Nursing Home Conditions Still Producing Scandals

By Ken Bottencher

F oder those that capitalism has failed to rob of human sentiment, the scandals produced by its health care for profit system are as unending as the mountains of profit it produces for its capitalist owners. Nowhere is this more painfully clear than in that branch of health care for profit known as the "nursing home industry." Elderly workers deserve to be cared for with the respect, human concern and services they need after a lifetime of hard work; likewise for the sick and unfortunate. Too many instead spend months or years subject to abuse, neglect and disrespect in nursing homes for profit that even the capitalist press sometimes call "hell holes.

The situation is getting much worse very rapidly—just as tens of millions of so-called baby boomers enter their declining years.

One of the latest reports attesting to this appeared in the Sept. 23 issue of The New York Times. In an article on U.S. nursing homes entitled "At Many Homes, More Profit And Less Nursing," the Times details conditions in homes taken over by big capital. It examined records for "more than 1,200 nursing homes purchased by large private investment groups since 2000 and more than 14,000 other homes." Data compared included "complaints received by regulators, fines levied by state and federal authorities," and other factors reported in national databases on the industry.

Among the findings:

• "The typical nursing home acquired by a large investment company...scored worse than national rates in 12 of 14 indicators [used] to track ailments of long-term residents. Those ailments include bedsores and easily preventable infections, as well as the need to be restrained." Before their acquisition "many of those homes scored at or above national averages in similar factors."

• "Homes owned by large private investment firms provided one clinical registered nurse for every 20 residents, 35 percent below the national average."

• "Staffing cuts are cited in "some cases where residents died from accidental suffocations, infections or those that capitalism has failed to rob of human sentiment, the scandals produced by its health care for profit system are as unending as the mountains of profit it produces for its capitalist owners. Nowhere is this more painfully clear than in that branch of health care for profit known as the "nursing home industry." Elderly workers deserve to be cared for with the respect, human concern and services they need after a lifetime of hard work; likewise for the sick and unfortunate. Too many instead spend months or years subject to abuse, neglect and disrespect in nursing homes for profit that even the capitalist press sometimes call "hell holes."

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Looming Coastal Crises

By B.B.

It is now a veritable certainty that sea levels are rising at an alarming rate and that nature has less to do with it than capitalism. Capitalism rarely rates a mention when scientists and the "public" media speak up or report on such "manmade" contributions to global warming as the greenhouse gas emissions so much talked about. Greenhouse gases in the quantities needed to envelope the globe and the emissions from factories, airplanes, automobiles and other sources that account for them, are not nature's work—and they are not on this globe just because human beings happened to live on its surface. It is the way human beings live, their social arrangements and institutions that warrant the attention of those concerned enough to want to stop further damage from being done and put Mother Earth on the mend. Movies, Nobel Prizes and smiling former vice presidents aside, when we encounter the enemies of the Earth we find they are not us, after all, but only some of us and the rotten system they cling to as maggots cling to gore. We drive too much and work too much we are told, as if we—the working class—had much to say about how capitalists and their politicians go about conducting business. In a report from the Associated Press, as published in The Dallas Morning News, Seth Borenstein reported huge areas of North America are going to be lost in a matter of 50 to 150 years by a rise of more than three feet in surrounding ocean areas. Worse, some scientists believe it is too late to reverse the crisis, which is melting ice sheets, glaciers and the polar caps. Ironically, the Bush family "digs" in Kennebunkport, Maine, John Edwards' spread in the Outer Banks of North Carolina and numerous other seaside retreats of the filthy rich will be inundated and "old money Wall Street as well as the new money Silicon Valley" will not be spared. Manhattan subways may require gondolas unless they are entirely submerged. Indeed, "This past summer's flood and subway...could become far more regular, even an everyday occurrence with the projected sea rise."

In a program aired on national television the week of Sept. 24, Washington, D.C., was depicted as awash in tidal surges, as well as eastern and western coastal areas. "The EPA, which studied only the Eastern and Gulf coasts,...projects a land loss of 22,000 square miles" (25,000 by other estimates) in the states of Alaska and Hawaii. "Inland areas like Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia have sivers of at-risk land. The..."
Misled Teachers Misleading Students

By Michael James

A magazine for teachers entitled Teaching Tolerance carried an article in its fall issue calling for teachers to help students think more deeply and critically about the social problem of poverty. Some alarming statistics are cited. “Hunger exists in close proximity to the hungry every night,” and “In the past eight years, poverty has risen 17 percent.” The article encourages teachers to help students go beyond the traditional canned food drives or winter coat drives conducted by many public schools by introducing students to “the root causes of poverty.” What are the root causes of poverty, according to this magazine on pedagogy? It argues that poverty is caused by “low wages, lack of affordable housing and the ongoing reduction of social services.” This is a perfect example of bourgeois miseducation. The article encourages teachers to help students think more deeply and critically about the social problem of poverty. The so-called “roots” of poverty listed in Teaching Tolerance, “low wages, lack of affordable housing and the ongoing reduction of social services,” are simply calculated and deliberate capitalist strategies for maximizing profit. Teachers confuse students by presenting these capitalist policies as merely aberrations or inevitable and tolerable peculiarities or shortcomings of our desirable native country. They leave students with no hope and no class consciousness, teachers can never help students grasp the root cause of poverty. Few teachers, because of their own miseducation, are willing or able to help students to understand much less oppose capitalism. Again, Paulo Freire: “It would be extremely naive to expect the dominant classes to develop a type of education that would enable subordinate classes to perceive social injustices critically.” Many teachers oppose and dismiss the possibility of true social change because they assume the legitimacy, superiority and natural existence of capitalism, or because they have no faith in the working class. Even those having a “liberal” or “progressive” bent of mind serve capitalism well because they fail to identify it as the root problem of humankind and fail to identify socialism as the necessary alternative. They leave students with no hope and no solution to the profound social ills, which threaten civilization itself. The People and other 3L literature are the urgent educational remedy needed to save the working class, young and old, from capitalist miseducation.

