. His conduct was ruled by Marxian science, the path he had followed all of his life.

He was an individual deeply imbued with the fundamental correctness of the Socialist Labor Party and totally committed to its cause. Even during his illness, he continued to render his services to the extent that he could in behalf of the party. He had a thoughtful and warm personality; he was humorous, witty and engaging—an unforgettable person that I will always feel privileged to have known. I will miss him greatly.

Rachel and I extend our deepest sympathies to Comrade Anne Karp, Stan, Alan and Diane Karp, and to all of his family members.

By Robert Bills

Nathan Karp was a big part of my life for more than 30 years. Some who knew us both say our relationship was like that of father to son, but that is wrong. The relationship of parent to child is too intimate, too much involved with the passing on of traits and characteristics that no outsider can possibly share.

What Nat Karp and I shared was something different. We were comrades and friends, two things Nat had more than one occasion to say did not always or necessarily go together.

It was Abraham Lincoln who said: "The strongest bond of human sympathy outside the family relation should be one uniting all working people of all nations and tongues, and kindreds."

It was the bond of working together for a common purpose that brought Nat Karp and me together and laid the foundation for our relationship as comrades and friends. The foundation of our relationship was not blood, but a meeting of minds that welcome each other because it seems they share certain interests, certain ideals and a certain way of looking at things. Where the two things, comradeship and friendship, began to touch and overlap is hard to say. But wherever and whenever it began I know that for myself it grew stronger as time went by.

I met Nat Karp for the first time on a sunny San Francisco day in the summer of 1969. He was 54, just two years younger than I am today, and I was 25. He was newly elected as national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party. I was simply a young party member of three years' standing. He surely had no expectations beyond those he might have had at making the acquaintance of any member of the party, but I was surely excited and felt myself flattered to meet him and his wife Annie in that particular way. You see, it was not an "official occasion." It was not some party-sponsored meeting or social affair; not some performance of duty where the focus of attention shakes hands, smiles and thanks those introduced to him for their good wishes and words of encouragement. It was a personal arrangement that other comrades had made to see some sights at Ghiradelli Square, to

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following biographical sketch of Nathan Karp is taken from the souvenir program distributed at the Nathan Karp Memorial Meeting held on Sunday, June 4, in the A.J. Toppers Room of the Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel in Oakland, Calif.

Nathan Karp

April 25, 1915–April 22, 2000

Nathan Karp was born in Brooklyn, New York, on April 25, 1915. His parents, Daniel and Sarah, were young immigrants who worked in the New York needle trades when they met in 1908. When Dan Karp was 19 he heard Daniel De Leon deliver his address on *The Burning Question of Trades Unionism*, and he soon applied for membership in the SLP. Sarah worked at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in 1911, but she stayed home on that fateful day in March when a deadly fire swept through the building near Washington Square and snuffed out the lives of 146 other young women. Sarah and Dan were married that year. The young family moved to southern New Jersey in the late 1910s, where their three children, Morris, Nathan and Ruth, grew up and went to school.

Nathan Karp was a clothing cutter by trade. He spent some time in a CCC camp during the Great Depression. In 1935 he followed his parents and his beloved brother, Morris, into the SLP. Before long he moved to New York City, where he married Anne Werthamer, his wife and comrade of 63 years. Together they were the loving parents of three children, Diane, Alan and Stanley.

Nathan Karp was a conscientious objector during World War II. By 1943 he was elected to the Subcommittee of the SLP's National Executive Committee, and for many years he was also a member of the SLP's Press Committee. He was the SLP's candidate for United States senator from New York in 1952, for governor of New York in 1953 and for mayor of New York City in 1954. In 1962, he appeared before a Senate subcommittee to defend the "equal time" provision of the Federal Communications Act, and in 1965 he wrote a major statement on the same subject for *TV Guide*. He left his trade in 1963 to join the national headquarters staff of the SLP as assistant to the national secretary, and he was the SLP's national campaign manager in 1964 and 1968.

