Globalize, Or Die!

Does the rush toward globalization confirm that capitalism “must nestle everywhere,” as Marx and Engels declared in the Communist Manifesto?

Is the rush to globalize a compulsion inherent in the system, or does it simply mean that capitalists are greedy and that their search for the cheapest labor and highest profits is the driving force behind it?

Does it mean that capitalism must “globalize” or die, and can we remain viable without expanding into every nook and cranny of the globe?

These questions cannot be answered in an offhand way. Complete answers require a careful examination of how capitalism works, of the economic laws that govern it, and what effect those laws have on its operations.

Regardless of the answer, no worker can doubt that globalization is a fact, a galling fact, that is closely connected to the disappearance of millions of jobs, bloated labor markets, increased competition for work, higher productivity demands, falling wages and declining living standards.

Regardless of the answer, workers know that globalization is here to stay, and its effects also are here to stay. Globalization inevitably means even more lost jobs, even sharper competition among workers, even higher productivity demands and a downward spiral in living standards.

Yet the future depends on workers getting the right answer to these questions, and to the logical question that follows: “What can workers do about it?” Seeing to it that they get the right answers is your job, and ours.

Our job is to explain how capitalism works, why it inevitably works against the interests and well-being of workers everywhere, and what the American working class can do about it. Your job is to ensure that we can do our job, by providing the financial support needed to publish and distribute The People. And this is no time for either of us to fall down on the job. Do your part by using the coupon on page 7, and we will continue doing ours.

KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

Bracing for a Global Shift in Service Work

When automation began to revolutionize production lines in the 1950s and 1960s, apologists for capitalism were constantly reassuring workers that improved methods would eventually lead to easier working lives and more leisure time in which to enjoy an unprec- edented abundance.

That, of course, is not how things worked out. Over the next few decades, leisure time and real wages fell significantly for most workers. The equivalent of an extra month of work was added between 1972 and 1996, while real wages dropped by 20 percent over the same period.

By 1996, Jeremy Rifkin of the Washington, D.C.-based Foundation on Economic Trends estimated an even grimmer future for manufacturing in an article for The Nation. “Within 10 years,” Rifkin believed, “less than 12 percent of the U.S. workforce will be on the factory floor... Over the next quarter century we will see the virtual elimination of the blue-collar, mass assembly-line worker from the production process” thanks to automation and globalization working together.

Rifkin and other so-called “futurists” held out hope that “knowledge workers”—those in charge of running all the technology required to coordinate automation, globalization and “outsourcing” of production or administrative functions formerly handled by corporate staff—would still have jobs and even wield some power in the capitalist economy of the future.

Now, however, there is plenty to indicate that even those involved in computer technology and services, as well as other information technologies, cannot escape the joblessness capitalism creates: • An article in the July 2 issue of Salon online magazine observed that, based on present trends, “John C. McCarthy, an analyst with Forrester Research, predicts that in the next 15 years, 3.3 million U.S. service jobs, from accounting to software development, totaling $110 billion in wages, will move offshore to countries such as India, Russia and China.” • The same article noted that “A new study from A.T. Kearney, a management consulting company owned by Electronic Data Systems, predicts that in the next five years U.S. banks, brokerages and other financial service companies will relocate more than 500,000 jobs offshore—fully 8 percent of their workforce. According to A.T. Kearney’s research, the jobs that will move away include ‘high-end internal functions’ such as financial analysis, research, regulatory reporting, accounting and graphic design.” • A May article in eWeek online magazine noted that “Many observers expected world

(Capitalism Is Organized Crime)

This writer sometimes wears a button that states, “Capitalism is organized crime.” These days it is difficult to distinguish a newspaper’s business pages from the police blotter.

Although, as will be shown, the current round of corporate scandals is something of a red herring, it is worth noting that the following, not all breaking news to be sure, were among the crime reports on the business pages on two successive days:

• Sam Waksal, former CEO of ImClone Systems Inc., began serving a federal prison sentence for seven years for securities fraud and perjury.

• A subsidiary of Abbott Laboratories pleaded guilty to obstructing a federal investigation of Medicare and Medicaid overcharges and agreed to pay $1.64 trillion in fines.

• Freddie Mac admitted underreporting profits by $1.5 billion to $4.5 billion over the past three years. The new CEO told a House of Representatives subcommittee that the resi-

dential mortgage provider knew “how to fix these shortcomings” and would presumably sin no more.