Nursing Homes

(Continued from page 1)

Nursing homes are a huge growth industry. According to the Times article, nursing homes received more than $80 billion in 2006 from programs like Medicare and Medicaid. Fillmore Capital Partners paid $1.8 billion last year to buy up 15 percent of the nation’s nursing homes. As Ronald E. Silva, president and chief executive of Fillmore put it in the Times article, “There’s essentially unlimited consumer demand as baby boomers age.” I’ve never seen a sure bet,” said Silva. Big capital brings its legal resources along with it when it buys up nursing homes. Its army of lawyers came up with a way to break through the legal barriers to the ownership of nursing homes by large investment companies that the national average, according to analysis of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services records.

There is no question that big capital is accelerating the grim contradictions of health care for profit in the nation’s nursing homes. It can only be resolved through socialist revolution.

A prominent historian in Lies My Teacher Told Me finds that teachers shrink from addressing the class struggle because “formal education professes neutrality and objectivity, but bourgeois assumptions and values—saturated textbooks, curricula and teachers themselves, Brazilian teacher and writer Paulo Freire, in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, confirmed that there is no such thing as educational neutrality. Education must either 1) reproduce or 2) resist the dominant ideology. The educational system reproduces and perpetuates our dominant ideology of capitalism by ignoring the fact that socialism is the only genuine alternative to capitalism and the only ideological and political force that can save humankind from war, poverty and ecological disaster.” Marx wrote that to be radical is to grasp things by the root. Without Marx and consciousness, teachers can never help students grasp the root cause of poverty. Few teachers, because of their own miseducation, are willing or able to help students to understand much less oppose capitalism. Again, Freire: “It would be extremely naive to expect the dominant classes to develop a type of education that would enable subordinate classes to perceive social injustices critically.”

The Mercury News in 1999 demanded more regulations and more enforcement of regulations. Reformers in other states raised the same cry. Their efforts merely gave impetus to the complex ownership arrangements that big capital is using to circumvent regulation.

Clearly, the only thing that can place the care of our ailing parents and grandparents—and eventually of ourselves—on a social foundation that allows the best possible care and most humane treatment to accompany the last years of all, instead of the horrible capital now produces is to remove the profit motive from health care.

Older workers can only be cared for as they should be when all society is democratically administered by the workers themselves.

That means socialism, an economic system based on worker ownership and control of all the industries and services, and under which all productive activity is carried on for human wants and needs—rather than for the profit interests of a relatively tiny minority called the capitalist class.

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Baby Formula Companies Undermine HHS Campaign

By Donna Bills

The capitalist quest for profits is insatiable, or so the rubes, and the capitalist knows it can even encroach upon the nurturing relationships between mother and child. The Washington Post, while no anticapitalist institution, inadvertently called attention to this fact at the end of August when it reported that the baby formula industry had weakened efforts by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to promote breastfeeding.

According to The Post, HHS had planned a hard-hitting advertising campaign in 2003–2005 to educate women about health risks if they did not breastfeed their infants. The department based its ads on scientific research, including its own, which found that breastfeeding is generally associated with fewer ear and gastrointestinal infections, as well as lower rates of diabetes, leukemia, asthma, sudden infant death syndrome.

These findings could surprise only the uninformed. Indeed, the World Health Organization recommends that all infants be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life “to achieve optimal growth, development and health” and for the health of the mother. Health care professionals also recognize psychological benefits of nursing.

When the infant formula industry got wind of HHS’s educational plan, it sprang into action. The industry called on the International Forum Council, a manufacturers’ group, to intervene. The IFC put together a team to counter the HHS’s campaign, which included two former government insiders—Clayton Yeutter, who served as an agriculture secretary during the Bush administrations, and Joseph A. Levitt, a former official with the Food and Drug Administration.

The IFC team pursued its goal of undermining the HHS’s ad campaign with vigor. As Kevin Kane, the HHS’s assistant secretary at the time, said: “We took heat from the formula industry, who [sic] didn’t want to see a campaign like this.”

The result of the industry’s pressure was that the HHS campaign changed to publicize the benefits of breastfeeding rather than the risks associated with not breastfeeding and, consequently, proved ineffective. But that was not all.

While the HHS ran its watered-down ads, the formula industry stepped up its own advertising and the misinformation given to practice of hospitals sending new mothers home with free formula and other infant-care products provided by the formula companies.

In addition to demonstrating the impact of advertising and the misinformation given to mothers, the failure of the HHS’s educational effort points out the complicated relationship between overlapping and sometimes conflicting capitalist interests and the political state. That relationship can and often does thwart such well-intended efforts as the HHS’s sabotaged campaign to promote breastfeeding. In this instance, it turns out that the federal government’s nutritional program for women, infants and children also is a large recipient of infant formula.

According to a 2004 posting on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s website, “Each month, USDA’s Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which is the federal government’s nutritional program for women, infants and children, can provide up to 18 million WIC participants—over half of all infant formula sold in the United States is obtained through WIC.”

Predictably, a February 2006 report from the government’s General Accounting Office found that breastfeeding rates were significantly lower for WIC infants; 64 percent of WIC infants had ever been breastfed, compared to 78 percent of non-WIC infants.

With formula companies worried that profits would decline if more women chose to nurse and with the government relying on those companies to supply it with lower-cost formula, it is no wonder that HHS changed the tone of its educational message. Workingwomen and their infants never had a chance.

Fact is, that workingwomen and their babies have not had much of a chance in this regard for a long time. The trend away from breastfeeding and toward bottle-feeding in the United States began in the 1980s, as economic pressure forced growing numbers of working-class women to seek employment outside the home. Tragically, many workingwomen today do not realize that they have been denied the choice to breastfeed their babies. They simply are not aware how the basic human bond between mother and infant is disrupted, nor are many aware of the infant formula companies’ government lobbying efforts and pervasive advertising to influence them simply to enhance profits.

What at one time was a common and uniquely personal human experience has now become the unusual in capitalist America.

Following the third annual convention of the Industrial Workers of the World at Chicago in 1907, Daniel De Leon traveled to Germany to attend the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart. Upon his return to New York and the editorial offices of the Daily People, De Leon wrote and published a series of articles under the general heading of “Notes on the Stuttgart Congress.” The following excerpt from the fifth installment discusses the importance of a proper understanding of the informed utilization of parliamentary law as a safeguard for democracy within the socialist movement.