In 1969, the membership of the SLP elected him national secretary to fill the unfinished term of his predecessor. He was elected to a full term of four years in 1972 and to a second term in 1976. From 1973 until 1980 he was also *de facto* editor of the *Weekly People*. He was instrumental in the decision to move the party's headquarters from Brooklyn to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1974. More important, however, he took the lead in the effort to "revitalize" and rebuild the SLP starting with the 29th National Convention in 1976. In 1980, he was elected financial secretary of the party, and from 1983 to 1987 he was a member of the NEC. In 1990, he assembled a massive array of SLP memorabilia for the party's 100th anniversary celebration and supervised a similar exhibit for the centennial of *The People* in 1991.

He was the author of many SLP statements and publications, among them *Who Speaks for Socialism? Brinkmanship in Southeast Asia*, *Unionism: Fraudulent or Genuine? Crises in America: A Revolution Overdue*, *The SLP and the Unions* and *Early Efforts at Socialist Unity*. After retiring as financial secretary in 1983, he remained on the headquarters staff and was a regular contributor of articles to *The People*. He also acted as a consultant and adviser to the national secretary, and he was at work on the party's archives when he died on April 22, 2000.

spend a pleasant afternoon together and to share a meal.

But there was no reason on that particular day in 1969 for either of us to think that any more would come out of that afternoon than what it contained. He was 29 years my senior. We grew up at different times, some would say in different worlds. We had no shared experiences, either as members of a generation or as members of the SLP. He would return to New York and I would resume my life here on the coast with the addition of a pleasant memory. I had no reason to expect that all that would change one year later when Donna and I traveled from Sacramento to San Francisco where I was scheduled to give my first talk as an SLP speaker. I was scared, didn't do very well, and ordinarily it would have been one of those days that anyone would prefer to forget. However, it was also the day I was asked if I would consider moving to New York to become a member of the national headquarters staff of the SLP. I had no one to consult but Donna, and when she agreed I was on my way—and she soon thereafter.

Those first days and months in New Jersey and New York were difficult ones for Donna and me. Nat and Anne took me in when I arrived and helped me find a place for Donna and I to live when she arrived a month later. They took me to the airport to meet her, and showed us as much kindness and concern as if we

had been members of their own family.

New York City is a big place. Its size and its concentration, its press of humanity were wholly outside the experience of a young couple who grew up in much smaller and slower paced California and Nevada towns. It was at once exhilarating and intimidating, and Donna and I were very much fish out of our water.

Looking back, there is no doubt in my mind that Donna and I managed to survive life in the big city in large part because of the kindness that Nat and Anne showed toward us. It was a lopsided way to start a relationship, much less a friendship, but we must have measured up in ways that mattered. Nat had a talent for sizing people up. Within a few months of our having moved to the East he needed to hire someone else for the headquarters staff. I suggested that he consider Donna.

That was the first time I offered my advice about anything to Nat Karp. It turned out to be good advice, as I knew it would.

Nat Karp loved history, particularly American history. His personal library is filled with books about the history of the country and historical figures. Apart from Marx, Engels and De Leon, he admired such men as Samuel Adams, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and Abraham Lincoln—all of them dedicated revolutionaries and opponents of tyranny.

But his admiration of these men was tempered by the knowledge that they

were merely human, creatures of their times and of their circumstances, and subject to all the weaknesses that define humanity as a creature of its environment. He understood human nature very well, and because of that he could admire historical figures with an appreciation and perception tempered by his own intelligence and insights into the limitations that the social environment create.

It was Daniel De Leon, I believe, who answered critics of Jefferson to the effect that it was enough to secure his immortality for Jefferson to have written a few lines into the Declaration of Independence proclaiming that all men were created equal and that governments ought to derive their powers from the consent of the governed. A thousand generations were needed before that plateau in the social development of the human race could be reached. It was unreasonable to expect more of any one person, no matter how gifted, and it betrayed a lack of appreciation of how difficult truly historical progress is to make.

Nat Karp appreciated this. He understood that men and women could not always measure up to their own aspirations for themselves or for the world in which we live. But he never used that as an excuse not to measure up to his own aspirations. More than that, he never gave up on the potential he saw in others, no matter how often he may have been frustrated or disappointed by them. He wanted the men and women he came in contact with to measure up to their own potential. He could be firm, and he could get angry. But he also had gentle and insightful ways of reaching out to encourage others to improve their skills, and I never knew him to deny anyone help or advice when they needed it. He did not hesitate when he was asked for his help, and if he felt it was necessary to take the initiative it was with all the sympathy and tact that anyone could wish for.

