George Will was astonished by something President Bush said in his State of the Union address on Jan. 28. Will expressed his astonishment on ABC-TV’s post speech show, where he and several other pundits sat around a table ready to give their opinions of the speech. But time was short, and Will had only a moment at the tail end of the show to express his surprise.

Will used that moment to recite a passage from the president’s speech, a passage that was marked with deliberate inflections of his voice to emphasize his surprise.

“To date,” Will quoted, “we’ve arrested or otherwise dealt with... various terrorists. ‘All told, more than 3,000 suspected terrorists have been arrested in many countries and ‘many others have met a different fate...’”

Then, as time ran out, Will quickly added: “The astonishing thing is that the president of the United States, in calculated icy language, is saying we are tracking them down one at a time—and killing them.”

What did Will find astonishing about this presidential confession? Was it that the United States is “tracking down” suspected terrorists “and killing them” in cold blood? Was it that the president’s “cold icy language” made it clear that the president knows about, approves of and condones this cold-blooded killing? Was it that the president identified this “tracking them down one at a time—and killing them” as “American justice”? Or was it that the president would confess such a thing publicly for the whole world to hear?

Will did not say. There was no time. Host Peter Jennings intervened and said: “Thank you all. I realize it is, as always, brief...”

Will, however, had all the time and space he needed to explain his astonishment in his syndicated column for Jan. 29. He called it “Struggle in the Shadows,” and wrote:

“Having finished the bouquet of policy posies expected in State of the Union addresses, the president made an abrupt rhetorical turn. With words as spare and crisp as State of the Union addresses, the president made an abrupt rhetorical turn. With words as spare and crisp as a State of the Union address...”

Neither...

Unemployment is rising across the country, Texas not excepted. Much of the increase in unemployment nationally comes from the manufacturing sector, where massive layoffs occur with increased frequency. That holds true for Texas also; and despite efforts by the Federal Reserve to lower interest rates to make credit more available, manufacturing jobs continue to slow down, close down and shed themselves of unwanted, because not needed, workers.

“Texas has lost all but 26,800 of the manufacturing jobs it had added during the economic boom, according to the latest figures from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas,” the Dallas Morning News reported recently. “And with few signs of any rebound in hiring, the number could drop further.”

Some capitalist economists think that lost manufacturing jobs will never come back. “Our economy is shifting to one in which the highest value is production to develop the productive forces in such a way, that only the absolute power of consumption of the entire society would be their limit.” —Karl Marx, Capital

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More Than Oil at Stake In Dispute With Iraq

Bush Shows Contempt for Growing Antiwar Movement

By B.B.

“Millions of Americans oppose the Bush administration’s determination to wage war on Iraq, and they are speaking out. Their slogans make it clear that they believe that Iraq’s oil is at the bottom of the Bush administration’s warmongering. They do not want men, women and children slaughtered to make the Middle East safe for American oil companies. They have joined the antiwar movement in the belief that their opinions count and that their voices will be heard. They believe that public sentiment will be enough to deter the administration and to stop the war before it starts.”

The Socialist Labor Party also opposes the administration’s war plans. Indeed, the SLP has stood up and spoken out against every war since the 1890s.

The SLP, however, knows from experience that public sentiment has little influence on the foreign policy decisions of the government. History shows that similar movements preceded every major war of the 20th century, but succeeded in stopping none. Even disintegrate once the bombs start to fall. “Mr. Bush’s advisers are telling him to ignore them [the demonstrations] and forge ahead, as are some leading prowar Republicans.” (The New York Times, Feb. 17)

President Bush has taken that advice. He has...
Sick Days Under Attack

Are you employed by a company that claims to offer the “benefit” of sick days off? About 84 percent of companies offer sick days. But that doesn’t mean you actually get to take the sick days they offer—or that you should if you value your job.

"Some employers who do that [take sick days] too often might be fired," according to an article in the Feb. 7 issue of USA Today.

In its most recent study, CCH Inc., which USA Today calls a “human-resources information provider,” shows that U.S. employees who ostensibly have sick days available are allotted, on average, 8.8 sick days per year. They only use, on average, 4.7 days. But even that is apparently too much for many U.S. employers. According to the USA Today article, “Employee absences have become such an epidemic that companies are going on the offensive.”

Going on the offensive is more like it. Use of the sick-day “benefit” is increasingly an issue in job performance reviews, and some companies are cutting down the number of sick days allowed before an employee is fired. Other companies pay a small bonus for those not taking the sick days allotted to them.

Regardless of the means a company uses to cut back on the use of sick days, the message to workers is clear: “Don’t get sick, and if you do, come to work anyway, you lazy bum!”

