The war on Iraq was not all about oil, it definitely was not about weapons of mass destruction. Now, however, American workers are in danger of being misled again by the Bush administration by its criticism on why the United States went to war on Iraq.

Supporters and opponents of the administration alike want workers to believe that somewhere, hidden behind the exchange of charges and countercharges about Iraq, some high-minded objective of U.S. foreign policy has been twisted, distorted and betrayed. Nothing could be further from the truth. No high-minded principle or objective was ever involved.

In October 2002, President Bush told the nation that Iraq “possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons.” He said it was seeking nuclear weapons, and that it had “given shelter and support to terrorism.” In his State of the Union address in January 2003, he said: “Iraq has 500 tons of chemical weapons, 25,000 liters of anthrax, 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin, 30,000 prohibited bombs and warheads…”

He left no room for doubt about the accuracy of these figures, and underlings of his administration claimed that the Iraqi regime had proved ties with the al Qaeda terrorist group believed to have conducted the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. “The CIA has collected solid facts about a decade of Baghdad’s efforts to acquire those weapons still—now, more than ever.”

“BUSH: So what’s the difference?”

Bush’s appearance on NBC-TV’s “Meet the Press” program in January, in which he had the following exchange with correspondent Tim Russert, was no improvement over his performance.

(Continued on page 4)

Workers’ Safety Impaired by OSHA

By B.B.

Capitalism is rife with reform illusions that obscure the predatory nature of the system and distract workers from seeking out fundamental solutions to dangerous, life-threatening and even life-ending social problems. Creating these reforms, and the illusion of progress and safety that comes with them, provides “work” for battalions of lawyers, judges, politicians and bureaucrats. The output of these producers of such social sleight of hand is numerous laws and governmental agencies, ostensibly designed to protect society from capitalist greed and anarchy, but that do just the opposite—they protect capitalism and its beneficiaries from society at large.

New York Times staff writer David Barstow reported on the performance record of one of these reforms and the reform agency created to enforce it in a three-part series of articles on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published in December. With statistics, interviews and some “investigative re-

porting,” Barstow found that OSHA has done little or nothing to protect workers from the workplace hazards that result in numerous illnesses and deaths. The agency, he said, has been a “shadow government,” where, hidden behind the exchange of charges and countercharges about Iraq, some high-minded objective of U.S. foreign policy has been twisted, distorted and betrayed. Nothing could be further from the truth. No high-minded principle or objective was ever involved.

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(Continued on page 4)
Sojourner Truth's Struggle Against Oppression

By B.G.

The age-old struggle for freedom and equality within class-divided societies obviously involves certain inherent obstacles and limits over the generations. Gender and race may struggle with success for all the freedom and equality within their class that class-divided society can allow, but equality between and among classes, between slaves and masters, is impossible. It is impossible within capitalism, for example, to cause the line that divides the working class from the capitalist class is more than an obscure or abstract thing based on mistaken ideas or prejudice. It is as concrete as the factories, the mills and the other means of wealth production and distribution that the capitalist class owns and that the working class does not. Capitalists may nurture and manipulate prejudice and ignorance for their own purposes, but that is incidental to their power.

All historic struggles for freedom and equality have been blocked and limited by similar barriers. Today it is possible to think of abolishing class divisions, but that was not the case in earlier times. It was not the case in the middle of the 19th century, when chattel slavery still held millions of African Americans in bondage. Freedom from that form of bondage became possible and inevitable only when capitalism could no longer tolerate it, but freedom from wage slavery would have to wait for a later day.

The struggles of those who fought against chattel slavery and to extend political rights to women of all races were indispensable steppingstones along the historic path toward the greater freedom that socialism will ultimately bring. With this understanding of what was and what was not possible at different historical stages we gain a true appreciation of the importance of those whose earlier struggles against oppression, bondage and inequality moved us forward to the very threshold of complete human emancipation from all forms of tyranny.