During our 30-year relationship as co-workers at the National Office there were countless occasions on which I was witness to Nat Karp's boundless energy and dedication under circumstances that unquestionably would have left most other men wringing their hands in despair. But not Nat Karp.

When the former editor of the *Weekly People* walked off the job in May 1973, Nat stepped in without hesitation to prevent the paper from going under. How he managed it is still something that I marvel at, even though as the only remaining member of the editorial staff I witnessed it at firsthand.

Occasionally I have taken down the 1973 volume of the *Weekly People* just to read through the many articles and editorials that Nat labored over during the months that followed the 1973 NEC Session. To this day I am amazed at the variety and the quality of what he managed to produce in circumstances that would have caused anyone else to throw in the towel. But he didn't. He couldn't. It wasn't in his nature. He saw what needed to be done and he did it.

Nat Karp was not only the most intelligent and perceptive man I ever met. He was the most self-disciplined man I ever knew. It was that self-discipline that enabled him to use his intelligence to a purpose.

Nat Karp's natural attributes, and the self-discipline that allowed him to make the most of them, sometimes overwhelmed others whose potential may or may not have been as great, but whose determination to make the best use of their own potential was not as keenly developed.

I know these things because I was a beneficiary of them.

When health considerations forced Nat

(Continued on page 6)

...Farewell to Nathan Karp

(Continued from page 5)

Karp to step down as national secretary at the end of his second full term of office in 1980, the pool of possible replacements from which to draw was limited. When the 1980 National Convention voted to confer that honor on me Nat Karp knew that the responsibilities were being placed on inexperienced shoulders. During the months and years that followed, however, he never intruded himself, but seemed to trust to my judgment to decide when and if I felt the need to seek his counsel and support. I did that often, and he helped me in far too many ways even to begin to list. My preparation had been limited to a year or two as one of his assistants, and while I eventually found my way in most things, I doubt that I would have lasted beyond that first shaky term without the knowledge that Nat was there to help me through.

Nat Karp was also a man of great personal courage. There are dozens of examples I might cite to make the point, but none so revealing as his struggle to overcome the physical limitations he was faced with after he suffered a stroke.

He insisted on receiving all the physical therapy that was available, and he devoted himself to recovering his physical independence. He not only accomplished that goal, he returned to work at the National Office and dedicated his time, his mind and his energy to organizing the party's vast archives for transfer to the Wisconsin State Historical

Society. In addition, he continued to write articles for *The People* and never missed an issue until he drove himself to the hospital from which he would never return.

When Donna and I took our last trip to the hospital to visit Nat we were informed that he had died about an hour before we arrived. The doctor who informed us said with a voice marked by unmistakable sincerity that "he was a fighter." She didn't know the half of it.

Apart from being the most intelligent, highly disciplined and in many ways the most courageous man I ever met, Nat Karp was also the most principled man I have ever encountered. His principles were synonymous with those of the Socialist Labor Party, to which he had wholeheartedly dedicated himself from the time he joined at the age of 20.

But there was nothing pat or dogmatic about Nat Karp. He was as perceptive, inquisitive, analytical and logical on the day he died as he was that day I met him 31 years ago.

Nat Karp was my friend and comrade, two things, as I said earlier, that do not always or necessarily go together. But in my heart and in my mind I know that, in our case, they did.

Nat Karp was everything a man could hope to be—everything an admirer, a friend and a comrade could ever hope to emulate. His heart was as big as it was courageous. His mind was as powerful as his principles were strong. His comradeship

and friendship were as firm as the grip of his hand. If he had been my father I could not have loved him more.

I can think of no more fitting words for parting from that living friendship than a slight paraphrase of those that A.C. Cameron wrote when he lost his friend and comrade, William H. Sylvis, in July 1869, 100 years to the month before Nat Karp entered my life.

"And now that he has gone from our midst; that his active...brain has been stilled forever; that his words of counsel and encouragement will be heard no more, let it be our highest ambition to carry to successful completion the good work so gloriously begun. Let us re-pledge our devotion to the dissemination of those principles to which his life was devoted, and in the attainment of which the welfare of the human race is involved; and though we may not be able to emblazon our names in letters of such shining light, or engrave them high on the scroll of fame as he, yet we shall be emulating his virtues by following his example, by making the precepts which made him so truly great our precepts, leave behind us the fragrance of a well-spent life, and a memory to be honored and revered.