United Airlines Executives Propose New Company

When United Airlines filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization in December, many workers voiced concerns that the court proceedings might become a tool to bust the airline unions—which members ostensibly “own” the company. Industry analysts claimed the company—or rather, the executives and bankers that run it—would probably not move too rapidly in that direction because bankruptcy law requires an attempt at negotiation, and the workers’ rejection of the “offer,” before court-ordered cuts can take place.

The workers may be more on the mark than the analysts. The company had not publicly revealed details of its reorganization plan by press time, but unions for both UAL pilots and flight attendants were already aware that UAL executives are “going for the throat” of the unions.

In a letter to the membership of the Air Line Pilots Association at United, the chairman of its United chapter wrote that executives had proposed “giving away some of our most modern narrow-bodies to another company and allowing that company to operate a large part of the United network with non-United (nonunion) employees,” as the New York Times reported. Flight attendants received a letter from their union stating that “United was proposing to shift 20 percent to 40 percent of its flights and workers to the new carrier.” The new company would reportedly operate with different “pay scales, work rules and seniority rights.”

United had already announced that it wanted its five unions to concede $2.4 billion a year in its five-year plan. A “shift 20 percent to 40 percent of its flights and workers to the new carrier.”

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.
**What’s a Worker’s Life Worth?**

By Bruce Cozzini

What is a life worth? Federal regulators have been putting dollar values on lives in cost-benefit analyses for years. Now, if you are 50 or older, yours is being devalued. The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has told Environmental Protection Agency to discount the value of workers’ lives by 63 percent of a person’s life at its cost-benefit studies of antipollution regulations. A report by Seth Borenstein in the San Jose Mercury News of last Dec. 22 provided some of the details.

According to Borenstein, the question asked by cost-benefit analysis is “If a regulation would cut pollution enough to extend an older person’s life, how much would that be worth in dollars, compared with what would it cost the polluter to comply? How many lives would be saved overall, old and young?” To answer such a question it is necessary to place a monetary value on the “benefit,” in this case, the health of life of workers in an industry or the general population (also workers).

Researchers and capitalist government regulators perform the cynical task of assigning the value. They often use surveys, such as one cited by Borenstein, that studied workers’ attitudes toward occupational risk. The researchers asked workers how much they would pay to reduce the risk of death. They found “no significant difference between old and young” workers surveyed. “You could just as well say life becomes more precious the more you enjoy it, and you don’t really want to cash in your chips,” one researcher said. The OMB based its 63 percent discount rate for the elderly on a 20-year-old British survey that, according to its author, is out of date and does not apply to the United States.

The motivation behind all cost-benefit analysis is to control the costs of complying with regulations. Thus devaluation of the life of an older person allows the government to apply weaker rules at lower cost to industry. An apologist for this callous approach rationalized it on grounds of “limited resources.” “If you are extending a life by a year or six months, that’s less important than extending a life by 30 or 40 years,” said Cass Sunstein, a law professor at the University of Chicago.

Environmentalists and liberal politicians object, as might be expected. One, quoted by Borenstein, characterizes the approach as “a pretext to cut the value of health and safety standards in order to protect industries.” Another calls it “faulty science based on bad facts.” But they do not object to the underlying assumptions behind cost-benefit analysis, which balances arbitrarily determined values of human life against perceived costs to industry.

The entire idea behind cost-benefit analysis is backwards if we analyze it from a working-class perspective. Capitalists benefit by cutting costs on workplace safety by not protecting workers from hazardous equipment or materials. Likewise they profit by uncontrolled use of the air and water in our environment as a sewer for disposal of industrial and chemical waste. The cost is to the health and lives of workers and their families.

The injustice is that capitalists, apart from exploiting the labor of workers, can use their power in the political system to assign a value to workers’ lives. By setting the value of the lives of workers over 70 at 63 percent of that of younger workers they are adding insult and injury to the years of exploitation they have suffered in their productive years.

**Capitalism’s Version of ‘Socialized Medicine’**

By Donna Bills

“It was capitalism’s version of socialized medicine,” said retired Bethlehem Steel vice president. “And it was an implied contract. It was the company and the workers saying, ‘We are going to take care of each other.’ ‘It was capitalism’s version of socialized medicine,’ said James Van Vliet, a retired Bethlehem Steel vice president. ‘And it was an implied contract.’”

The Associated Press (AP) quoted Van Vliet in an article circulated on Feb. 10. The “implied contract” that the former steel executive referred to was one in which steelworkers, after decades of arduous and life-endangering work, expected what they thought were secure pensions and virtually cost-free health care for themselves and their families.