March is Women's History Month, and International Women's Day falls on March 8. By looking back over the history of the country, we can see the results of women's long struggle for political, educational and economic equality. Although there has been progress and women are farther ahead today than were their sisters two centuries ago, they still have far to go. For working-class women, the path to equality is particularly steep.

On this occasion, we can remember and honor one of the great women of the past who strug-gled under almost insurmountable odds to overcome the humiliations and physical abuse of her slave past to become one of the country's most noted spokespersons for antislavery and women's rights. She was born Isabella in 1796 in Ulster County, N.Y, where she worked as a slave field hand and house servant for Dutch-speaking farm owners. By her husband and fellow slave Thomas, she had five children, one of whom evidently died in infancy. When New York State abolished slavery in 1827 Isabella's emancipation was immediate and complete, but her children were legally required to complete a period of indentured servitude before they became free, a legal stipulation that caused her and her children much anguish.

After a number of years, she moved from Ulster County to New York City. In 1849, she felt called to a greater service, changed her name to Sojourner Truth and joined an antislavery and women's rights commune, the Northampton (Mass.) Association of Education and Industry.

In the fall of 1844, Sojourner Truth gave her first antislavery speech in Northampton. In May of 1845, she spoke at the annual meeting of William Lloyd Garrison's Anti-Slavery Society in New York City. In 1850, she was one of the speakers at a large national women's rights meeting in Worcester, Mass. It was also in 1850 that she published her autobiography, Narrative of Sojourner Truth. Although she had never learned to read or write, she dictated her life story to Olive Gilbert, an antislavery friend. With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, she began vigorously supporting the Union cause. Although she was well aware of Northern race prejudice, she experienced her first violent assault in Indiana while speaking at a pro-Union rally at the Steuben County Courthouse. A mob interrupted the meeting and Sojourner Truth was arrested and charged with violating the 1851 Indiana law that prohibited persons of African descent to enter the state. After 10 days detention, she was released. She later visited Abraham Lincoln in 1864 and thanked him for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation in 1862. In later years, in a brief visit to President Ulysses S. Grant she thanked him for signing the Civil Rights Bill.

From 1864 to 1868, Sojourner Truth worked in the refugee relief camps sponsored by the National Freedmen's Relief Association and the Freedmen's Bureau to help the refugees who had fled slavery.

After the Civil War, she continued her women's rights activities, speaking not only for voting rights and political equality but also for economic equality. As a woman who had been at the very bottom of the economic ladder and who had worked as hard as any man had, she knew the oppression and despair of economic inequality. As she once expressed it: "I have done a great deal of work; as much as a man, but did not get so much pay. I used to work in the field and bind grain, keeping up with the cradler; but men doing no more, got twice as much pay; so with the German women. They work in the field and do as much work, but do not get the pay. We do as much, we eat as much, we want as much."

In her later and infirm years, Truth lived in Battle Creek, Mich., with her daughters Diana and Elizabeth, who cared for her. She died Nov. 26, 1883. The great men of the abolition movement, Frederick Douglass and Wendell Phillips, were the first to pay her tribute. The black press presented her as a hero of her race. The women's suffrage movement and its leaders also memorialized her for her courage, her wisdom and her loyalty to the cause.

We cannot forget those who have gone before us who fought the good fight for freedom. We can marvel that one who was born into lowly circumstances—where she was oppressed, beaten, abused, deprived of liberty and denied education—could have the strength and the wisdom to become a leader of the freedom movement, Sojourner Truth did precisely that. She stood and fought with strength and eloquence along side of men and women who had far better education and opportunities than she in life. She earned their respect and support because in her humble beginnings she had the experience of oppression that they lacked. They could only talk about oppression and condemn it. She had lived through it and had overcome it.

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 slavery? Do you understand why the SLP does not advocate reforms of capitalism, and why it calls upon workers to organize Socialist Industrial Unions?

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

For information on what membership entails, and how to apply for it, write to: SLP, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Ask for the SLP Membership Packet.
What Will Globalization Mean For Silicon Valley Workers?