"Then up and be doing, the night has been long,

Our forces are weak, and the tyrants are strong;

But while fortune favors the true and the brave,

Let's pledge our devotion o'er Nathan Karp's grave."

...De Leon Editorial

(Continued from page 4)

fact that the walls are shaky, but, the one knows that the cause of the trouble lies in the foundation, and consequently he addresses himself to the task of reform by advocating the pulling down of the rickety thing and building up of a new house upon solid ground; while the other, ignorant of the cause of the leak, will propose to reform the house by tinkering its roof. If the latter is let alone, the chances are he will break his neck by the roof giving way and dropping him on the ground. But whether he is let alone or not, the reform he proposes—the stoppage of the leak—will never be reached by him or by his methods, or at the time he advocates them: his methods are false and he is intellectually disqualified to do the work. On the other hand, however, the reformer who starts with a knowledge of the fundamental weakness of the house and advocates the stoppage of the leak by the building of a new structure will every time reach the reform he advocates, he will reach it by his methods, and he, or those who hold his views, will reach the reform at the time of its advocacy: his premises being correct, his methods are sound, and only he is intellectually qualified to do the work. So

likewise in social and political reforms.

When the foundations of a social system are eaten up, social evils will spring up, and will be admitted to be such by all hands, but, just as in the above illustration, the reformers will be of two classes: one, ignorant of the facts, will imagine the evils complained of can be remedied by tinkering; the other, well posted, will listen to nothing short of revolution. In such cases it is only tinkering reformers who never reach their object; while the revolutionary reformers have every time reached theirs, substantially with the methods they proposed, and at the time they proposed them. It was so with the British bourgeois when they accomplished the first English revolution; it was so with the American patriots when they snapped the feudal bonds of British rule; it was so with the French bourgeois when they tore themselves loose from Bourbon feudalism; and it has been so in every instance where reform was not possible without revolution.

Now, then, what is the reform that Dr. Parkhurst wishes to accomplish? He wishes to stop prostitution, alcoholism and crime. Are these leaks in the modern social structure due to local or to structural defects?

They are of structural origin. The capitalist social structure is like the house whose foundations are eaten up by rats, which consequently cannot hold its walls straight, and which therefore must inevitably be affected with the leaks of prostitution and other evils. Does Dr. Parkhurst understand this? He does not. He is of the species of tinkering reformers. The mayor, therefore, spoke sensibly when he implied that Dr. Parkhurst would never reach the reforms he aims at. But the mayor spoke nonsense when he at the same time implied that the reforms arrived at by Dr. Parkhurst would not be reached by anyone who is attacking them. The tinker Parkhurst will not, the scientific revolutionary movement of socialism will—just the same as all other revolutionary movements have.

The mayor's opinion upon this subject simply illustrates that he is as superficial a bourgeois as he is illiterate.

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activities

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

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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 log onto <http://slp.pdx.home.mind-spring.com>. The general public is invited.

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Social—Sections Akron and Cleveland will hold a social on Sunday, July 30, beginning at 2 p.m., at the Burns' residence, 9626 York Rd., North Royalton. Refreshments will be served. For more information call 440-237-7933.



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Other Tributes to Nathan Karp

AVI BORTNICK, OAKLAND, CALIF.—I was saddened to hear the news about Nathan Karp. I have very fond memories of him, stretching back nearly as far as I can remember. I will miss his astute socialist insights and terrific sense of humor.

SAM BORTNICK, OAKLAND, CALIF.—I will always have fond memories of Nate, having known him as a friend of the family since childhood.

JEFF CHERN, FRISCO, TEX.—As a “writer” I often read Comrade Karp’s articles and questioned my own abilities. He wrote with such clarity and economy that it seemed each article went through 25 drafts. And I’m sure they didn’t. Though I met him only once, he seemed a man of genuine good humor, but also of uncompromising principles. Should all of us today rededicate ourselves to the kind of commitment he gave, few of us would have enough years left to approach his contributions. The party will more than miss him, and will never replace him.