By Paul D. Lawrence

(Capitalism Is Organized Crime)

(Continued on page 5)
Goodyear-USWA Negotiations

Contract negotiations between Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) were under way as The People went to press. The outcome of the talks will affect some 19,000 workers in 14 states. Goodyear claims it has lost $1.3 billion over the last two years. In truth, however, the company has already lost at least $1.5 billion in costs to offset the losses it claims to have sustained in another way. It is “demanding hundreds of millions of dollars in wage and benefit concessions, with foreign plants,” the Associated Press reported. Goodyear plants and make other cuts “to trim as much as $5 billion in costs by 2005...so it can compete with foreign plants,” the Associated Press reported. The company also wants to help itself in another way. It is “demanding hundreds of millions of dollars in wage and benefit concessions” to offset the losses it claims to have sustained, the Akron Beacon-Journal reported.

Goodyear’s USWA members have been working under the union’s old expired contract since April. Negotiations that broke off in June resumed in August. The union wants pension and health benefit protections for active workers and retirees, and it “wants job security for workers at all 14 plants.” What it has to offer to persuade Goodyear to keep the lights on at its wing is not clear. Production plans remain to be seen. Its options are limited, and that suggests that concessions are in the offing.

The USWA has represented Goodyear’s workers since it absorbed what remained of the former United Rubber Workers in 1996.

U.S. Auto Plant Shutdowns Loom

Contract talks between the Big Three U.S. auto companies and the United Auto workers are under way. The present four-year master contract expires on Sept. 14, and the UAW is expected to announce its target company by Labor Day for the “pattern bargaining” that has become standard practice in the industry. USWA contracts with the major auto-producing firms cover wages and working conditions for more than 300,000 current industry workers and pensions and health benefits for 475,000 retirees and their spouses.

Early indications are that all three companies are coming into the talks with big problems and bigger plans. Ford reportedly plans to cut as many as 21,000 workers and to permanently close two assembly plants, one at Edison, N.J., and the other at St. Louis, Mo.

For as General Motors, one report noted in early August, “speculation has mounted that GM will announce the sale of a component operation in Huntsville, Ala.” It hasn’t announced that it wants cuts or concessions, but the billion-dollar loss it reported in the second quarter of this year makes it clear that they are on the table. And a Chrysler spokesman has announced that “The company and the union have to find a way so I say what I have to say—in case it helps. Thank you for providing a place for alternative viewpoints. The only way to preserve democracy is to practice it.

Jill Campbell
Forestville (Calif.) Gazette, April 18-May 16

Better System

Norman M. Parsons (“More socialism,” letter May 7) is misinformed about socialism. As a member of the Socialist Labor Party, I’d like to set the record straight.

Socialism has nothing to do with universal health insurance. That can be effected—and has been in many countries—without changing the basic capitalist relations of production. These include private ownership and control of the means of producing goods and services and production for sale with a view toward profit through the exploitation of wage labor.

The government, or political state, exists to uphold these capitalist relations of production. A few reforms, such as universal health care, could serve to maintain capitalism by alleviating certain problems the private owners of industry cannot address individually.

In contrast, socialism is the collective ownership of the factories, mines, transportation systems, land and all other instruments of social production. Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and services through a democratic government based on the useful producers’ nationwide economic organizations.

Such a system would make possible the fullest (Continued on page 7)

Do You Belong?

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

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

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

Peace Is Attainable?

Dear Editor,

At the end of [your] Forum column, “Peace is Attainable?” (March 4), you ask, “Got a better plan?” I empathize with your passion and concern and I offer the following perspective.

Capitalism is a primitive method of economic exchange. It began to replace feudalism several centuries ago and now dominates the world. Having reached its peak a few decades ago, it has become outmoded, regressive and very dangerous.

The main components of capitalism are the profit motive, competition, acquisition and exploitation backed up by ever increasing massive physical defense forces. Such a system needs to expand and protect its markets and resources, and it needs cheap labor to reap big profits. Can we not see then, that the dynamic of such a system is conflict and the end result is ultimately war? Where else could it lead?