By Bruce Cozzini

What will globalization mean for Silicon Valley workers? That’s the question the Mercury News panel, an offshoot of the San Jose Mercury News’ Perspective section, set out to answer.

Several panelists likened the rise of China to the Industrial Revolution, but with a difference. The difference, as Brian Halla, CEO and chairman of Silicon Valley University, stated, is that globalization is a fact that cannot be automated. As the value collectively produced (new products to be put forth in the marketplace) is high, so is the wage of the workers, the value of their labor in a restricted and highly competitive labor market. It is these wages that are driving layoffs and offshoring.

So we see that engineers and other high value-added folks are just workers too. Like other workers, they are finding their jobs being offshored to India and China. They do not like it, and as two letters to the Mercury News editor a week after the panel noted, they have no voice in it.

In one of those letters, a woman who had lost her customer support job to offshoring commented on the lack of a worker’s voice on the panel and decried the patronizing suggestion by a highly paid executive that she “retrain to qualify for a more ‘sophisticated, innovative’ job.” In another, two activists from the National Writers Union questioned the Mercury News why, with all of the unions and anti-offshoring groups and tens of thousands of laid-off workers, they didn’t seek out any of them. Indeed, the principal concern of the panel, as expressed through an editorial in the Jan. 25 Mercury News, was that if displaced workers are not treated well there could be a political “backlash” against offshoring.

However, more is needed than that. As the September-October issue of The People stated, globalization is a fact that workers must face. Workers’ voices will be heard when they unite as a class and fight the capitalist system itself. Rather than fighting U.S. capitalism’s export of exploitation to Asia, end the system itself.

Editor’s note: a downloadable video of the panel discussion are available at the Mercury News’ Web site.

Biomonitoring: The First Findings

By Paul D. Lawrence

Some 200 years ago industrial and political revolutions established capitalism. Since then, the capitalist industry has been spewing poisons into the air, water and land. Now some scientists have begun measuring precisely how these toxins affect people. That is like locking the barn door after the horse has been stolen.

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When President Bush outlined his “vision” for America’s space program on June 29, 2001, he set a goal for an orbiting station that would be sent to the moon by 2020. He spoke of technological development, scientific research and the exploration of “other worlds” to evoke a sense of high purpose and adventure. In this way, the space program would take on a new importance.

President Bush also spoke of a possible human trip to Mars. He said he could envision a “mission to Mars” by the middle of the 21st century. This is a grander, more ambitious vision than that of former President Bill Clinton, who said on Jan. 20, 1997, in his first address to the nation, that “the American people want to believe that a future generation will be able to walk on Mars.”

President Bush’s goal was more ambitious. He set a clearer, more concrete goal. The race to Mars was seen as a way to advance technology and encourage innovation. It was also seen as a way to advance human understanding of the universe.

The space program is a key component of our nation’s technological and economic competitiveness. It is a key component of our national security strategy. It is a key component of our ability to explore and understand the universe. It is a key component of our ability to protect our nation and our people.

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On March 18, 1871, the workers of Paris, France, attempted, for the first time in modern history to construct a classless society. Their effort was in response to the terrible conditions imposed upon them by capitalist exploitation. It was precipitated by their masters’ attempt to take possession of the artillery that the workers themselves had purchased for their National Guard.

French capitalism had just been defeated in the Franco-Prussian War. The war was initiated by the French emperor Napoleon III in a desperate effort to save his throne through war fever. It was welcomed by Prussia’s “Iron Chancellor,” Otto von Bismarck, who saw in this victory a chauvinistic opportunity to create the German Empire. In short, the Prussian Junkers and capitalists defeated the armies of French capitalism.

The collapse of the French Empire was followed by the proclamation of a republic by the workers of Paris. But representatives of the vested class usurped power. With the approval of their Prussian peers and conquerors, the French capitalists then turned on the workers of Paris. The workers’ resistance to the capitalists’ attempt to disarm them resulted in the proclamation of the Commune.