Bethlehem Steel benefited hugely from that arrangement for years until the uncertainties of the marketplace caused it to lose out to competitors. It has declared bankruptcy and is seeking to sell what remains to International Steel Group. Until recently, those Bethlehem Steel workers lucky enough to have survived years of work in the steel mills and make it to retirement felt secure with their retirement dole and Bethlehem’s “socialized medicine,” as secure as the emphysema and cancer that years of exposure to poisonous materials Bethlehem also gave them would allow.

“We, the old-timers, were part of the industrial revolution,” said an 81-year-old quoted by AP. “And now we are part of the medical revolution. We have the emphysemas, we have the cancers. We have everything.”

“Everything,” that is, except the retirement benefits that were their “reward.” For now it appears that the “implied contract” is unraveling, and what little pension and health benefits the steelworkers got is slated to be drastically reduced.

In December “Bethlehem Steel’s pension fund was underfunded by $3.2 billion and would be turned over to a government agency,” the AP reported. Now the company wants “approval to terminate health and retirement benefits for 95,000 retired workers and their dependents March 31” as an inducement for International Steel Group to buy up remaining assets.

Yes, efforts are afoot to preserve something for Bethlehem’s aged workers. What crumbs may be rescued will likely be woefully inadequate to their needs and an insult and affront to them.

There was no report of how Bethlehem Steel’s board members, executives, lawyers and the like are faring since the company collapsed. But, then, the news was about those who lose and not those who don’t.

Van Vliet hit the nail on the head—Bethlehem Steel was “capitalism’s version of socialized medicine.” America’s workers can’t act soon enough to end a system responsible for such cruelty.

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**Abolition of Poverty**

By Daniel De Leon

An examination of capitalism and its philosophical “justifications” as presented by a Jesuit priest. Contrasts socialist materialist concept of history with class society’s “idealism.”

76 pp.—$1.55 postpaid

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
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Two Tragedies

The news coverage given to two recent tragedies offers a study in contrasts that imparts a lesson on capitalist ethical standards. Both calamities—the disintegration of the Columbia space shuttle and a factory explosion in North Carolina—involved horrible multiple deaths. Yet the media gave short shrift to the factory disaster and the lives it snuffed out while it is still busy romanticizing the lives of the Columbia astronauts.

The Jan. 29 explosion at the West Pharmaceutical Services plant in Kinston, N.C.—a factory that only months earlier was fined a measly $10,000 by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for safety violations—killed three workers instantly and injured at least 37. One more worker later died of injuries sustained in the blast or the inferno that followed, and at press time nine remained hospitalized in critical condition, hanging onto life. The blast made the national media for a day or two, but was generally relegated to the back pages or a few short news bites.

Such treatment is quite natural in a system where the means of information and communication are almost exclusively privately owned and controlled and operated, not in the interests of truth and objectivity, but in the profit interests of their owners. According to official figures for 2001, the latest available, more than a hundred thousand people owned and controlled the major media of his time during the last century, “The owners of the newspapers, whether they be bankers, stockbrokers of a corporation, or individuals, feel a rather keen sense of financial responsibility, and they pass their anxiety along to newspaper operatives whether these operatives be superintendents known as managing editors, foremen, or copy editors as day laborers are, or men known as editorial writers, copydesk men, reporters, or what not. The sense of property goes thriling down the line. It produces a slant and a bias that in time becomes—unconsciously and probably in all honesty—a prejudice against any man or any thing or any cause that seriously affects the right, title, or interest of all other capital, however invested.”

That slant and bias is what determines whether stories about rising unemployment and poverty, occupational deaths and injuries—or murders and hazardous accidents and other sensationalized reports get the “top of the news.”

It is the reason why the Feb. 1 disintegration of the space shuttle Columbia, which killed all seven aboard, galvanized capitalism’s leading defenders into an all-out campaign to disprove the very notion of culpability. Rather than the usual need for the intelligence capabilities, to help stimulate the crisis-ridden U.S. economy like all other military spending, to find new sources of raw materials, to research and implement new manufacturing and communications processes for the benefit of U.S. capitalists.

The shuttle program was another aspect of the same money like all other military spending, to find new sources of raw materials, and to research and implement new manufacturing and communications processes for the benefit of U.S. capitalists.

Such a system would make possible the fullest democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the production of wealth for the satisfaction of all workers and their families. In such a society, the workplace would be a place where one could develop all individual capacities and potentials within a free community of free individuals.