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

If the world is able to survive the devastating effects of capitalism’s appetites, the next progressive and truly civilized stage of human development must be genuine egalitarian, worker-controlled, scientific socialism (industrial democracy). Such a form of economic and social exchange has never existed anywhere before in the world. It will be up to the world’s working people to bring about such a structure.

Amen, for example, who are truly interested in peace and “liberty and justice for all,” need to educate themselves toward building an economic system based on cooperation and democratically administered social ownership of the means of production and services. The status of the world (diminishing natural resources, killer pollution, massive arsenals, ruthless rivalry and desperation of all magnitudes) demands that people wake up to this task very soon. Capitalism is on a collision course and we are all riding it to its death and ours—either by catastrophic social and environmental collapse or nuclear annihilation, whichever comes first.

Who knows how much time we have to stop this madness, but at this writing, the sun is still shining, dogs are barking, birds are singing and...
The AFL-CIO is in big trouble. That might not be news to most readers of The People, but the federation's troubles are starting to go beyond closing factories, losing certification elections and a rapidly declining membership. The federation's setbacks are starting to attract some competition. The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), for example, has been a shockingly effective at the International Association of Machinists (IAM) for more than 40 years. Recently, however, the IAM was obliged to sit up and take notice.

The latest wrangle came to a head earlier this year when 63 percent of mechanics at United Airlines signed election cards calling for a vote on decertifying the IAM and replacing it with the AMFA. The IAM precipitated the trouble when it ceded $1 billion in concessions to help United avert bankruptcy. Another factor was “the secrecy that has surrounded their current union's relationship with the airline, where it holds a seat on the board,” according to AMFA national director O.V. Delle-Femine. (The New York Times, June 12)

The result was that the AMFA more than doubled its reelection membership of 11,000 and the IAM lost nearly 2 percent of its total membership.

Turf fights are nothing new with procapitalist unions. They have plagued the AFL from its inception in the 1880s, and they have continued since the old federation merged with the CIO in 1985. As recently as 1999, the AFL-CIO felt compelled to adopt a resolution condemning “renegade labor organizations, which seek to grow their own membership by raiding the membership of other labor organizations, cause substantial damage to all unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO and act to destroy the area standards and benefits for workers that members of the AFL-CIO have striven for decades to achieve.”

All that is problematic when it comes to the AMFA, however, because it doesn’t belong any longer to the AMFA-CIO and couldn’t care less about its hands-off resolutions. The AMFA previously dislodged the IAM at Alaska Airlines, Northwest Airlines and Southwest Airlines. Before the voting at United, the IAM tried to head off the change. It pointed out that the AMFA had failed to stop Northwest Airlines from outsourcing to outside contractors for maintenance or from laying off large numbers of mechanics. Teamster Aircraft Mechanics, an online publication, reported that the “AMFA gave management a green light to subcontract up to 88 percent of the Northwest mechanic work hours to repair stations, including nonunion and foreign stations.” IAM officials even dug up the old saw about “union busters” during the fight, but without effect.

Some United mechanics may have been confused by the storm of charges exchanged by the rival unions before the vote. Although 63 percent of mechanics called for the election, and the AMFA “received 5,234 of the 8,239 votes cast in the election itself went to the AMFA, less than 63 percent of all eligible mechanics bothered to vote for one union or the other. According to a press release that the AMFA issued on July 14, it “received 5,234 of the 8,239 votes cast by the 13,144 employees eligible to vote…. In short, a majority of 7,910 either voted to keep the IAM or failed to vote at all.”

Nonetheless, the AMFA’s win has inspired it to go after US Airways’ mechanics, and is now gathering signatures. USAir recently emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy shielding. The AMFA is also pursuing mechanics at American Airlines, who were reluctant participants in a $1.8 billion union giveback on wages and benefits in an effort to keep that airline from a crash landing in bankruptcy court.

Before the election at United, Robert Roach, the IAM’s vice president for transportation, denounced the AMFA’s dues-raiding expedition and Mr. Delle-Femine for endangering United. “There’s no time for grandstanding in bankruptcy,” he said. Delle-Femine wasn’t impressed. “Everything’s competitive,” he told The New York Times. “That’s what makes this country great.” Business is business, in other words, and that is precisely what pro-capitalist business unionism is all about.