Political Life (Daily People Nov. 3, 1907)

The continent of Europe has been frequently charged with lack of “political life.” If pure and simple physical forces had had a delegation at Stuttgart, they might have added that European parliamentary activity, besides having proved itself barren of results for the benefit of labor, has not done to the parliamentarians themselves any good. It has not even trained them in the elements of parliamentary practice. The general charge is, the specific charge would have been, justified.

“Parliamentary practice” is not “trickery.” There are folks who have the habit of attempting to conceal their ignorance on things they ought to know with an affrontment of contempt for such knowledge. Anyone at all active in the labor movement is familiar with the species here at home.

(Continued on page 10)
The Mukasey Charade

The Senate will soon write a new chapter in its cynical charade to convince American workers that it has any real concern for their civil liberties as the ruling class pursues its failed tactics in the "war on terror." Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) said Oct. 4 that confirmation hearings for President Bush's nominee for attorney general, retired federal judge Michael Mukasey, could begin by Oct. 17.

In this charade, Senate Democrats pretend they are actually interested in assuring that Mukasey will curb the Bush administration's illegal and unbridled use of torture and spying and help establish the administration to the rule of law. Republicans pretend that the Bush administration is already within the law and that Mukasey is the man to bring respectability to the unprecedented rollback of civil liberties wrought under the guise of fighting terrorism—a rollback spearheaded by the administration, fostered by a lapdog the law and that Mukasey is the man to bring respectability to the unprecedented rollback of civil liberties wrought under the guise of fighting terrorism—a rollback spearheaded by the administration, fostered by a lapdog the law and that Mukasey is the man to bring respectability to the unprecedented rollback of civil liberties wrought under the guise of fighting terrorism—a rollback spearheaded by the administration, fostered by a lapdog the law.

But the administration declared the information off-limits under executive privilege, which was how it was heard from Bush's Democratic predecessor of the day, former President Bill Clinton, who had revived the rule of law through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization. Two weeks later, Mukasey was the judge in the case of "dirty bomb" suspect José Padilla. In that case, Mukasey authorized the aggressive use of these warrants "to throw men into prison without any showing of probable cause that they had committed any crime."

But Mukasey and the Bush administration have already backed off the stance he declared with some fanfare when Bush announced his nomination of Mukasey to succeed Gonzales. As an Associated Press story put it, "The Mukasey signal was not forthcoming. Instead came confirmation hearings until the White House furnished him with information about the administration's eavesdropping and interrogation methods.

It is clear that the Mukasey confirmation hearings will be largely a farce, while both sides feign concern for a genuine dialogue on the fundamental legal issues raised by the administration. Mukasey was the judge in the case of "dirty bomb" suspect José Padilla. In that case, Mukasey authorized the aggressive use of these warrants "to throw men into prison without any showing of probable cause that they had committed any crime."

Sensitive nuclear war. 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.
Celebrating ‘Capital,’ Marx’s Greatest Work

T he 140th anniversary of Capital, Karl Marx’s most important work, provides an occasion to celebrate and call attention to one of history’s most important breakthroughs in one of the most important fields of scientific inquiry and study, the field of political economy.

Why is political economy so important? It is important because it explains how the social system we live under operates. Every social system brings certain consequences for the division of labor, the nature of the power, or even the potential, to unleash forces capable of bringing the world to the brink of destruction. It is only necessary to mention nuclear weaponry and global warming to prove the point, though many other crimes and consequences of capitalism could easily be added to the indictment.

Nothing could be more important or decisive in determining the future of the Earth and all that clings to it than a clear and accurate understanding of how the human race arranges its affairs and interacts with its natural surroundings. Political economy alone can explain these things, and the key to understanding the political economy of capitalism is the law of value, which Karl Marx elaborated and perfected in Capital.

Unfortunately, Marx’s great accomplishment is not widely understood and appreciated by the working-class millions whose lives are directly and adversely affected by the capitalist system, or why the opponents of socialism go to such lengths to grapple with and refute it. Daniel De Leon touched on that very question in the following passage from Marxian Science for Capitalists:

“The strongest spot in the fortresses of socialism is the Marxian law of value. It is at once the keystone of socialism, and the heirloom from which the refutation of all bourgeois schemes radiates. Against that spot, the bourgeois artillery is directed most numerous, and correct is the judgment or instinct of the bourgeois in their strategy. If the Marxian law of value could only be battered down, bourgeois society is vindicated. In many instances the attack is open, in most instances it is masked behind an insidious affront of ignoring Marx... The long and short of it is this: that, directly or indirectly both instinct and reason, the forces of bourgeois attack center upon the Marxian law of value, reason and instinct, in turn, marshal the SLP to attack with the only strategy which these circumstances dictate—to mass its forces there where the attack is strongest—to silence by refuting the open batteries, to unmask the concealed ones.

The following excerpt from Frederick Engels’ introduction to a much earlier work by Marx, Wage-Labor and Capital, provides as good an introduction to the later and culminating work of Marx’s career as any ever written. Although Engels did not write it for that purpose, his introduction to that earlier work explains the fundamental principles that Marx would later explore and elaborate in Capital, and the significance of what Marx ultimately accomplished in the culminating work of his career.—Editor

[From the Introduction to Wage-Labor and Capital]

Classical political economy1 borrowed from the industrial practice the current notion of the manufactory, that he buys and pays for the labor of his employees. This conception had been quite serviceable for the business purposes of the manufacturer, his bookkeeping and price calculation. But naively carried over into political economy, it there produced truly wonderful errors and confusions.

Political economy finds it an established fact that the prices of all commodities, among them the price of the commodity which it calls “labor,” continually change that they rise and fall in consequence of the most diverse circumstances, which often have no connection whatever with the production of the commodities themselves, so that prices appear to be determined, as a rule, by pure chance. As soon, therefore, as political economy stepped forth as a science, it was one of its first tasks to search for the law that hid itself behind this chance, which apparently determined the price of commodities, and which in reality controlled this very change. Among the prices of commodities, fluctuating and oscillating now upward, now downward, the fixed central point was searched for around which these fluctuations and oscillations were taking place. In short: starting from the prices of commodities, political economy sought for the value of commodities as the regulating law, by means of which all price fluctuations could be explained, and to which they could all be reduced in the last resort.

And so classical political economy found that the value of a commodity was determined by the labor incorporated in it and requisite to its production. With this explanation it was satisfied, and to which they could all be reduced in the last resort.