Karl Marx called the Paris Commune “a working men’s government...the bold champion of the emancipation of labor, emphatically international.” But it survived for less than three months. On May 28, 1871, the last of the Commune’s defenders were crushed by superior numbers, following a betrayal that allowed the reaction’s troops to enter the city.

During its brief life, however, the Commune organized the workers for the management of their workshops. Crime was literally ended, for the criminals fled Paris with the capitalists, their social kinsmen. The separation of church and state was decreed. Paris ceased to be the playground of exploiters, domestic and foreign. Universal suffrage was restored. The standing army and the police were abolished. Public service was done at workers’ wages. The educational institutions were opened to the people. Science itself was freed from the fetters imposed upon it by class prejudice and governmental force. All functionaries held their positions by election, were held responsible and were subject to recall.

Karl Marx had said that “the Commune held power by terror. Actually, it formally abolished the guillotine. The terror of the Commune was the revenge the capitalists took when they reconquered the workers by military power and betrayal.

Men, women and children, as prisoners, were shot down in cold blood. A notorious militiaman arbitrarily picked prisoners from lines for execution, long after the fighting was over. More than 10,000 Communards were killed in their last resistance. By June 17, 1872, the formal “trials” of prisoners (after the main butchery was over) brought death to 270 more and other punishments (various forms of imprisonment, transportation, etc.) to more than 13,000 additional men, women and children.

The hatred shown the French workers by their French masters had no parallel in modern European history to that time. Even the German conquerors had never seen anything like it. And no wonder! National differences among capitalists do not submerge class similarities. As Emma D.Direction said, the workers are a nation apart from the capitalists.

The Socialist Labor Party honors the workers of the Paris Commune on this 133rd anniversary of their pioneering achievement. It and the SLP are better men, women and children. Its ideals and lessons are needed now more than ever before. It and the SLP are better men, women and children. Its ideals and lessons are needed now more than ever before.
Blame Capitalism

(Continued from page 1)

formance in December:

“RUSSELT: The night you took the country to war, you and your intelligence gathered by this and other governments leave no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised.”

“BUSH: Right.

“RUSSELT: That apparently is not the case.

“BUSH: Correct.”

One would think that if Bush’s seemingly clumsy attempts to defend the invasion of Iraq went to basic principles his Democratic rivals would be unrelenting in their criticism, but that has not been the case. Kerry, the presumed front-runner for the Democratic nod, U.S. Sen. John Kerry, has expressed no principled opposition to the war. Not surprisingly, Kerry’s Democratic rivals, most notably Ohio Congressman Dennis Kucinich, have criticized his stance on the war. On Feb. 8, for example, Kucinich said:

“Sen. Kerry voted for the war. Senator Kerry supports the occupation. Sen. Kerry said he was sending another 40,000 troops to Iraq. I’m wondering if the people of this country are ready to support the occupation. Sen. Kerry supports the occupation. Sen. Kerry would be unrelenting in their criticism, but that’s exactly where we’re headed right now.”

Well, not quite that, Mr. Kucinich, not quite that.

The United States is a capitalist country. It is the relentless character of which the two major capitalist political parties controls the White House or Congress.

Capitalism is a predatory social system. The capitalist class and its political parties couldn’t care less if the government of Iraq (or any other country) is democratic or antidemocratic. Its ends. It will shoot down, it will murder and it is the development and implementation of that strategy and the tactics needed to carry it out that is the source of the controversy over the Bush administration’s presumed misuses on Iraq and Saddam Hussein’s supposed cache of weapons of mass destruction.

The ruling class and the government that serves its interests has no scruples either in pursuing or defending its interests. As Daniel De Leon said:

“The capitalist class will wreck a railroad, scuttle a steamer, or fire a building to achieve its ends. It will shut down, it will murder and kill to advance the price of its commodities. It will declare war in order to dispose of its goods. Nothing, even not even what it now considers the most sacred, is allowed to stand in its way.