I was wondering if the SLP supports any of the theories for socialism from Plato’s Republic. I understand that Utopia portrays more of a pure communist society, but the question for me still remains. I was also wondering if any of your theories for communism come from Plato’s Republic. I only ask because I am trying to trace the true source of the theories for communism and socialism. My last question: What happens to the Bill of Rights if our socialist revolution succeeds? Thank you for your time.

---Joe Stott
Night225389

Reply—Modern socialism owes very little to people like Thomas More, and even less to the ancients, such as Plato. Modern socialism is a response to capitalism and the social conditions that the industrial revolution created. It is not a scheme or a plan that philosophers thought up. It not comparable to More’s Utopia or Plato’s Republic, but a science that has analyzed the economic laws that explain how capitalism works and why its contradictions must cause it to collapse.

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---Joe Stott
Night225389
The 'Dual Union' Ruse

The International Association of Machinists raised the cry of "dual unionism" during its recent battle with the American Machinists Union. Asking workers to choose between the American Machinists Union and the Airline Pilots Association, the AMFA is no price, but the "dual union" ruse is only meant to distract and disarm workers who are discontent with labor fakers.

[Continued on page 7]

What is Anarchism?

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

Under socialism, all authority will originate from the workers, integrally united in a single Industrial Union. In each workplace, from the local to national level, every committee or representatives are needed to facilitate production. Within each shop or office division of a plant, the rank and file will participate directly in formulating and implementing all plans necessary for efficient operations.

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

Such a system would make possible the full democratic and freedom. It would be a society based on primary freedom and responsibility.

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

Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a state bureaucracy as in the former Soviet Union or China, with the working class oppressed by a new bureaucratic class. It does not mean a closed party-run system in which the leadership is beyond the reach of criticism. Socialism means a free and self-governing system of councils or worker-run "economic councils," or state capitalism of any kind. It means a complete end to all capitalist social relations.

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

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

By Paul D. Lawrence

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the arbiter of economic cycles, has declared that the current “recession” ended in November 2001. Cicero, the 1st century B.C.E. Roman politician, declared, “Nothing so absurd can be said that it has not been said by some philoso-

pher.” Today he might have substituted “econo-

mist” for “philosopher,” for unemployment has con-

tinued to rise since the “recession” suppos-

edly ended.

For workers, unemployment means misery. Most workers are but a paycheck or two away from

hardship, if not destitution, whereas capi-

talist economists are paid outrageous salaries for their absurd auguries.

• About 40 percent of workers who collected unemployment insurance payments last year were still unemployed when their checks ran out.

• Many unemployed young adults are return-

ing to live with their parents because their unemployment payments can’t fill their needs or have run out. Perhaps this is what capitalist ideologues mean by promoting family values.

• Two-income families now constitute 42 per-

cent of all U.S. households, but both incomes are usually needed to get by. When both work-

ers lose their jobs, the hardship is immense.

• One survey showed that “two-thirds of all workers laid off in the last three years received no severance package or other compensation from their employers,” according to the Associated Press.

• The same survey showed only 49 percent of unemployed workers who earned $40,000 or more annually received any unemployment insurance payments. Only 35 percent of those who earned less received payments.

• Only 25 percent received extended health care coverage after layoff.

• Less than 20 percent received “help finding a job, career counseling or skill training.”

That survey by researchers at Rutgers University and the University of Connecticut was titled, “The Disposable Worker: Living in a Job-Loss Economy.”

Under capitalism, workers whose labor power cannot be exploited are simply stubbed out. It does not matter that social networks have been strengthened. It does not matter that there is hunger, poverty, environmental pollution and other social ills that workers could remedy if they controlled production. If capitalists cannot expect to realize a profit, nothing else amounts to beans.

Such abominations need not continue. They are not inherent in every possible social system. But they are inherent in capitalism, with its pri-

vate ownership of the socially operated means of production and its production for sale with a view to profit through the exploitation of wage labor.

Workers can end this system and the contra-

diction between private ownership and social production. The Socialist Industrial Unionism program of the Socialist Labor Party shows how.

Learn more about that program and join the struggle to save civilization and humanity itself.

(Continued from page 1)

Shift in Service Work

Jack London and the SLP

Did Jack London have a role in Socialist Labor Party?

Matt <DixieStix ATB8@.

Reply—Yes, Jack London had a role in the SLP. He joined Section Oakland, Calif., in April 1886 when he was 19 or 20 years old, and left in 1900 when a part of the section deserted the party and went with what the SLP called the “bogus SLP.” One year later that group merged with the Social Democratic Party to form the reformist Socialist Party (SP).