DIANE SECOR, SAN JOSE, CALIF.—I cannot find words, so all I can do is speak from the heart. Comrade Nathan Karp dedicated his life to the Socialist Labor Party and humanity. He led a lifetime of self-sacrifice and adherence to principle through thick and thin. He always chose to stand for what is right, never yielding to what is expedient or convenient. His courage and total commitment to the principles of the SLP are a source of strength and inspiration to all who knew him. His life and memory are a priceless treasure which will endure for generations to come.

CHRIS CAMACHO, MIAMI, FLA.—I am deeply saddened to learn of Comrade Karp’s passing. Anyone who have ever met the man and heard him speak would agree that he was an exceptional man, a gifted speaker and a genuine Socialist revolutionary. Summed up in him were the virtues and the wisdom that the party imparts upon its steadfast men and women. The SLP has lost a true working-class hero. I consider myself a fortunate person to have met him and will mourn his passing for a long time. However, I take comfort in the thought that a little bit of what Nathan Karp was still lives on in my mind and in my heart. May that little bit live forever!

MANUEL LUEVANO, STOCKTON, CALIF.—Although I did not know Mr. Karp personally, I hold deep admiration and respect for this special man for all he did and attempted to do for the workingman. He worked to the very end for our cause and he richly deserves this final tribute. May his soul rest in peace.

HENRY CORETZ, SKOKIE, ILL.—The loss of Comrade Karp is irreparable. I mourn his death along with you and our other comrades in the SLP. His life was

a gift and a model for the working class to emulate.

JOHN GALE, PHOENIX, ARIZ.—It is with sadness that I enclose my contribution to the Nat Karp Memorial Fund. As far as I was concerned he was a brilliant, considerate and fair man. A medical condition prevented me from knowing him and his wife Anne better than I did. He was my “boss” for a couple of years at the N.O., and when I was stabbed in Brooklyn after I left the N.O., he and the whole staff were concerned and came to see me at Kings County Hospital. During and after my recovery, he was concerned about my recovery and employment prospects for the future. He was the most knowledgeable man about Lincoln I ever met and he wrote brilliant pamphlets and articles for *The People*. When and if the workers build socialism, I will remember dedicated people to the cause of humanity, including Lincoln, De Leon, Arnold Petersen and Nathan Karp.

BRIAN BLANCHARD, LAUNCESTON, AUSTRALIA—I am saddened and shocked to hear of the death of Comrade Karp. I noted that he didn’t have an article in the April edition so I thought something must be wrong. What a loss to the party and the world. I never met him but I have known him for over 40 years. I salute a profound Socialist and a fine human being. He will be sadly missed. The best way to honor him, I think, is to carry on the work with as much effort and dedication as he did.

DOUGLAS IRVING, NATIONAL SECRETARY, SLP OF CANADA—I was shocked to read in your letter of the death of Comrade Nathan Karp. I will send a copy of your letter to all Canadian members. I am in deep sorrow for the death of not only a great and dedicated Marxist, but also a great human being who I had the privilege to know personally.

ROY K. NELSON, NEEDHAM, MASS.—Nathan Karp was our elder statesman and a guiding influence upon our survival through deteriorating political and social conditions and adaptation to new and different circumstances. His death leaves us remaining members and leadership to carry on as our parents did for their forefathers.

MARY AND JOHN BRAS, GULFPORT, FLA.—We have received letter of April 23 with the sad news that Comrade Karp has passed away. We were so hoping to see him next year at the convention. The news has saddened us and as you so ably said it: “...to give expression to emotions so deeply embedded in my being that they reduce all words to hollow and meaningless echoes.” We feel the same way and we couldn’t put it better than the way you have so touchingly stated. I believe that most of our members will be speechless and saddened. I met Nathan Karp the first time at our federation convention in

1933—67 years ago. He was such a young and energetic fellow.

TONY MARSELLA, WHITING, N.J.—I was greatly saddened to hear of the death of Nathan Karp, a man that I had known and worked together with at the party headquarters. He was one of the best human beings that I met. Also a great social mind and outstanding intellect from whom I learned all that I know today about the corrupt system we live under. I will never forget what he did for me and others to understand life and ourselves. I am deeply sorry over the passing of a fine human being.