Whatever menaces it is ruthlessly swept aside. No compunction being shown in the matter of aggression, war, or any other matter before it.

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Expansion [imperialism], none will be or is justified by the need to implement that strategy and the tactics needed to carry it out. The useful producers will demoralize the enemy and turn the heads of the masses.”

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...Impaired by OSHA

(Continued from page 1)

parole murderers having gotten by once repeat-
offense with additional deaths, and in all but
mitigation against OSHA's pursu.

•“Since 1990, the agency has quietly down-
graded 202 fatal cases from ‘willful’ to ‘unclassified,’ a vague term favored by defense
defendants in death. It virtually forecloses

reduce to injury or death are legally

misdemeanors rather than felons, a fact
that militates against OSHA's pursu.

In this regard retired OSHA inspector Paul
Blakewell referred to the resistance exerted
upon him in pursuing violators, noting that crim-
inal charges were very time consuming while the
progress from the top OSHA bureaucracy was
highly qualitative. ‘The honest to God truth is that it’s
just going to slow you down. They want num-
bers,’ he stated, ‘lots of inspections, and it will
hurt you to do one of these.’

Indeed, John Henshaw, OSHA's administra-
tor, reminded of the pilloried Soviet burea-
crews that sought validation in counted
numbers, liked to point in increase in in-
teractions—5,000 more than in 2000, and 9,000 vio-
lations that are more serious. But few of these go
to prosecution and that’s the rub.

The case of Chicago OSHA administrator
John J. McCann was cited as symptomatic of one.
In the 1980s, Reagan-appointed bureaucrats
rebuked him in seeking criminal prosecution of
willful violators. ‘They were all thrown out,’ he
stated. ‘We wanted to make an example of those few
people who do so much harm to society for their
own personal gain,’ he observed. Instead of
being rewarded for his vigilance, he was trans-
ferred for so many times that he ended up living in
a tent to avoid moving his family.

Jeff Brooks, a 16-year OSHA inspector who,
while speaking of the job-related deaths, articulated
the real code OSHA follows: ‘It can’t just be will-
ful, it has to be obscenely willful. If they didn’t
pursue with malice seek to kill this person,
then you don’t prosecute.’ This waffling
ultimately caused OSHA to bend to capitalist pres-
sure and downgrade the term ‘willful’ to
‘unclassified.’

The reluctance of federal prosecutors to take
on carefully prepared and documented cases
only to declare them ‘misdemeanors’ has prolif-
erated and inhibited the process of judicial pros-
ecution and sends a clear message to the capi-
talist class that workers can be killed in job-
related deaths with impunity. The six-month jail
term originally levied in 1970, when OSHA was
enacted, was the maximum sentence, half the
term levied for anyone harassing a wild burn on
federal lands. OSHA is now far more protective of their own breed.

The fact is that OSHA is a vulnerable ploy
advanced by the political state to protect capi-
talist interests before challenging the work with
the notion that workplace safety is assured.
It is an agency subordinate to the Office of the
Solictor under the Department of Labor and its
horde of 500 lawyers. Its rhetoric in turn is a political appointee who is subordinate to the sec-
retary of labor, a position politically subservient to the
capitalist class.

Jeff Swanson, Thomas Williamson Jr., referred to his role as a “choke point control” to
protect the political flanks of the secretary. “You start accruing people of crimes and then they get
acquitted, you’re going to destroy the credibility of the agency.” Is this a new concept in jurispru-
dence—or capitalist justice as usual?

To measure the answer, New Jersey Sen. Jon S.
Corzine wants to raise the prison penalty for
safety violations from six months to a paltry 10
years. Even this proposal faces stiff resistance
judging from Randle K. Johnson’s reaction. This
vice president for labor’s U.S. Cham-
ber of Commerce declared, “Obviously we’re not
going to support the expansion of criminal
penalties.” Obviously, such penalties would be inimical to the profit motive that propels the
murderous engine of capitalism wherein workers’
safety is always sacrificed if it means slowing production or spending for safety meas-
ures that could reduce profits.