London’s decision to leave the SLP was prob-
ably for the best. He was not much of a Socialist, as his racist and nationalist views were to attest.

His racism in particular suited him to the SP, which proposed and supported anti-immigration resolutions at International Socialist Congresses aimed at barring “inferior races” from entering the country. Nonetheless, some lessons London learned from the SLP stuck in his mind for the rest of his life, as he confessed in his March 7, 1916, letter of resignation from the SP. An excerpt from that letter tells the story:

“I am resigning from the Socialist Party because of its lack of fire and light, and its loss of emphasis on the class struggle. I was originally a member of the old revolutionary, up-on-its-hind-legs, fighting Socialist Labor Party. Since then, and to the present time, I have been a fighting member of the Socialist Party. My fighting record in the Cause is not, even at this late date, already entirely forgotten. Trained in the class struggle as taught and practiced by the Socialist Labor Party, my own highest judgment concerning my party and its policies is that the workers themselves can build a new society in which they will possess the power to determine their own future, eco-

nomic well-being. Learn more about it and then join us—help build a better world.” —K.B.
Socialist Greetings

Just a note to wish you socialist greetings and solidar- ity from Isham, Northamptonshire, England. I thought the May-June People was a real breath of fresh air, with clear and readable articles on Saddam, what is happening in Iraq and the original Sept. 11, the 1973 coup in Chile, to name but three.

It is good to know there is a gleam of uncomprom-ising revolutionary socialism at the heart of world imperialism, and I hope I see this very small gesture of international working-class solidarity gives power to your comrades and friends’ elbows.

I look forward to working with Socialists everywhere to bring about the world socialism revolution, sweeping away capitalist states and their rotten, nasty operated systems, to bring about a new society, a new civilization, based upon the common ownership of the whole of the world’s productive resources by the whole of the working class, and the dawn of real human history.

Andrew Northall
Isham, England

Surprised and Impressed

I just received a copy of your newspaper The People and I am surprised at how much I am impressed with your point that the Iraq war was not just about oil, but also the American dollar versus the euro. That is an excellent economic insight. As you point out, the Iraq war was also about controlling the oil market in China. Although the origin of Saddam’s dictatorship is not a secret, there is an imperative to get this news, and the details of it, out to as many people as possible. And B.G.’s article, by the same name, contributes toward that end. That is one of the reasons I am making a contribution of $100, enclosed herewith, to the Socialist Labor Party. Another reason for this contribution is that you are reminding people of the 1973 coup in Chile and the other unspeakable atrocities, of that other Sept. 11th. Finally, I did not know that the execution of the Rosenbergs was in fact illegal.

Raymond Solomon
Rago Park, N.Y.

Best Analysis Yet

The article “U.S. Invasion Plunges Iraq Into Chaos and Ruin” in your May-June issue, had the best analysis yet of the real reasons the USA invaded Iraq—“leverage on countries dependent on foreign oil, especially the People’s Republic of China.” I have not read this in The Nation, The World, World, Fifth Estate, Slingshot, or any other “zines” or papers to which I have access. I am a little surprised that The Nation never even mentioned this as they don’t miss a cup. I came to the conclusion, awhile ago, that China was by far the USA’s biggest economic and political rival when I read Willem Van Aago, that China was by far the U.S.A.’s biggest eco- nomic and political rival when I read Willem Van

“American Companies Poised to Plunder Post- Saddam Iraq” make the issue worthwhile, even if you had not printed anything else. Thank you for outstanding journalism!

Anna Lucia Gelabert
Gatesville, Tex.

Excellent!

Hope this $15 helps a little. The May-June issue is excellent! Keep up the good work.

Diane Poole
Monessen, Pa.

Thrilled

I’m very much thrilled you are back with your newspaper. Never got bored.

Nina Guth
Phoenix, Ariz.

Liked What He Read

Save your paper and like what you people are doing. Here is a contribution ($100) to help you people continue.

Smoky Fink
San Diego, Calif.

War After War

I have noticed that your leaflet about the war against the people of Iraq was completely correct.

(Continued on page 8)
...Organized Crime

The workers whose labor produced that value received $383 billion in wages.