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. Such a system means democracy, as a right, a birthright of all individuals. It means the working class to administer the rifle diet to the working class. Upon their own specialized interests the capitalists of any country are split up. Thence it will happen that sometimes one set and sometimes another is in power, and the set that happens to be on top politically runs things to suit its own business interests. The effect of this upon the attitude of each of these sets on the question of international peace or war is interesting to the watchful, though it upsetting the lightweights.

If, at a given time, the capitalist interests that happen to be in political power see more reason to be in war than they do at other times, they involve “patriotism” to their aid: Brutus and Patrick Henry pale before them; “the flag” becomes their symbol and the gun their weapon.

Simultaneously, however, with such outbursts of “patriotism,” one will regularly perceive a counter outburst of sanctimoniousness. The capitalist inter-

(Continued on page 7)
By Ken Boettcher

Rising homelessness is a growing concern for the U.S. working class after over two years of recession and the beginning of a new “jobless recovery.” On the minds of many is the subject of what can be done to address the problem.

Unemployment has leaped by at least 50 percent since November 2000, even by official figures, but has still at or near historic highs. *Time Magazine* recently observed that “the number of homeless appears to be at its highest in at least a decade in a wide range of places across the United States.” Statistics cited by *Time* also show that the fastest growing segment of the homeless population is composed of families.

In his State of the Union address, President George Bush claimed that a goal of his administration was “to apply the compassion of America to the deepest problems of America,” including homelessness.

Yet the administration’s plan, according to sources cited in the *Time* article, is to target only the most visible segment of the homeless—the disheveled and sometimes malodorous street dwellers found most offensive by detractors of the homeless.

Reports have it that even the funding for this approach is mostly a shell game.

The plan is, ostensibly, to find permanent housing for the “chronic homeless”—those helpless cases, usually the mentally ill, substance abusers or very sick—who will probably be homeless for life.” According to a study cited by *Time*, this segment takes up 50 percent of beds in temporary shelters each year, while making up only 10 percent of the homeless population. Getting them permanently off the street would decrease homeless traffic around temporary shelters by half and cost much less than putting this 10 percent up in temporary shelters, which can average as much as $1,800 a month per person in some cities.

The other 90 percent of the homeless—more than 35 percent of whom *Time* says are members of families—will be tossed into storms in a shelter, if it can be built fast enough.

Yet temporary shelters are not being built fast enough, and the administration’s plans reportedly may involve robbing funds from temporary shelters to benefit permanent housing for the chronic homeless—so overall funding levels aren’t actually cut.

No matter what happens, it is important for workers to understand that homelessness simply cannot “go away” under capitalism. There are economic factors that deem this impossible—factors that cannot be overcome by compassion, even if the ruling class had any, nor by throwing billions of dollars at the problem, if it was so inclined. Neither can they be overcome by working-class volunteers—who have plenty of compassion but few resources—working within the constraints of a capitalist economy.

Aid for the homeless or to agencies ostensibly acting in their interest can no more permanently halt homelessness or lift the poor out of poverty than all the other “urban renew-al” or “anti-poverty” programs that have historically served to line the pockets of business owners and landlords rather than bring jobs and prosperity to the poor.

Past failures prove the point—but historical evidence, while useful, is not essential to prove that any such program is doomed to failure. Economic facts do the job nicely.

One of the primary economic facts that all such attempts to deal with poverty fail to take into account is the commodity status of labor under capitalism and the economic contradictions set in motion by the exploitation of wage labor by the capitalist class. Necessarily so, since taking them into account would require the repudiation of the capitalist system itself by the politicians and other defenders of capitalism who come up with such programs.

Under capitalism, the labor power of workers is a commodity, purchased by capitalists according to the economic laws that dictate the purchase price of any other commodity. What determines the value of a commodity is the amount of socially necessary labor time required for its production, including the amount of labor time required for the production of the machinery, facilities and materials used in production. In the long run, the price of a commodity is equivalent to its value, but in the short run prices are modified by supply and demand.

For workers, this means that the value of their labor power is equivalent to the cost of the necessities of life—food, clothing and shelter; in amounts necessary not only to furnish reasonably healthy workers for the capitalist class but also to allow the reproduction of similarly healthy future workers—plus the costs of transportation, education enough to meet the requirements of the capitalist class, and so on. The price of labor power—wages—is modified by supply and demand and by historical standards in any given country, with wages tending to be higher in more developed countries.

If the cost of production of labor power goes down due to cheaper availability of the necessities of life, decreased educational requirements in industry, an increase in supply of labor power, a decrease in the demand for labor power or changes in historical standards, etc., the price and wages will go down. Conversely, if the cost of production of labor power goes up, wages will go up.