The ever-compliant OSHA bureaucrat
John Henshaw virtually seconded Johnson in pli-
ously declaring “that our job is not to rack up the indi-
vidual statistics that some people like to see.
Our job is to correct the workplace.” That can only mean more of the same.

Funds


Press Service Fund

Anonymous $50; Joseph U. Barlow, Glenn Schueller $76; $20 each Chris Drehoff, Doug Irving for SL of Canada, Roy B. Nelson, Section Cleveland (in memory of Conrad Gutermuth); Walter Leibfritz $183.32; Anonymous $112; K. Nelson, Section Cleveland (in memory of Conrad Gutermuth); Walter Leibfritz $183.32; Anonymous $112; K. Nelson, Section Cleveland (in memory of Conrad Gutermuth).

SLP Emergency Fund

R. Holm $80; T. Meiners $50; C. Dobreff $30; D. Irving $20; SLP of Canada $10; C. Dobreff, Doug Irving for SLP of Canada $20; R. Holm $50; K. M. $28.50; SLP of Canada $10.

SLP Convention Fund

McGregor $12.06; Marshall G. Sours $12, each $10 during the national convention.

Federal Reserve Bank of New York

$20,000.

Bank of America

$200,000.

Surplus for 2003 ............................... 194,731.41

Bank Balance (Dec. 31) .......................... 281,375.36

Income (December)* .............................. 240,252.97

Expenses (December) .............................. 13,652.00

Bank Balance (Nov. 30) .......................... $54,774.39

Surplus for 2002 ............................... 1,797,358.41

Bank Balance (Dec. 31) ......................... $2,575,376.36

*Includes Goldberg bequest ($233,793.33).
China's Dictators Embrace Private Ownership of the Means of Life

By Paul D. Lawrence

China's dictators have decided to amend China's constitution. The amendment states that "private property obtained legally shall not be violated." Not surprisingly, this prompted some in the press to take a swipe at Karl Marx. The Age of Australia, for instance, had this choice bit of information.

"China has formally acknowledged the end of its 50-year attempt to build communism by talking [sic] an amendment to the constitution to protect private property—which Karl Marx wanted abolished." (Dec. 24)

Fact is, however, that Karl Marx never called for the abolition of private property. Daniel De Leon put it this way:

"Socialism does not, as is still believed by many of its adherents, take the field against 'private property,' what it does take the field against is 'private property in the machinery necessary for production and distribution.' It takes the field against that, not as an adversary of 'private property,' but, on the contrary, as an upholder of the right to private property, which the present capitalist system, with its 'private ownership in the machinery necessary for production and distribution,' shockingly violates.

"Socialism argues that the product of human exertion belongs to those to whom exert themselves; that theirs is the right to such product or property; and that, today, owing to the 'private ownership of the machinery necessary for such production,' the capitalist, or idle class deprives the working class, i.e., robs the working class of its property.

"Socialism, accordingly, aims at overthrowing the present system of 'private property in the machinery necessary to production,' and at substituting that with common or collective ownership, for the very purpose of securing to the workers their now violated proprietary rights in the product of their labor." (March 18, 1899)

The new amendment will tinker with the machinery of that theft. It changes China's long march away from bureaucratic state despotism. For China's workers, it makes little difference. They still are wage slaves, exploited under state-owned property. They will remain wage slaves, exploited under capitalist-owned private property.

The amendment can, however, provide some valuable lessons for workers the world over, particularly in the advanced capitalist countries. The Associated Press reported: "In past the change is symbolic, bringing the constitution up to date with China's market-driven reality. It but will also likely strengthen the rule of law in a business environment where many common transactions go on without legal structure or regulation."

The Associated Press likely didn't know it, but it had confirmed one of the key concepts of the materialist conception of history. Marx wrote: "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite social relations, which are independent of their will." These are the "relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production." (Marx wrote that about 150 years ago when "men" could refer to "human beings" in general, not just males.)