ROBERT K. HOFEM, CARLSBAD, CALIF.—What a great world this would be if the world were populated with Nathan Karp! We are deeply saddened that he has left us.

DOROTHY HARDIN, MCMINNVILLE, ORE.—*The People* arrived yesterday and I was shocked to learn of Nathan Karp’s death and so very, very sorry. I have been taking the paper for over 15 years, and when it arrived each time I would always look first for Nathan’s articles. Because of his well-reasoned, vigorous writing talents I have always assumed that he was a much younger man—so learning about his death was a terrible blow, and learning he was almost 85 was at first impossible to grasp. I wish I lived nearer so that I might attend his memorial. We have lost a fine man.

D.H. KNIGHT, BOOMER, N.C.—The news of the death of Comrade Karp was disturbing. I admired his devotion and contributions to the party. His articles in *The People* always interested me. His passing is a great loss to the party.

RALPH REIDER, SCHOOLCRAFT, MICH.—Sorry about the death of Nathan Karp. That was a real disaster. He did so much good writing. *The People* should print many of his articles over again. Possibly several of his articles could be edited to make a permanent booklet.

ROB FAIVRE, SARATOGA, N.Y.—Please send three copies of Nathan Karp’s *Unionism* pamphlet—and accept the rest of this check as a small donation to his memorial fund. His work continues to be of value to my students and to my work as a college writing teacher and member of a teachers’ union that does little more than make deals with management. I keep working at it—and look forward to sharing the pamphlet with our union president.

JOSEPH AND FRED BELLO, BROOKLYN, N.Y.—We both are saddened to read in *The People* that Nathan Karp has passed on. We both send our deepest sympathy to all his family and to every SLP man and woman who knew him. We both were inspired by his works and words. We will always remember him in our thoughts, and may he rest in peace.

Nathan Karp Memorial Fund

(\$9,368.75 as of June 16)

Collection at June 4 memorial meeting (\$2,720): Genevieve Gunderson \$1,000; Louis Lipcon \$500; Harry Banks \$250; \$200 each Section San Francisco Bay Area, Bruce Cozzini; \$100 each Dale Birum & Joseph Gingras, William Kelley, Robert & Donna Bills and family; Ken Boettcher \$50; Frank & Mary Prince \$45; Steve Littleton \$40; \$25 each Matthew Rinaldi, Mike Marken, Jennie Seekford; Mr. John Woo \$20; \$10 each Marsha Boettcher, Diane Secor, Jill Campbell; \$5 each Mary Prince, Leon Prince.

John O’Neill \$1,000; \$500 each Rachel & Bernard Bortnick, Marie & Ray Simmons; Joan Davis \$400; Angeline Kleist \$300; Angela DeBord \$278; \$200 each Daniel D. Deneff, Chris Dobreff; \$100 each Section Cook County, Ill., Section Cleveland, Roy K. Nelson, Robert P. Burns, Peter Kapitza, Mildred & Richard Woodward, Marty Radov, Louis Fisher, Joseph C. Toth, Jessie L. Campbell, James G. McHugh, Henry Coretz, Harvey K. Fuller, Glenn Schelin, George S. Taylor, G. Lucas, C. James Matuschka; Earle McGue \$90.

\$50 each William E. Tucker, Warren & Nancy Carlen, Sid Fink, Rudy & Aune Gustafson, Roy K. Nelson, Reynold R. Elkins, Rethinking Schools, Michael Preston, Mary Mills, Linda M. Christensen, Joseph B. McCabe, John & Mary Brlas, John & Lois Reynolds, James & Mary Buha, Jack Radov, H. Lasher, Ben &

Sylvia Kraft, Barbara Graymont, Tony Marsella; George E. Gray \$26; \$25 each Walter & Millicent Leibfritz, Sixten Anderson, Ruth Freed, Mildred Killman, Michael R. Mahoney, Donna Meyer, R.P. Sulenta, Robert K. Hofem; \$20 each Joseph & Fred Bellon, John S. Gale, D.H. Knight, Archie Sim; Lila Holmdahl \$15; Robert Faivre \$12.25; Marshall G. Soura \$12.