Aid to the poor and homeless, while more humane than letting them die from exposure to the elements, therefore cannot be a permanent solution to homelessness, or for that matter to hunger or poverty in general. It can only affect such problems temporarily.

As Friedrich Engels wrote in *The Housing Question* in 1872:

“Every reduction in the cost of production of labor power, that is to say every permanent price reduction in the worker’s necessities of life is equivalent ‘on the basis of the iron laws of political economy’ to a reduction in the value of labor power and will therefore finally result in a corresponding fall in wages.”

“...What has been said above applies to all so-called social reforms which aim at saving or cheapening the means of subsistence of the worker. Either they become general and then they are followed by a corresponding reduction of wages, or they remain quite isolated experiments, and then their very existence as isolated exceptions proves that their realization on a general scale is incompatible with the existing capitalist mode of production.”

Whether one looks at objective history or the economic laws that drive the contradiction-ridden capitalist system of production for private profit, it is crystal clear that capitalism is utterly incapable of permanently halting growing homelessness, hunger and poverty.

In the long run, it is only capable of reproducing those problems and compounding them as every improvement to the means and methods of production is passed over. Expansions of production tosses more workers out of their jobs and into poverty.

It is equally clear today, more than ever, that the means exist for abolishing poverty, hunger and homelessness forever. Vast numbers of workers are unemployed and underemployed. Nearly 25 percent of the nation’s industrial capacity, and much of its agricultural capacity, lies idle. The labor of millions of workers and much industrial capacity are wasted on producing shoddy, unnecessary or even harmful commodities. Workers have but to organize politically and economically to abolish capitalism and bring these immense resources, and the resources that are still in use, under the control of a collectively owned, democratically administered socialist society to banish these social plagues from human society.

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already expressed his contempt for the antiwar movement. “Size of protest, it's like deciding: ‘Well I'm going to decide policy based on a focus group,’” he said after the demonstrations on Feb. 15. The president also expressed his contempt for democracy. “Democracy is a beautiful thing,” he said. “People are allowed to express their opinion, and I welcome people’s right to say what they believe.” In short, the stakes of “democracy” is that it allows people to blow off steam.

Credit where credit is due. President Bush understands that opinion does not decide policy.

President Bush did not mention Saddam Hussein by name in his State of the Union address on Jan. 28. He did not mention oil. But he referred to both when he said: “Abraudictator, with a history of reckless aggression, with ties to terrorism, with great potential wealth, will not be permitted to dominate a vital region and threaten the United States.”

The “vital region” is the Middle East, of course, and underpinning that makes it vital. American capitalism’s dependence on foreign oil sources has grown steadily since the end of World War II. The United States now imports half of the oil that is consumed on American markets, and three-quarters of what it imports comes from the Middle East. The stake is that U.S. capitalism has in the flow of oil from that part of the world is an established fact that even the Bush administration would not deny. Indeed, that is why it is so ferventlyefforts to open up new areas for oil exploration in Alaska and for development of offshore oil operations.

If by imperialism one understands the forcible subjugation of another nation or nations, for whatever alleged purpose, then the United States is an imperialist nation bent on dominating markets and controlling resources for the benefit of its industries of all nations have been at the root of every major war since the American Civil War. Under the overwhelming competitive profit motive inherent in capitalism, and in the reaching out for control over sources of oil and other raw materials so vital to modern industry, clashes are inevitable.

Considering the basic cause and real factors that have produced the wars that have plagued a world dominated by capitalism, it is obviously irrational to blame international disputes and wars on this or that individual or group of individuals. Capitalism means war. Saddam Hussein and his government may be the utterly crushed by another war, but at a horrendous price in human blood and suffering. None of the basic problems that beset the Middle East and its long-suffering peoples will be solved. It will not resolve the contradictions of capitalism or make the world a safer place. For when the war ends, the identical process will start again, leading to new clashes of interest and in time to the next greater and more destructive war.

Can we do anything about that? The SLP believes we can.

We believe that the American working class must at last come to recognize that the competitive capitalist system of private ownership of the land and plants of production, means of transportation, mines, etc., is in fact the basic cause of the present state of world anarchy, and of wars, declared and undeclared. To avoid future wars, therefore, the capitalist cause must be abolished.

Society must be reorganized on socialist lines, replacing private (and state) ownership and competition with social ownership and cooperation. We must make the factories, mills, mines, railroad and all the other means of social production the collective property of society so that we can produce things to satisfy human needs instead of for the profit of the few. Only then can the competitive, war-breeding struggle for international markets, spheres of influence and sources of raw materials be ended. Only then will the nations of the world have an economic foundation for lasting cooperation, harmony and peace.