Value added by manufacture represents the difference between all inputs (raw materials of whatever sort, energy, value transferred by machinery, etc.) and the value of manufactured commodities. In 2000, workers added value of $2 trillion by their labor. The difference between that value and the value of wages is a rough gauge of surplus value extracted by the capitalists. Wages amounted to 18.1 percent of the product of workers' labor, for a rate of surplus value of 551 percent.

Those were gross wages, which exclude "taxes" and with 551 percent.

Thus, it is clear that the relative share of workers' wages is decreasing and the exploitation of labor is increasing. Under capitalism with socialism.

...Industrial Front

(Continued from page 2)

to eliminate the $10-per-hour labor cost advantage enjoyed by the [nonunion] plants operated in the United States by companies such as Nissan and Honda," according to one industry observer.

UAW Strategy Revealed

The August announcement of a UAW labor agreement at Dana Corp., a parts supplier for the Big Three, plus similar agreements last year at three other industry parts suppliers—Johnson Controls Inc., Magna International Inc. and Visteon Corp.—would seem to corroborate a recent observation in The Detroit News.

"The Dana deal adds more credibility to the union's organizing strategy, which has targeted the increasing number of independent and nonunionized parts makers that supply Big Three automakers," the motown newspaper reported. "Analysts say Ford likely pressured Dana to adopt a more union-friendly approach before [its] significant expansion to solidify the UAW at the [upcoming] bargaining table."

Hundreds of thousands of Big Three UAW members and retirees depending on the UAW to defend and advance their interests won't have to wait long to see just how "credible" this UAW "organizing strategy" is as far as their own interests are concerned.

...De Leon Editorial

(Continued from page 4)

clergymen, as delegates of "Councils of the Churches of Christ" and as delegates of "Federations of Catholic Societies," notedly large property interests—this is socialism, need but to be uttered clearly and boldly, as was done in Chicago, to evoke the enthusiastic response of proletarians. Not to build "dual unions" is to abandon the language of bona fide unionism, which abjectly bows to as a monopoly of the AFL, has, as its lieutenants seek to secure for the mere word "unionism," with which obscene capitalist interests and the labor movement, as yet nonexistent in the land. The facts alleged in the report from Chicago are

...SLP Letters

(Continued from page 2)
democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the primary freedom—economic freedom. It would be a society where the people command the means of production and the unmet human needs amid the opulence of a handful of exploiters. Workers would receive the full social value of their labor, and no one could live off the labor of others.

Paul D. Lawrence

Madison on War

"The only case in which the Executive can enter on a war, undeclared by Congress, is when a state of war has 'been actually' provoked by the conduct of another power, and then it ought to be made known as soon as possible to the Department charged with the war power."

Nov. 16, 1827

welcome symptoms that the persistent work of the SLP is bearing fruit. The superstitious reverence with which obscene capitalist interests and the labor leaders seek to secure for the mere word "unionism," and which pure and simple political socialism abjectly bows to as a monopoly of the AFL, has, as the SLP has long maintained, no hold among the workers: the language of bona fide unionism, which is democracy and freedom, is the only stone possible to become the headstone of the corner.

The facts alleged in the report from Chicago are...
Poverty Amidst Plenty

By Paul D. Laurence

Feds the Children donates food and other necessities to people in impoverished areas, generally in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It recently provided two big rigs loaded with food to an organization called Leave INC for local distribution in its area. The need was substantial.

Some 300 families received food.

One boy had not eaten in five days and was dehydrating.

A 13-year-old girl, whose family lives in a camping trailer, sleeps outside in a refrigerator box.

Some families live outdoors, under bushes. Others have homes without inside bathrooms, heating and cooling.

However, the scene depicted here was not from some Third World country. It was, as reported by The Fresno Bee, in Tulare County, Calif.

Tulare County is the second most productive agricultural county in the nation. Supermarkets all over the United States sell vegetables from its fields. Production last year was valued at $3.2 billion.

The contradiction of poverty amid plenty was so stark that it didn’t altogether escape notice in capitalist circles. Besides its reportorial article, the Bee later printed an op-ed article by Sue Moore Fenske, president and CEO of the Community Food Bank in Fresno.

“We all know that no one in the Central Valley should be struggling to stave off hunger,” Fenske wrote. “Unfortunately, the solutions are complex and can be expensive.”