But so soon as the economists applied this determination of value by the commodity “labor,” they fell from one contradiction into another. How is the value of “labor” determined? By the necessary labor embodied in it. But how much labor is embodied in the labor of a factory for a day, a week, a month, a year? The labor of a day, a week, a month, a year. If labor is the measure of all values, we can express the value of labor only in labor. But how can we express absolutely nothing about the value of an hour’s labor, if all that we know about it is that it is equal to one hour’s labor. So thereby we have not advanced one hair’s breadth nearer our goal; we are constantly turning about in a circle.

Classical economy, therefore, essayed another turn. It said: the value of a commodity is equal to its cost of production. But what is the cost of production of “labor”? In order to answer this question, the economists are forced to strain logic just a little. Instead of investigating the cost of production of labor itself, which unfortunately cannot be ascertained, they now investigate the cost of production of the laborer. And this latter is ascertained. It changes according to time and circumstances, but for a given condition of society, in a given locality, and in a given branch of production, it, too, is given, at least within quite narrow limits. We live today under the regime of capitalist production, under which a large and steadily growing class of the population can live only on wages. Political economy alone can explain this means of production—tools, machines, raw materials, and means of subsistence—in return for wages. On the basis of this mode of production, the working class is deprived of any share in the means of subsistence (or their price in money) which on the average are requisite to enable him to work, to maintain in him this capacity for work, and to enable him to pursue his interests, by reason of age, sickness, or death, with another laborer—that is to say, to propagate the working class in required numbers.

Let us assume that the money price of these means of subsistence averages three dollars a day. Our laborer gets therefore a daily wage of three dollars from his employer. For this, the capitalist lets him work, say twelve hours a day. Our capitalist, moreover, calculates somewhat in the following fashion: Let us assume that our laborer can live on three dollars a day and one laborer a value of one dollar. The consumption of coal by the steam engine, the wear and tear of this engine, amount to three dollars from his employer. For this, the capitalist calculates somewhat in the following fashion: Let us assume that our laborer can live on three dollars a day and one laborer a value of one dollar. The consumption of coal by the steam engine, the wear and tear of this engine itself, the turning lathe, and of the other tools with which our laborers work, represent for one day and one laborer a value of one dollar. The wages for one day are, according to our assumption, three dollars. This makes a total of 24 dollars for our piece of a machine. But the capitalist calculates that on an average he will receive for it a price of 27 dollars from his customers, or three dollars over and above his outlay.

(Continued on page 8)
Frederick Engels on How Not to Translate Marx

This year marks the 140th anniversary of the publication of the first German edition of Capital, Karl Marx's most important work and arguably one of the most important books of the modern era. The first English edition of this monumental contribution to the science of political economy would not appear for another 20 years.

The People

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The London correspondent of the Cologne Gazette [Kölnische Zeitung] took this literally, and faithfully reported to his reader that "a crab had got entangled in the ear of one of the rowers." If a man who has been living for years in the midst of London is capable of such a ludicrous blunder as soon as he comes across the technical terms derived from a man with a passable knowledge of mere book-German undertakes to translate the most untranslatable of German prose writers? And indeed we shall see that Mr. Broadhouse is an excellent hand at "catching crabs."

But there is something more required. Marx is one of the most vigorous and concise writers of the age. To render Marx clearly, a man must be a master, not only of German, but of English too. Mr. Broadhouse, however, though evidently a man of respectable journalistic accomplishments, commands but that limited range of English used by and for conventional literary respectability. Here he moves with ease; but this sort of English is not a language into which Das Kapital can ever be translated. Powerful German requires powerful English to render it; the best resources of the language have to be drawn upon; new-coined German terms require the coinage of corresponding new terms in English. But as soon as Mr. Broadhouse is faced by such a difficulty, not only does his reply to it not satisfy him, but also his courage. The slightest extension of his limited stock-in-trade, the slightest innovation upon the conventional English of everyday literature, frightens him, and rather than do such a heresy, he renders the difficult German word by a mere less indefinite term which does not grate upon his ear but obscures the meaning of the author; or, worse still, he translates it, as it recurs, by a whole series of different terms, forgetting that a technical term has to be rendered always by one and the same equivalent. Thus, in the very heading of the first section, he translates "Fraction of Labor" by "quantities of value," ignoring that griösse is a definite mathematical term, equivalent to magnitude, or determined quantity, while extent may mean many things besides. Thus he gives the simple innovation of "labor time" for Arbeitszeit, is too much for him; he renders it by (1) "time labor," which means, if anything, labor paid by time or labor done by a man "serving" time at hand labor; (2) "time of labor," (3) "labor-time," and (4) "period of labor," by which term (Arbeitsperioden) Marx, in the second volume, means something quite different. Now as is well known, the "category" of labor time is one of the most fundamental of the whole book, and to translate it by four different terms in less than 10 pages is more than unparlanceable.

Marx begins with the analysis of what a commodity is. The first aspect under which a commodity presents itself is that of an object of utility; as such it may be considered with regard either to its quality or its quantity. "Any such

KARL MARX
The Man

By Paul Lafargue

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thing is a whole in itself, the sum of many qualities or properties, and may therefore be useful in different ways. To discover these different ways and therefore the various uses to which a thing may be put, is the act of history. So, too, is the finding and fixing of socially recognized standards of measure for the quantity of useful things. The diversity of the modes of measuring commodities arises partly from the diversity of the nature of the objects to be measured, partly from convention."

This is rendered by Mr. Broadhouse as follows: "To discover these various ways, and consequently the multifarious modes in which an object may be of use, is a work of time. So, consequently, is the finding of the social measure for the quantity of useful things. The diversity in the bulk of commodities arises partly from the different nature, etc.

With Marx, the finding out of the various utilities of things constitutes an essential part of historic progress; with Mr. Broadhouse, it is merely a work of time. With Marx the same qualification applies to the establishment of recognized common standards of measure. With Mr. B., another "work of time" consists in the finding of the social measure for the quantity of useful things, about which sort of measure Marx certainly never troubled himself. And then he winds up by mistaking Massé (measures) for Masse (bulk), and thereby saddling Marx with one of the follies that were his. Further on, Marx says: "Use values form the material out of which wealth is made up, whatever may be the social form of that wealth" (the specific form of appropriation by which it is held and distributed). Mr. Broadhouse has: "Use values constitute the actual basis of wealth which is always their social form"—which is either a pretentious platitude or sheer nonsense.