Socialism—genuine socialism—is literally the hope of humanity.
Downsizing Means Working Harder and Longer

By Carl C. Miller Jr.

Dell Computer is one of many large companies that began to “downsize” long before the current recession became official. Apart from losing thousands of workers onto the streets, the company’s move to centralize production and cut operations has also impacted its remaining workers. The company aimed to reduce its payroll, but not production levels. Indeed, it has pushed its remaining workers to labor 80 days off. Deregulated exploitation has naturally produced something else besides more computers. It has produced more stress for the remaining workers—stress from the increased demands on them, but also from the knowledge that thousands of jobless workers are waiting to take their places should they fail to live up to the company’s demands.

Dell began turning the screws on its workers more than a year ago. In May 2001, the company introduced a plan to lay off about 4,000 workers while maintaining its share of the computer market. The only way the plan could work was to increase productivity among the workers who would remain on the payroll.

Dell redesigned its computers to simplify assembly, replaced the 30-minute lunch break with another half its size, and then pared its workforce from 40,000 to 34,400 in 2001, according to The New York Times. The new plan streamlined the manufacturing process, allowing more units to be produced by fewer workers.

The plan appeared to be working. Lower labor cost enabled Dell to lower prices, thereby making its products more competitive on the computer market. But the downside for workers was that Dell only holds enough inventory for four days’ worth of sales, so increased productivitv was the only way to keep pace with demand.

The scheme succeeded as far as it affected sales and profits, but the new production method also caused for decreased productivity. As Dell’s former workers, people felt overwhemed by the increased speed of production and the longer working hours. Many began calling their sick days off to avoid being fired. A long-time Dell employee, workers felt overwhelmed by the increased speed of production and the longer working hours. Many began calling their sick days off to avoid being fired. A long-time Dell employee said: “They’re putting a lot more load on the remaining people, particularly the salaried employees. Our group is just overloaded with work. They’re asking us to put in more time on the house.”

Dell ordered more layoffs last October, therefore further increasing the workload for those who escaped the recurring layoffs. Many workers are questioning their future at the company. Dell “used to be one of the most family-oriented places to work at,” a third-time long-term employee said. “Now everybody’s kind of looking at this and saying, ‘Why are we still here?’ The answer is there’s no better place to work.”

The workers at Dell are just one example of how the evolution of the capitalist system and advances in labor-saving technology and other advances are put in place, workers are being pushed out onto the street. Capitalists must constantly strive for ever greater profits to stay competitive. The results are never favorable for workers.

Workers must realize that capitalism can never be true, a play in which the working class餐 themselves politically and economically to begin building a society which will benefit everyone. The Socialist Industrial Union program of the SLP shows the way.

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(Dec. 7—Feb. 14)

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Joan Davis $1,200; Marie & Ray Simmons $1,000; $500 each Anonymous, Harry Banks and Family, Irene Schelin, Jack Radov, Section Cleveland; Gerald M. Lucas $400; Anonymous $315, Section Wayne County, Mich., $300; $200 each Angela J. Brandeloff, Irene J. Leski (In memory of Harry Loukit), Section Cook County, Ill., $116; $100 each Anonymous, Frederick Vogel- gesang, S.J. Banilower, Walter Wojciech Glennis Schelin $80; Norman Smith $88.25; Mildred Kullman $78; Jim Pianalto $65; Donald T. Jazzie $43; $50 each Harry Gibson, Harvey K. Henry, Coretta, Jack Blossington, Jennie Seidone, Lloyd A. Whitewell, Mary Briggs (In memory of Elizabeth Schelin), R. Hofem; Daniel Brian Lazarski $40; Herbert Joyce $33; Paul D. Lawrence (In memory of Nathan Karp); $31; $30 each George Frenesy, Joseph C. Massimino, Donna C. Meyer $28.

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Total: $1,955.00

Press Security Fund

F.P. Cruikshank $1,640; Sid Fink $30; P. Chine $29; David P. Mohle $9.

Total: $1,670.00

SLP Leaflet Fund

$5 each Walter K. Ragnick, Joseph J. Frank. Total: $25.00

...De Leon

(Continued from page 4)
est that are not in political power and that can see more dollars and cents in peace, are seized with a religious and moral spasm; they will hold mass meetings and otherwise proclaim for “humanity.” Yet the farce does not end there. By a turn of the industrial wheel, the very capitalist interests that just before saw more money in peace, may find that his profits now lie on the side of war. Forthwith the two sets change sides; the former “patriots” become “saints,” the former “saints” turn “patriots.” At each turn, the lightweight makeweights fill the halls, and do the scurrying, and like the flies on the wall imagine they are doing great things, wherever the working class themselves politically and economically to begin building a society which will benefit everyone. The Socialist Industrial Union program of the SLP shows the way.