\$10 each Walter Beale, N.M. Goldberg, Lois Kubit, Jack Blessington, George E. Gray, Edward C. Kowalski, Earl L. Shimp, Dionisio Villarreal, Clayton Hewitt, Sidney Steiner; John-Paul Catusco \$5.50; \$5 each Richard Callen, Otto C. Plaug, Michael James, Joseph J. Frank, Ralph W. Rieder; Richard Wilson \$4; Daniel B. Jackson \$1.

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Why African AIDS Is A U.S. Security Threat

By Bruce Cozzini

The Clinton administration's recent declaration that the world AIDS pandemic, particularly in Africa, is a security threat to the United States illuminates the hypocritical and self-serving nature of U.S. capitalism's policy towards the AIDS crisis in Africa.

The administration has supported drug industry interests and dragged its feet in allowing generic AIDS drugs to be made available in Africa. It moved to relax some of the international trade rules protecting pharmaceutical industry interests only after its hand was forced by the threat that South Africa, and other countries where AIDS is rampant, might ignore those international trade agreements to increase their supplies by authorizing the manufacture of less expensive generic drugs in Africa. As reported by the Johannesburg *Daily Mail & Guardian* on May 12:

"The Clinton administration—under pressure from gay activists, the World Bank and the United Nations—announced that it would drop its threat to use trade sanctions against countries such as South Africa planning to produce cheap generic copies of existing Western medicines."

In short, at least part of the threat perceived by the Clinton administration was that the American pharmaceutical industry might be elbowed out of the African market entirely if they failed to compromise by lowering the prohibitive prices that have deprived tens of millions of infected Africans access to AIDS-fighting medications. However, while formally recognizing the horrendous toll that AIDS is taking on human life and the political and economic structure of Africa, the Clinton administration is taking only limited action calculated to ensure capitalist interests and minimize potential losses, not only to pharmaceutical companies but to other capitalist interests doing business in Africa.

Indeed, the Clinton administration and other caretakers of capitalist interests know that economic sanctions would cut both ways, and they are not eager to cut off their economic noses to spite their hypocritical faces. They know that the laws that bestow "intellectual property rights" on the pharmaceutical companies that monopolize AIDS treatments are only as good as the willingness of people and governments to abide by and enforce them, and that to be effective such laws must be consistent with the interests of those expected to comply with and enforce them.

According to *The Washington Post*, a "National Intelligence Estimate prepared in January, representing consensus among government analysts, projected that a quarter of southern Africa's population is likely to die of AIDS" and that the death toll "will rise for a decade before there is much prospect of improvement." In addition, the course could be repeated or even exceeded in South Asia and the former Soviet Union. The study suggests that the resulting decline in life expectancy would present the greatest risk for "revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, genocides and disruptive regime transitions."

With this report (supposedly) as a motivation, the Clinton administration has declared worldwide AIDS as a threat to U.S. national security. It has doubled its budget request for AIDS measures to \$254 million and created a White House inter-

agency working group to expand AIDS initiatives.

But these actions are too little and too late to accomplish their stated purposes. With an estimated 23 million people in sub-Saharan Africa infected with HIV (and new infections increasing by an estimated 5,000 per day), the money requested amounts to barely over \$10 per infected person. And by the end of the Clinton administration, his working group is likely to have accomplished little more than to watch the new AIDS cases increase by additional millions.

Another factor that may have motivated the Clinton administration is the political pressure at home. Prominent African-American leaders have adopted AIDS in Africa as a cause and are joined by longtime AIDS activists in the United States and Europe, where the advance of AIDS has been slowed by effective drugs and preventive methods. In June of 1999, activists, angry at drug prices that put AIDS treatment out of reach of HIV-infected people in developing countries, disrupted Vice President Gore's presidential campaign announcement and two other speeches the same week. They claimed that the Clinton administration, including Gore, was bullying poor countries into dropping their pursuit of generic AIDS drugs.

More recently, efforts by Democratic congressional leaders to pass legislation that would have allowed African nations to make or import cheaper versions of AIDS drugs than those marketed by U.S. drug

The threat to the United States' 'national security' is that in the possible chaos that may ensue as societies collapse, it will be impossible for U.S. corporations to control the tragic consequences and continue to profit from their exploitation of Africa.

companies were failing at the time of Clinton's announcement. U.S. trade officials, in the pockets of the pharmaceutical industry, have sought sanctions for patent infringement against countries that have tried to manufacture or import cheaper AIDS drugs. A provision championed by Sen. Dianne Feinstein was adopted by the Senate as part of a major trade bill opening new commerce venues in the Caribbean and Africa. However, facing major opposition from Republicans in the House, the provision was removed from the Senate bill. At the urging of Feinstein, Clinton, on May 10, issued an executive order opening access to cheaper drugs to poorer countries as long as their efforts complied with World Trade Organization agreements on intellectual property.