The second aspect under which a commodity presents itself is its exchange value. That all commodities are exchangeable, in certain varying proportions, one against another, that they have exchange values, this fact implies that they contain something which is common to all of them. I pass over the slowly way in which Mr. Broadhouse here reproduces one of the most cliche analyses in Marx's book, and at once proceed to the passage where Marx says: "Something common to all commodities cannot be a geometrical, physical, chemical or other kind of property. Other and apparent properties come into consideration only as far as they make something useful, that is, insofar as they turn them into use values." And he continues: "But it is the very act of making abstraction from their use values which evidently is the characteristic point of the exchange relation of commodities. Within this relation, one use value is equivalent to another, so long as it is provided in sufficient proportion."

Now Mr. Broadhouse: "But on the other hand, it is precisely these use values in the abstract which apparently characterize commodities. It is the use value of the commodity itself, one use value is worth just as much as another if it exists in the same proportion."

Thus, leaving minor mistakes aside, Mr. Broadhouse makes Marx say: the very reverse of what he does say. With Marx, the characteristic of the exchange relation of commodities is the fact that total abstraction is made of their useful values, that they are considered as having no useful values at all. But, as the reader makes him say, that the characteristic of the exchange ratio (of which there is no question here) is precisely their use value, only taken in "the abstract!" And then, a few lines further on, he gives the sentence of Marx: "As use values, commodities can only be of different quality, as exchange values they can only be of different quantity, containing not an atom of use value" neither abstract nor concrete. We may well ask: "Under researches of Marx is that revealing the duplicit character of labor. Labor, considered as a producer of use value, is of a different character, has different qualifications from the same labor, when considered as a producer of value. The one is work, the other is productive effort, e.g., ploughing, etc.; the other is the general character of human productive activity, common to spinning, weaving, ploughing, etc., which comprises them all under the one common term of labor. The one is labor in the concrete, the other is labor in the abstract. The one is technical labor, the other is economical labor. In short—

For the English language has terms for both—

"labor" and "work". Mr. Broadhouse must say: "We saw that labor, too, as far as it is expressed in value, does no longer possess the same characteristics which belong to it in its capacity as a creator of use value." Mr. Broadhouse insists on proving that he has not understood a word of Marx's analysis, and translates the above passage as follows: "We saw the commodity as first as a compound of use value and exchange value. Then we saw that labor, so far as it is expressed in value, only possesses that character so far as it is a generator of use value."

When Marx says: White, Mr. Broadhouse sees no reason why he should not translate Black. But enough of this. Let us turn to something more amusing. Marx says: "In civil society, the futility of the idea that everybody, in his capacity as a buyer of commodities, possesses an encyclopedial knowledge of all such commodities."

"Now, although the expression, civil society, is thoroughly English, and Ferguson's History of Civil Society is more than a hundred years old, this term is too much for Mr. Broadhouse. He renders it "amongst ordinary people," and thus turns the sentence into nonsense. For it is exactly "ordinary people" who are constantly stumbling at being cheated by retailers, etc., in consequence of their ignorance of the nature and values of the commodities they have to buy."

The production (Harvesting) of a use value is rendered by "the establishing of a use value."

When Marx says: "If we succeed in transforming, with little labor, coal into diamonds, their value may fall below that of bricks," Mr. Broadhouse translates: "Mr. Broadhouse repeats the same misconception over and over again. After the sentence just quoted, Marx continues: "Now, if we leave out of consideration that is, make abstraction from the use values of the commodities, there remains to them but one property; that of being the products of labor. But even this product of labor has already undergone a change in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use value, we also make abstraction from the bodily components and forms which make it into a use value."

This is Englished by Mr. Broadhouse as follows: "If we separate use values from the actual material of the commodities, there remains (where with the use values or with the actual material?) "one property only, that of the product of labor. But the product of labor is already transmuted in our hands. If we abstract from its use value, we abstract also the stamna and form which constitute its use value."

Again, Marx: "In the exchange relation of commodities, their exchange value presented itself to us as something perfectly independent of their use values. Now, if we actually make abstraction from the use value of the products of labor, they arrive at their value, as previously determined by us."

This is made by Mr. Broadhouse to sound as follows: "In the exchange relation of commodities their exchange value appears to us as something altogether independent of their use value. If we now in effect abstract the use value from the labor products, we have their value as it is then determined."

There is no doubt of it. Mr. Broadhouse has never heard of any other acts and modes of abstraction but bodily ones, such as the abstraction of money from a till or a safe. To identify abstraction and subtraction will, however, never do for a translator of Marx."

Another specimen of the turning of German into English and Ferguson into Marx is the passage: "The producer of a commodity has therefore to do two things: to bring forth the product of his labor and to make it into a use value."

When Marx says: "The producer of a commodity has therefore to do two things: to bring forth the product of his labor and to make it into a use value." Mr. Broadhouse renders it: "But enough. I could give tenfold this number of examples."

Kapital is not a book the translation of which I conceived.

"In the exchange ratio of commodities their value is determined by the social measure of the total yield. The primitive communism is thoroughly English, and Ferguson's History of Civil Society in his hands become 'venerable communities.'"

"In the exchange value of a commodity is contained (stated, which had better be translated.) For the productive labor of a number of individuals (of which there is no question here) is precisely a certain productive activity, adapted to the peculious purpose, or a certain useful labor. Mr. Broadhouse must say: "But enough; I could give tenfold this number of instances, to show that Mr. Broadhouse is in every respect not a fit and proper man to translate Marx, and especially so because he seems perfectly ignorant of what is really conscientious scientific work."

Frederick Engels

"From the above it will be evident that Das Kapital is not a book the translation of which can be done by contract. The work of translating it is in excellent hands, but the translators cannot devote all their time to it. This is the reason of the delay. But while the precise date of publication cannot as yet be stated we may safely say that the English edition will be in the hands of the public in the course of next year."