Letters to the People

Glad The People’s Back

I just received my newsletter and was so pleased to read it again. I have been a subscriber for many years. I hope all will be well and the paper can continue. It is my one way to know the truth about what is going on over the years. I am sending a donation to further the work for the party. Good Luck and thank you.

Pushed by Speedup

I was glad to see your newspaper once again in my mail. When you said that you were folding the paper several years ago I was somewhat surprised. I liked your article “Speedups Are Pushing Many Workers to the Breaking Point” that appeared in your January-January-February 2000. In fact, I personally feel the effects of this breaking point. Fifteen years ago we used to get one-hour breaks at lunch time. These days, 30-minute breaks in most workplaces are the norm rather than the exception. One of the main reasons given for adopting the half-hour lunch break was an attempt to emulate the competition of the 1980s that gave its workers only a 30-minute lunch recess. We all know the current state of the Japanese economy. At one of my job assignments last year I actually did take a one-hour lunch break. When I returned to work I felt so refreshed and eager to work again. This is in contradiction to the 30-minute break when you feel very rushed and still tried to resume work. Thus, I am not surprised that with the 30-minute break policy most workers suffer from a wide range of physical and psychological problems nowadays.

Ishaya Isieh

Liked Our Web Site

I am a junior at Bishop England High School, Charleston, S.C., and I would just like to thank the creators of this site in aiding me in an AP history class. I really appreciate the organization and the way the site was put together. The site proved very helpful in providing so much useful information pertaining to the SLP’s history all the way up until its ongoing activities that are carried out everyday. Everything I was looking for was on this Web site, and I did not waste any time on it because everything was direct and clear. I hope that the information I obtained in this Web site will help me achieve a good grade when I present my project in a few days. I know it will. Thank you again, you are very much appreciated. I admire the efforts shown by the SLP throughout the decades.

Valerie Devera

Charleston, S.C.,
By B.B.

The elections held in Israel on Jan. 28 gave the Likud Party a full articulation of its policies, not just a fig leaf. That majority, however, is reportedly too thin to give the Likud a free hand in governing the country. Accordingly, the Likud is attempting to build a partnership with some of the smaller parties represented in the Israeli legislature, primarily with sectarian religious parties more reactionary than itself.

What the Likud's electoral success did not and could not do, of course, was defuse the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The social forces militating against any resolution to that conflict were, if anything, exacerbated by the outcome.

The Likud Party and its leader, Ariel Sharon—a former general resurrected from political oblivion several years ago after a long and bloody military career—were confronted by the so-called Labor Party, or Mapai, led by Amram Mitzna, another former general with a long and bloody military career behind him and currently the mayor of Haifa. Several months ago, Mitzna was elected to lead the thoroughly discredited Mapai, which, despite its name, has always enjoyed the support of large-scale capitalist interests in the country. These particular capitalist interests have watched with dismay as the prospects for peace raised by the Oslo Accords of 1995 crumbled, and with them potential trade with the Arab countries.

Israeli textile tycoon Dov Lautman is one dis-appointed capitalist who has watched things spin out of control over the last 20 months. He encouraged and supported Mitzna's bid to lead the Mapai to victory. "The reality of our intolerable friction with the Palestinians harms basic values of ours," Lautman said, "Israel will self-destruct if it hangs on to the West Bank and Gaza Strip." (Dallas Morning News, Jan. 25)

Lautman advocates entering into immediate negotiations that would free settlements of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and if all else fails he proposes a unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and major portions of the West Bank. He also supports dismantling Israeli West Bank settlements, claims that currently favorably favors relocating their 200,000 residents. Mitzna, for his part, recognized an issue that has haunted the Jewish state from its inception—that of maintaining a Jewish majority in Israel in the midst of the Arab majority. His plan was to send the Jews "in a haven for the Jews." (The New York Times)" According to Mr. Mitzna, leaving the territories is not a concession to the Palestinians; it is Israel's most vital and urgent self-interest,“ The New York Times reported on Jan. 29. “If they do not withdraw, Jews will soon be a minority in their own country.”