An American pharmaceutical industry spokesman quoted in a Reuters story in the *San Jose Mercury News* of May 11 complained that the order "sets an undesirable and inappropriate precedent" for patent law exceptions. "We recognize that AIDS is a major problem," he said, "but weakening intellectual-property rights is not the solution." However, recognizing that there was still money to be made, a group of five pharmaceutical companies offered on the following day to negotiate price cuts on their drugs by 80 percent and more. One, Glaxo Wellcome, announced that it would sell Combivir, one of its drug blends that normally sells for \$16.50 for a daily dose, for \$2 in poorer countries. However, at \$730 per year, that is substantially more than the annual income of most residents of Africa's poorer countries.

More significantly, however, even if drugs could be made available in the quantities required, the medical infrastructure does not exist to supervise the complex administration of potentially toxic drugs such as AZT and the protease inhibitor cocktails. Likewise, South African President Thabo Mbeki argued in a May 22 meeting with President Clinton, as reported in a *Los Angeles Times* story, that "it is pointless to fight AIDS with powerful and expensive drugs without tackling 'the underlying poverty' at the same time." Poverty and ignorance have blocked prevention efforts; shame among those afflicted has contributed to the spread. Now, as a recent PBS Marketplace broadcast on AIDS in Uganda noted, AIDS treatment is overburdening an already inadequate health system to near collapse.

That poverty has been a contributing cause to the spread of AIDS in Africa, and is the greatest obstacle to stopping or reversing its progress, is without question. It is likewise without question that poverty in Africa is the direct result of rapacious exploitation of the mineral, agricultural and human resources of Africa by world capitalism. In the interest of extracting the wealth of the continent, its people have been colonized, brutalized and impoverished. Its governments in the postcolonial era have been destabilized and overthrown or co-opted to allow U.S. and European capitalists to maintain control.

Until now it has been possible for U.S. and European corporations to extract the wealth of Africa by exploiting its workers at miserable wages and in virtual slave conditions with the assistance of repressive governments. The low standard of living forced workers to survive on some of the lowest wages in the world. However, now the presence of the AIDS pandemic has the potential of destabilizing the already marginal existence of African workers and the societies in which they live. There is a real fear that government collapse and brutal insurrections like that in Sierra Leone may spread. The threat to the United States' "national security" is that in the possible chaos that may ensue as societies collapse, it will be impossible for U.S. corporations to control the tragic consequences and continue to profit from their exploitation of Africa. The Clinton declaration that AIDS is a threat to U.S. national security is a pitifully weak gesture towards dealing with AIDS, but one that may justify future political and military efforts to safeguard capitalist interests in Africa.

... Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

In his remarks, Bills said in part that "Nat Karp was everything a man could hope to be—everything an admirer, a friend and a comrade could ever hope to emulate. His heart was as big as it was courageous. His mind was as powerful as his principles were strong. His comradeship and friendship were as firm as the grip of his hand. If he had been my father I could not have loved him more."

The full texts of these tributes are printed elsewhere in this issue.

A videotape entitled "Nat Karp: Vignettes From an Interview" was shown at the meeting. The program was compiled from footage of an interview with Karp shot in 1990. Portions of that footage were used in the SLP centennial video program, "The SLP at 100," which Karp helped to produce.

A printed souvenir program prepared for the meeting by the headquarters staff included a photograph and synopsis of Karp's life and contributions to the SLP and the working-class movement for socialism. The photograph and text from that program also can be found elsewhere in this issue.

A light buffet was served after the video presentation, and some of the pamphlets and other materials written by or about Nathan Karp were available for those present to peruse.

Contributions to the Nathan Karp Memorial Fund made at the memorial meeting and received by mail comprised \$9,368.75 as of June 16. The fund is being held open for late contributions through July 18.

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