An analysis of both capitalist miseducation and the false economics the colleges and universities develop in defense of the capitalist exploitation of workers. (96 pages)

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Cover of the first edition.
...Marx's Greatest Work

(Continued from page 5)

Whence do the three dollars pocketed by the capitalist come? According to the assertion of classical political economy, commodities are in the long run sold at their values, that is, they are exchanged through correspondence to the necessary quantities of labor contained in them. The average price of our part of a machine—27 dollars—would therefore equal its value, i.e., exactly equal to the value of labor power... Marx’s Greatest Work

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS

767 pp. (paper) — $13.95 postpaid

International Publishers edition—
KARL MARX

Capital

LONDON: April 30, 1894

FREDERICK ENGELS
THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY OF SOCIALISM

Revolutionary Program
The Socialist Labor Party has a twofold program for building a socialist society. What follows is a brief summary of its main points.

POLITICAL ACTION
To establish socialism, political unity under the banner of a mass political party of labor is needed. The role of the party is to educate workers to the need to abolish capitalism, to agitate for the formation of class-conscious industrial unions, and to express the revolutionary mandate of the working class at the ballot box. The party must also aim to capture and dismantle the political state—the present territorial form of government—and thus pave the way for a new form of government, a participatory democracy based on industry.

ECONOMIC ACTION
To establish socialism, workers must unite as a class, by organizing new unions. These democratic, rank-and-file-controlled unions, built along the lines of industry, would not only fight day-to-day battles for better wages and conditions. Based on the principle that the working class is involved in a class struggle with the employing capitalist class, a struggle that cannot be ended under the capitalist system, a Socialist Industrial Union movement would be motivated by a higher goal: replacing capitalist ownership of the industries and services with socialist ownership and democratic workers’ control.

Thus, while fighting day-to-day battles, these unions would move toward that goal, mobilizing workers’ real strength as the sole productive class in society by building the greatest possible unity and solidarity. When the majority of society is in favor of socialism, the Socialist Industrial Union would back up the decision made at the ballot box by taking, holding and operating the industries and services of the land in the social interest.

Socialist Industrial Unions would then become the governing bodies of socialist society. We would have a truly democratic government in which society’s useful producers would be in control of their own economic security and well-being.

NOT A BLUEPRINT
The chart below is not a blueprint. Rather, it is intended to illustrate graphically the principle upon which Socialist Industrial Unionism and the future socialist industrial democracy rest, using the auto industry as an example. A similar chart could be used for any socially necessary industry or service. A chart at the upper right depicts the flow of representation in socialist society.

The Socialist Industrial Union unites workers for the establishment of socialism. And it provides the governmental framework through which to organize and administer social production for the benefit of all the people. Council members at every level of government will be elected from industrial constituencies which coincide with the subdivisions of the integral industrial union of all the useful producers. This industrial self-government of the producers provides a viable means for society to operate the economy collectively and democratically, without social classes or any form of state oppression.

New Society
After the revolution, the administration of all production and distribution will be the function of the democratically elected Socialist Industrial Union government.

As industry is organized for production, so will be the administration of the new socialist society.

Socialist Industrial Unionism is the only certain safeguard against bureaucratic usurpation. In socialist society final authority will rest with the rank and file of useful producers.

The useful producers will elect administrators and representatives to all levels of government, and they will have the easily and immediately exercisable power to recall and remove any administrator or representative who, in their judgment, fails to serve their interests in office.

The Socialist Industrial Union, in firm possession of the industries and services of the land, will insure that all power remains in the only safe place for power to be—with the rank and file of society’s useful producers.

Today, in the procapitalist unions, union bureaucrats are almighty, and union members are virtual subjects. But in the Socialist Industrial Union each individual worker will have an effective voice as well as a vote in everything from the operation of the workplace to the administration of society.

This will be a social organization in which the people who do the work will have complete democratic control of their tools and products—thus production will at long last be for use and the benefit of all.
The SLP recently posted what we believe to be the first online edition of Paul Lafargue’s The Evolution of Property to its website, where it may be viewed and downloaded free of charge. Lafargue was a distinguished French Socialist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and a son-in-law of Karl Marx. The Evolution of Property is originally published as a series of articles, under the nom de plume of “Fargus,” in the Nouvelle Revue de Paris in 1890.

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Recognized immediately as a serious and informative attempt to work out the history of property along the lines of Marxist materialist conception of history, the articles attracted wide attention and were translated into several languages. The famous London book publishing firm of Swan Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd. brought out an English edition in 1890. Some time later Charles H. Kerr & Co. of Chicago printed an American edition.

The online edition now posted to the SLP’s website is directly from the original Swan Sonnenschein edition, with the difference that several passages from Marx’s Capital incorporating into the chapter on “Feudal Property” without their sources being clearly identified have been placed in bracketed quotation marks and identified by a number of bracketed footnotes.

In his classic work, Ancient Society, Lewis Henry Morgan wrote: “A critical knowledge of the evolution of the idea of property would embody, in some respects, the most remarkable portion of the mental history of mankind.” Lafargue’s study with wit and erudition, demonstrates how very true Morgan’s observation is. Moreover, in giving us an account of the evolution of property, Lafargue has also given us a broad but useful panoramic picture of the evolution of society.

Readers of The People may wish to visit the SLP’s website to read this engaging and informative work by Paul Lafargue will be well rewarded.

Log on to www.slp.org, click on “Other Marxist Literature Online” and follow the links to the works of Paul Lafargue.

...De Leon

(Continued from page 4)

black cartridges may scare only the weak and the foolish; in that sense such ammunition fried at socialism from behind the ramparts of capitalism redounds doubly to the benefit of the camp of the Socialist Labor Party, by cleansing the camp of the Readers of the regime supported by Eisenhower was ever more inivincible, because of serving as proof of the imimility of capitalism, the modern Gideon’s band grows ever more enthusiastic and aggressive.

Impegradable socialism! The law of values utters a truth that can never down. Labor and labor alone produces all wealth; the only source of value in society is the quantity of labor communicated to the commodity, and socially necessary for its reproduction. Against that square-jointed truth capitalism has fostered a generation being flirg its blank cartridges in rageful despair. And no wonder. From that truth flows the sentence of death to the capitalist system. Labor being the source of all values in society the ideo-capitalists brands as not a value-impartor, but a values-spender. Once launched, a Truth of such dimensions and signifi- canecanakes care of itself. In its own deliberate way, and in its own dark lantern, a convicted fool-falsifier.