A preélection Israeli incursion into Gaza fol-low ing a suicide bombing seemed calculated to convince frightened Israelis that security and ultimate peace requires harsh military action, action that the reélection of the Likud almost certainly guarantees. Ziad Abu Amr, a Pal estinian legislator, asked, "Why this massive retaliation?" He answered himself by saying it was because he would "enforce his [Sharon's] position and that of his party, and it does not involve any risk to him." (The New York Times, Jan. 27)

Sharón’s increasingly bloody confrontations, Israeli Army depredations and repeated incursions into Palestinian towns and villages—actions seemingly calculated to invite more suicide bombings and lend credence to Sharon’s bellicose stance—are buttressed by the irre dentist view of a greater Israel founded on bibles laws and bolstered by archaeological remnants from the distant past. When archaeologists dig past layers of Ottoman, Byzantine and Greco-Roman ruins, ancient Hebrew artifacts sometimes emerge. Religious sectarians often justify their territorial claims over lands long occupied by Arabs on these ancient artifacts.

Such nationalistic aspirations and ambitions on both sides of the dispute are generally accepted as being at the heart of the hostilities; but that is a mistake.

Both sides to the conflict are based on systems of class rule, and wherever class rule prevails class struggle is the inevitable result.

The class struggle manifests itself in many ways. A glance at the context between ruling and ruled classes within a nation, there are international disputes among ruling classes. These disputes ultimately explain all international conflicts, including wars.

What dominating or ruling classes need to succeed in any war is the support of the domi nated or ruled class. Ruled classes provide the fighters without which no war could be fought. Accordingly, it is often necessary to manipulate the ruled class with nationalistic and other forms of misleading propaganda to whip up the necessary fervor for the configuration.

While these factors are rarely noticed or taken into account by “mainstream” efforts to unravel the deadly knot that has entangled the Israelis and Palestinians, they do more to explain the source of the conflict than all the nationalistic propaganda and religious dogma dragged onto the scene combined. In the hands of ambitious ruling classes, love of country and love of God become tools to manipulate people into doing the dirty work of their masters. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no exception. Indeed, it is a casebook study on how ruling classes exert themselves to control how ruled classes understand the world.

Ultimately, of course, Israeli politics is gov erned by American capitalism’s imperialist pre rogatives. The United States inherited the mantle of British imperialism after World War II and the rationale that came with it. Winston Churchill articulated this in 1945 when he said that a Jewish state under the protection of the British Crown in what was then called Palestine “would from every point of view be ben efitial and would with the greatest harmony with the true interest of the British Empire.” Those "interests" include markets, strategic military advantages and easier access to the oil resources of the entire Middle East region.

“The terms of reference of Israeli politics are such that it is difficult to put up serious opposition to a prime minister who enjoys the full backing of the U.S. government,” the December 2002 issue of The Other Israel argued. “In his policy speech of June 24, [2002,] President Bush effectively endorsed the indefinite reoccupation of the West Bank cities and authorized Sharon to use his discretion in fighting terrorism, pending reforms in the Palestinian Authority, i.e., the removal of [Yasser] Arafat.”

The Bush-declared “war on terrorism” has become a prop of justifications for the Israeli incursions into Palestinian areas. However, the cycle of brutal retaliatory strikes has had the effect of inciting anti-Israeli and anti-American feelings in the surrounding Arab countries just as U.S. planning for a war on Iraq needs the support of Arab regimes. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has become a threat to imperialist interests and power in the Middle East.

This situation has periodically alarmed the Bush administration, and explains its back and forth flip-flops from faint admonitions to acquiescence in the brutal Israeli strikes into Gaza and the West Bank. Thus Secretary of State Colin Powell, in a speech in Davos, Switzerland, criticized Israel’s settlement policy declaring that the Palestinians need a “real state, not a phony state that’s dived up into a thousand different pieces,” while also calling for Arafat’s replacement as head of the Palestinian Authority.

The Likud’s electoral success in January may prove a pyrrhic victory because of the need to form a coalition with some of the sectarian reli gious parties whose backing they need if they want to succeed; it could result in the “narrow rightist government that Mr. Sharon says he wants to avoid—and which would make the Bush admin istration strain to wring concessions from Israel in seeking an end to the conflict.” (The New York Times, Jan. 29) This is likely to be a major problem, considering the probability that any Likud-led coalition will be shackled to elements more reactionary than itself.

...Justice? (Continued from page 2)

surprised him, but he was not the only one who understood the president’s meaning.

“One by one,” the president said, “the terrorist ists are learning the meaning of American jus tice.” (Appeal, p. 2)

The first came from the vice president, from the representatives, from the senators, the cabinet members, the military brass—from all the “dignitaries” who gathered to hear the president speak. They understood, and their applause made it clear that they approve of this brand of “American justice.”

No wonder millions are raising the cry “Not in our name!”

Israel-Palestinian Conflict Rages

In the Shadow of Imperialist Domination