“The ultimate goal,” she continued, “must be to create jobs and to improve job readiness so that families can change their circumstances and find a path to economic self-sufficiency.” Until then, programs such as food banks and other give-aways are necessary to make “sure each family member has regular and nutritious meals.”

Fenske was rather short on details about how any of this would happen.

“When economic development corporations, the chambers of commerce, the business councils and representatives from government get together to brainstorm solutions, representatives from the nonprofit sector must be at the table,” she said.

Such idealist moonshine ignores how capitalism works. Indeed, the groups Fenske believes must find solutions are representatives of the social class that is responsible for the problem.

Ironically, the food distributed to impoverished workers in giveaway programs represents the product of their own collective labor, which accumulates as unsalable commodities that are then recycled back to some workers as charity.

That rarely happens when times are “good” and most of what is produced can be sold, or when times are so bad that production is reduced and no surpluses are available for “charitable” purposes. It only happens between the “boom” and “bust” periods that are characteristic of the irrational capitalist system, when rising production collides with glutted markets.

Capitalists rarely give anything away unless there is a social dividend in it, either for the individual capitalist seeking notoriety as a “humanitarian” or collectively on the local, state or national levels to diffuse discontent and potentially explosive social unrest.

The problem of poverty amid plenty is not simply a social problem. It is an inexcusable social crime that cannot be solved by looking for relief from the self-serving “charitable” schemes of the same capitalist class whose greed and parsimony are responsible for all social distress. Rather than “charity,” workers need clarity on how capitalism turns the abundance that human labor creates into scenes similar to those described at the top of this article. Workers need to shun such schemes, which only sow confusion and sap their political and economic strength by nurturing delusions about the social system that creates widespread social hardship and misery.

As profit is the bottom line for capitalists, so for workers must be the abolition of capitalism and its replacement with socialism. Socialism production, organized, democratically controlled and carried on by the useful producers themselves, would be for use, to satisfy human needs, wants and desires. It would provide plenty for all, not just for a few.

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Vote SLP for Houston City Council at-Large

SLP Sections across the Houston area have nominated Comrade Thomas Elliott as its candidate for Houston City Council. We have not decided on which at-large position we will be running for, but we will be fielding a candidate in November.

We still have a couple of other hurdles to clear, one will be finishing up our local platform. Once it is completed we will post it here. The other is getting on the ballot. According to the City of Houston Web site and the City Charter, all that is required is to file within the window and pay $500. The other method of ballot access is to gather signatures. This has its advantages but we have limited resources so we may have to go the payola route. Of course, there will probably be other unseen obstacles but we will deal with them when they arise.

I have created a campaign page on our Web site. Go to http://houstonslp.tripod.com and click on the City Council Campaign link in the left-hand links box.

We need your support. Whether monetary or just vocal, let us hear your opinions on this undertaking.

Carl Miller
Organizer
Section Houston

SWP ‘Photo Op’

I attended a small antiwar rally on Aug. 16. About 30 people attended and I was able to say a few words on behalf of the SWP.

I wasn’t aware that we were going to be allowed to speak, so I didn’t prepare a speech. I simply said a few words about the origins of war and how it is just one of the symptoms of a sick system called capitalism, etc. Comrades Miller and Elliott were unable to accompany me due to some prior commitments.

On a funny note, the mayoral candidate from the Socialist Workers Party showed up right before the protest ended and walked around with his ballot petition for everyone to sign. Of course, he got permission to speak and turned it into a campaign appearance, complete with his own photographer and plenty of photo ops.

We stood out in the Texas heat and protested the occupation of Iraq for two hours and this guy shows up right before it’s over and gives a campaign speech. I thought it was in extremely bad taste. So did a lot of other people.

Carl Miller
Organizer
Section Houston

NEC Recommends Postponing National Convention

The NEC recently voted to call upon the membership of the SLP to approve a recommendation to postpone the party’s 46th National Convention. The NEC cited the party’s financial problems, the impending expiration of the National Headquarters lease and a possible move to new facilities in support of its proposition. The party’s Constitution requires a general vote by the whole membership of the SLP to approve the recommendation. The National Office issued ballots to the sections and national members at-large in July.

A general vote of the whole membership takes six to eight weeks to complete. The vote will close on Aug. 25; a few days after this issue of The People goes to press.

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