Impegradable socialism! The fusillade against it is growing weaker: from the blank cartridges of bozos science, the fusillade has come down to the blank cartridges of the MP’s device, that, in this instant, are easily turned against that paper, and leave it in the unenviable plight of standing under the glare of its own dark lantern, a convicted fool-falsifier.

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Letters to the People

Suicidal Planet
After reading The Suicidal Planet, subtitled How to Prevent Global Climate Catastrophe, by Mayer Hillman (Thomas Dunne Books, 2007), I came across my copy of the September-October 2006 issue of The People, which contains an article titled "Texas Pushing Coal Use Despite Global Warming." The book certainly reinforces the points made in the article by providing the results of the latest scientific reports. Hillman states that, based on current use of fossil fuels and attendant carbon dioxide emissions and its buildup in the atmosphere, scientists have concluded that humanity must reduce its carbon footprint by 80 percent over the next three decades. Hillman explains that most of us would be shocked to realize the extent of reduction that we must make and the profound effect that making these reductions will have on our daily lives.

He states that "if no action is taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions...this would be disastrous for the climate, the environment, and the world's population." He also explains that the effects of "climate change...are already striking." In a chapter called "As if There's No Tomorrow," he details the increase in the U.S. car population from 40 million in 1957 to 225 million today, the increase in the human population, the greater distances we travel to work, the increase in aviation travel, and the increases in energy use both in the commercial and residential sectors.

Continuing, he shows that any hopes for a technological solution that would allow us to maintain current levels of energy usage to be no more than "wishful thinking." He states that "if no action is taken to reduce emissions...we will not be able to stop climate change either. Using automobiles as an example, he states it's not enough to get more miles per gallon; we have to drive a lot fewer miles.

Mr. Hillman's solution is to initiate a carbon credit card for everyone and on a global basis. Everyone has the same allotment, which decreases with time. If a better-behaved person wants more carbon credits, to purchase these credits, to perhaps fly to Europe for vacation, then this person will be able to purchase credits from lower income people who couldn't afford to purchase enough goods and services to buy their allotment. This system provides a way to help lower income people with an income increase.

Although he claims that we would have to develop a version of success different than the material-based one we currently accept, he doesn't explain how this would happen. Moreover, he doesn't explain how capitalism abandons profit-making and the continuing growth that it demands. He makes no notice of the continuing pressure on profits that exacerbate the growth in consumption trends he finds so ominous. The book is quite informative and, if anything, reinforces the need for a classless society and end class rule by replacing capitalism with an industrial democracy.

Jim McHugh
Quaker Hill, Conn.

Just One Regret
Although I'm not a member of the SLP, reading The People is probably the best thing that has taught me so very much. The writing is both insightful and enriching, and I'm only sorry the publication isn't more frequent.

Karl Behn
Portland, Ore.

Minneapolis Bridge Collapse
Subsequent to my last letter to you [not published], my trepidations have been vindicated. I indicated that I was in the process of gathering information for a feature on infrastructure, as evident by the Minneapolis bridge collapse; yet there is always money for the fruitless and unjust war for Iraq. It would have taken $1 billion to repair the bridge, whereas $12 billion goes to Iraq every month. Let us hope you discuss the socio-economic implications of the Minnesota bridge collapse in your coming issue.

Stephen B. Isabirye
Flagstaff, Ariz.

Reply: We addressed what we believe to be the central sociological implication in our editorial "Badge of Slavery." Any number of articles could be written on why the nation's infrastructure (bridges, roads, etc.) is going into deep decay, even when such outworn structures are known to pose a danger, while billions are spent on militarism and war. We will attempt to do more of that in future issues. In general, however, the answer is plain: Bigger profits can be had by "investing" elsewhere.

Activities
California
San Francisco: Discussion Meetings—For information call 408-280-7266 or email spsipdx@netscape.net.

Ohio
Independence: Discussion Meetings—Sections Portia n/d; Section Portia will hold a discussion meeting on Sunday, Nov. 11, from 1-3 p.m., at the Independence Public Library, 145 W. Market St., Independence, for more information call 440-237-7933.

Columbus: Discussion Meeting—Section Cleveland will conduct a discussion meeting on Sunday, Nov. 18, and on Sunday, Dec. 16, from 1-3 p.m., at the Independence Public Library, 6361 Selig Dr, off Rt. 21 and bracelet Rd., between Chestnut and Hillside, for more information call 440-237-7933.

Oregon
Portland: Discussion Meeting—Section Portland will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, Nov. 3, 10 a.m.-12 noon, at the Portland Main Library, SW Yamhill St. 10th. Topic: The Media Monopoly. For more information call 503-226-2881 or visit the section's website at http://slp.pdx.home.mindspring.com.

Funds
(Aug. 11-10. Oct.)
Press Security Fund
Chris Dobref $400; $350.100 each Earl Prochaska, Rich Farrell; Tom Tuszynowski; William Barry; $50 each Anonymous, Tracie Twedt; $40 each John S. & Rosemary Gaines, Wayne (In memory of) $40 each Cathleen Conklin, Eugene E. Riley, Tony Ruiz; Tony Marsella $32; $30 each Anonymous, Blake Bearden; $25 each Dave Cawley; Mike Miller, Robert Wurst; Steven Smadsk, each Paul Anthony McClellan; J. orile; Wendell Wattel; Phil Goodstein; Richard Shulder; $34; $30 each Donna Meyer, Lawrence Phillips, Mr. & Mrs. Paul Anthony McClellan; Richard Mack; David McClellan; Anna Reiner; $7 each Frank B. Evans; James Sweeney; Joeseph Bellon. Total: $1,569.00

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SLP Sustainer Fund
Jann Davis $800; Bernard Borntick $425; $200 each Gerald Lucas, Ruth Hall; Frank Cline $175; Robert Burns (In memory of Marie Simon) $167; Richard A. Aiken $140; Richard Cassin $120; $100 each Anonymous, Anonymous; 50; $75 each William Kelley, Ken J. ewell, Lois Reynolds, Olaf Mend, Phillip Colligan, Sidney W. Blanchard, Steve Banks (In memory of Faye & Harry Banks), Walter Vision, William Kelley; Harvey Fuller; $75; $50 each Ali Ebrahimi, Margaret Kay, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Leibfritz, Mrs. Ann Ruhl; $50 each Richard Mack; Total: $1,000.00

Duluth, Minn., gathering ($60) $20 each Karl Heik, Irene Schein; Ross & Norma Schein $11; Donald Donkel $10; Aune Gustafson; Total: $50.00


Memphis Bridge Collapse
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‘Disaster Capitalism’
And the ‘Shock Doctrine’

By B.B.