Impossible terms of totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society; the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.

But the "new superior relations of production never replace older ones before the material conditions for their existence have matured within the framework of the old society." In the United States and other advanced capitalist countries, the material conditions for the next stage of social evolution are ripe, if not overripe.

De Leon observed: "The mills, mines, factories, railroads, shops—from top to bottom, all the plants of industry and of useful service are now superintended and run by proletarians, by wage slaves. The capitalist class plays no useful role in production. But it does own as private property the socially operated means of production. Vampirism, like, it exploits the useful producers. By virtue of its ownership, it steals from the working class the far greater share of the wealth created by workers' collective labor.

"Private ownership and exploitation cause the social and economic problems facing modern society. Property relations are fettering the economic relations, the productive forces. A revolution is in order.

"The working class already operates the economy. But it does so in behalf of the capitalist class, not in behalf of the useful producers. Workers operating the economy are the key to social revolution. But, as De Leon noted, "The socialist republic is no predestined inevitable development."

"The socialist republic depends," he continued, "not upon material conditions only; it depends upon these—plus clearness of vision to assist the evolutionary process. Nor was the agency of intellect needful at any previous stage of social evolution in the class struggle to the extent that it is needful at this, the culminating one of all."

"In short, the working class needs to become class-conscious. It must become aware that the capitalist class exploits it. It must realize that properly organized it has the power to replace capitalism with socialism. Then the working class must act upon its knowledge. It must organize itself as a class."

The needed organization is twofold. On the political field, the working class needs to capture the political state. It must be the government in order to destroy that oppressive apparatus which exists to support capitalist ownership of private property. On the economic field, the working class needs to take, hold and operate all the industries of the land. It will thus transform them into democratically controlled socialized property.

Safeway Strike (Continued from page 1)

noted, "it can be said that a boycott was in place before the workers were sympathetic workers didn't need 500 union leaders to suggest one."

To date Safeway has reportedly lost at least $500 million in sales as a result of the strike, but the multibillion-dollar Safeway empire is showing no signs of lowering the guns of its contractors. The tactic used by management is to use the workers' own grievances, including the loss of their health care coverage, to make the workers more amenable to accepting contract terms that are far less than what was promised from the start and can never develop a strategy or implement tactics that can protect, much less advance, workers' interests. It is only as an act of the rear guard to a retreating army. It will not threaten the existence of the capitalist enterprises that are steamrolling workers everywhere. They have nothing—no strategy or goal—to erect in their place. Moreover, union leaders in general have some very feathered nests that are dependent upon continuing the status quo. They must stop any fight before it seriously affects the profit interests of the company they "fight," or risk pushing the company into a failure that could cost dismayers their jobs and the union leaders their feathered nests.

A "union" that accepts capitalism is thus compromised from the start and can never develop a strategy or implement tactics that can protect, much less advance, workers' interests. It is the rear guard to a retreating army.

If workers wish to be free of the vicious circle of battling to improve or defend their economic conditions one day only to find them growing worse the next, the tactic that their unions must adopt is that of the "general lockout" of the capitalist class, not the strike or the boycott. The tactic of organizing and uniting the entire working class along industrial lines—for the taking, holding and operating of the means of production in the interests of the whole working class—is the tactic workers need on the economic field today. Along with the tactic of uniting workers as a class politically to capture and dismantle the political state, that tactic embraces the goal of abolishing capitalism—not bargaining with its ruling class for a little less misery—and erecting an economic democracy in its place.

Of course, grocery and other workers through-out the capitalist world have little choice but to contribute to wage slavery, to wage sterile, which is the way they build the Socialist Industrial Unions and revolutionary political organizations they need to conduct that general lockout of the capitalist class and establish the economic democracy in its place. But as workers wage strikes, they and the unions are part of should seek to carry on the struggle on the wider front. The advantage of every opportunity to educate the working class on the need to build its own democratic economic and political organizations with the goal of a socialist reconstruction of society.