By Naomi Klein, who is widely regarded as a leading spokesperson of what has come to be called the “anti-globalization movement.” She is the author of at least two books, of numerous articles, notably “Baghdad Year Zero, Pillaging Iraq, Morning After,” in the September 2004 issue of Harper’s Magazine. It is not the currency of her articles and books on capitalist globalization that concerns us here, however, but the consistency of her argument and approach to the problem.

Klein’s new book, released in September, reportedly develops the thesis that an investment strategy known as “shock therapy” promulgated by the United States and its allies over the past decades utilizes crises that countries and regions become immersed in to deliver something analogous to the “shock and awe” therapy given the military ill will of the day. That is, the “bailing out” process is launched, often given over to the tender mercies of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and other capitalist institutions.

Shock therapy measures include privatizing state property, deregulation, gutting social spending, mass layoffs and wage cutting, all of which induce, in turn, “grinding poverty and dant misery, disaster and death for the Iraqi people,” Ms. Klein asserts that advocates of “shock therapy” require victimized countries and regions be brought to their “knees” by crises. After that, the “bailing out” process is launched, often given over to the tender mercies of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and other capitalist institutions.

One gets a glimpse of Ms. Klein’s perspective in her September 2004 article for Harper’s. Countering the argument that the Iraq imbroglio was the result of Bush not having a plan, she asserted that, contrary to the “Bush administration would have a plan for what it would do after the war; but simply, it was to lay out as much honey as possible, and sit back and wait for the flies,” a reference to the capitalists that would come buzzing into the prostrate country for plunder and profit. “A country of 25 million would not be rebuilt as it was before the war,” she observed, “It would be erased, disappeared. In its place would spring forth a gleaming showroom for laissez-faire economies, a utopia such as the world has never seen. Every policy that liberates multinational companies even though the United States didn’t own them, a minor legalistic detail ignored by precisely those who cherish private ownership above all. Nonetheless, everything from washing machine manufacturing to cement plants was to be put on the auction block, the “crowning piece” of Bremer’s efforts.”

It is now known, and only too well, how this “utopia” turned into dystopia, with death, disease, chaos, widespread torture, civil war and every evil known to humankind having descended upon this ancient land. Little if anything comes out of Iraqi factories except the infamous “improved explosive devices,” or IEDs. Electricity is virtually on permanent shutdown. Utilities, water, sewage and city services have been largely neglected and in most cases are nonexistent. Thus revealed, we perceive in sharp relief 21st-century capitalist barbarism.

This brings us to the relevance of Ms. Klein’s thesis and socialism. Consider the observation made by Marx and Engels in The Communist Manifesto that the ordinary markets under capitalist production “are too narrow” to absorb “the wealth created” through the system of private ownership of the means of production. The resulting crises of overproduction can only be overcome “On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones.”

As the exploitation of labor intensifies and increases, the mass of capital accumulated outside the system of private ownership of the means of production. The resulting crises of overproduction can only be overcome “On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones.”

The disasters that already are upon Earth, par- ticularly global warming and the melting of the polar caps and glaciers, are looked upon as “investment opportunities.” Hurrah for the long sought after northern passage! Think of the boom in shipping this disaster will bring.

In the Dutch lowlands, where most of The Netherlands is situated, enterprising manufac- turers of housing have conceived of flooding communities capable of negotiating the rise in the North Sea. “Experts,” as recently reported in The Wall Street Journal, say the Netherlands will transform its eastern coastlines would run well into the billions, while inundation of areas of Florida, California and coastal Gulf of Mexico are accepted as givens.

Klein and others think capitalist-caused “nat- ural” disasters would suffice for market growth but the military-industrial beast has an insatiable appetite for profit and blood. Hence, the never-ending “war on terror” nuse serves as a convenient justification for invasion and plunder. Every crisis from Hurricane Katrina, to the devastation resulting from the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, to earthquakes in Pakistan are all reasons for legitimate capitalist profit ven- tures and a stimulus for investment, often gar- nished with maudlin expressions of sacrifice and humanitarianism.

When those don’t suffice, the destruction rained down upon Iraq and Afghanistan by the United States and its imperialist allies are regarded as exceptionally expanded opportuni- ties for investment.

Indeed, Ms. Klein’s “disaster capitalism” has been with us since the 1850s when Marx and Engels first observed that capitalism portends disaster. The only conceivable objective must be to get rid of the system as quickly as possible and to establish the same society propagated within these pages.

J ohn with the SLP in this effort.

...Crisis

(Continued from page 1)

“New Orleans Katrina experience and the daily loss of Louisiana wetlands, which are set as a bar- rier that weakens hurricanes—are a preview of what’s to come here.”

San Francisco’s China Basin, Marina and Embarcadero will be lost. Lower Manhattan, Long Island and New Jersey coastal areas bordering the East River are a few among the many that will be lost. The Florida Keys, Miami and all the way up to Naples, Fla., will be history. The heavily urbanized Gulf areas along coastal Texas and Louisiana will be inundated, all subject to periodic tidal flooding and storm surges.

Donald B. Bogue, a University of Maryland sci- entist, reflects the myopic parameters of the scientific perspective on the subject, said, “We’re going into this big national debate about what we protect and at what cost.”

Anonymous experts are quoted as saying “that protecting America’s coastlines would run well into the billions, and not all spots could be saved.” There is utterly no consideration given to ridding the country of the capitalist system that is causing this escalating man-made disaster. That is what the scientific community is willi- nelly bent on protecting.

Indeed, as the article on “disaster capitalism” in another column of this issue of The People reveals, all of this represents profitable market expansion for reconstruction to “shock doctrine” ideologues and ardent adherents of “the best of all possible systems.”