



Labor Issue: New Organizing Challenges

SPECIAL LABOR SECTION

The Deal on Steel • Child Care Union Goes National
New Orleans Minimum Wage • Part-Time Teachers Organize

Interview with Barbara Ehrenreich

Melvin Dubofsky on The Future of Labor

plus

Green Party Strategy

Ellen Frank reviews *Globalization and Its Discontents*

The Bush Doctrine of “Pre-Emptive War”

By the time *Democratic Left* readers receive this issue, the US Congress may have issued a blank check for President George W. Bush to use military force against Iraq. The authorization will most likely empower the president to take unilateral military action whenever he (alone) deems that Iraq has not complied with UN weapons inspections. Thus, passage of such a resolution will enable the Bush administration to proceed with a unilateral war whose planning in neoconservative circles well preceded the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

Only the staunchest of progressive Democrats in Congress are likely to mount opposition to such a measure, as those with presidential ambitions (excepting, for now, Al Gore) or those in tightly contested seats fear appearing “weak” on defense on the eve of elections. This, despite the fact that independent analysts believe Iraq has no ties to Al Qaeda—despite last-minute, feeble administration assertions—and is several complex steps away from developing a nuclear device, let alone delivery capabilities.

It is possible that initial public opposition to the unilateral use of force will be confined to the religious and ideological left and the pacifist community. Yet there are three compelling reasons for those on the democratic left—who have absolutely no sympathy for the repressive Hussein regime—to engage in early, militant, and prolonged opposition to US military action.

First, this will not be a quick-escape. The Bush administration has no feasible strategy for putting in place a stable, democratic and pro-American regime in Iraq (nor in Afghanistan). Thus, the US intervention is likely to be of indefinite and costly duration.

Second, if opposition to the first attack on the “axis of evil” is tepid, then the likelihood of unilateral attacks on other “evil” states will increase. The Bush administration’s new doctrine of “pre-emptive” strikes makes evident its repudiation of the doctrine of national sovereignty. If the US, with its military dominance, decides to act unilaterally against “evil”—or violate international treaties—then it will do so, without any regard to what such behavior may lead other regimes to do (for example, Pakistan in regards to India).

Third, opposition is not only moral, but also in the security interest of ordinary Americans. If the US is to effectively prevent terrorism, then we need to secure the cooperation of diverse government intelligence services, as well as to decrease popular enmity towards the US. Moreover, we desperately need to facilitate a just two-state solution to the conflict in Israel and Palestine. A war against an independent Arab state will undoubtedly strike a severe blow to all such efforts.

If deterrence was capable of preventing US, Soviet, and Chinese use of nuclear weapons, only someone who believes that Hussein is suicidal—rather than just a brutal power politician—would bet on Iraq’s unilateral use of nuclear weapons. This is why over thirty leading “realist” scholars of US foreign policy signed a *New York Times* ad opposing intervention. More effective US and UN pressure on Russia, China, and France not to export nuclear-related technology would be a far more effective blow against nuclear proliferation than would war against Iraq. It was Russian, Ukrainian, and French desire to reestablish trade in potentially military-related technologies that weakened UN support for a strict inspections regime in the first place. And why just Iraq? What of the threat that nuclear devices in Pakistan, India, North Korea, Israel, South Africa, and even Brazil and Argentina, could eventually be used in a manner adverse to real or fictitious American interests?

True, the Hussein regime has used chemical and biological weapons against its own people. But the very peoples against whom such horrors were unleashed—the Iraqi Kurds—are presently enjoying their greatest



Editorial Committee:

Bill Dixon, Jeffrey Gold, Bill Mosley,
Gene Prosnitz, Kathy Quinn, Jason Schulman,
Joe Schwartz, John Strauss

Founding Editor

Michael Harrington
(1928-1989)

Democratic Socialists of America share a vision of a humane international social order based on equitable distribution of resources, meaningful work, a healthy environment, sustainable growth, gender and racial equality, and non-oppressive relationships. Equality, solidarity, and democracy can only be achieved through international political and social cooperation aimed at ensuring that economic institutions benefit all people. We are dedicated to building truly international social movements - of unionists, environmentalists, feminists, and people of color - which together can elevate global justice over brutalizing global competition.

DSA NATIONAL OFFICE

180 Varick Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10014
212-727-8610

<http://www.dsausa.org>

Democratic Left (ISSN 1643207) is published quarterly at 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY (Publication No. 701-960). Subscriptions: \$10 regular; \$15 institutional. Postmaster: Send address changes to 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014. *Democratic Left* is published by the Democratic Socialists of America, 180 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014. (212) 727-8610. *Signed articles express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the organization.*

degree of autonomy and prosperity. Their own leaders fear that war will end this golden period. There remains a powerful case for continuing UN sanctions against trade in military and police technology (but not food and medicines). The initial inspections regime found and destroyed considerable amounts of materials that could be used for chemical and biological weapons. Strong, multilateral UN pressure to reinstate effective inspections is necessary. But such an inspections regime cannot be aimed at overthrowing the Iraqi regime. The transition to a democratic Iraq will have to be achieved by indigenous democratic opposition forces, not by a puppet US regime.

Without offering any coherent public explanation, the Bush administration has transformed a "war" against stateless terrorists into a war against "evil" states. But the Bush administration has no clear ends in its "endless" war against evil. Is Bush truly going to war against all repressive, "evil" regimes? Is the US to occupy Iraq and Afghanistan permanently and insure that "evil" never resurfaces? What of Islamic extremists in Pakistan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia? Will not the world community rightly suspect that being "virtuous" consists of being compliant with United States government foreign policy aims?

Imperial powers that engage in hubristic overreach not only eventually suffer economic and political defeats, but also fail to take care of domestic difficulties. The Bush administration is sufficiently ideological that it may well believe both in massive tax cuts for the rich and wars against evil, but Bush's chief political advisers, Karen Hughes and Karl Rove, are as obsessively poll-driven in their political instincts as was Bill Clinton. Thus, Rove has openly said that he wants the upcoming Congressional elections to be a "referendum on the war against terrorism." For he knows that if the elections are a referendum on the administration's economic performance, the verdict will be negative.

If the Bush administration is using the drumbeat for war to drown out public concern with corporate greed, growing inequality, shrinking pension funds, and rising health care costs, then shame on them. But if we do not make our opposition to the war vocal and public, as well as expose the insidious domestic purposes for which the Bush administration is using the talk of war, then shame on us. For no matter how marginal our voices may initially be, the longer we take to build mass opposition to war, the greater the time it will take for domestic and global social justice issues to return to the center of American politics.

Joseph M. Schwartz chairs the Department of Political Science at Temple University and is a member of the DSA National Political Committee.

The Rule of Capital

The richest one per cent of this country owns half our country's wealth, five trillion dollars. One third of that comes from hard work, two thirds comes from inheritance, interest on interest accumulating to widows and idiot sons, and what I do: stock and real estate speculation. It's bullshit. You got ninety percent of the American public out there with little or no net worth. I create nothing. I own.

—Gordon Gekko, *Wall Street* (20th Century Fox 1987)

"Can capitalism survive capitalists themselves?" asks Kurt Eichenwald in the June 30 *New York Times*.

Strange question when you think about it. What is capitalism other than

continued on page 6

inside DL

2

Opinion: Bush and Iraq; Corporate Scandals; German Elections

5

Can the Greens See the Forest for the Trees?
By Frank Llewellyn

7

The Deal on Steel
By Bill Dixon

9

Child Care Union Goes National
By Denise Dowell

10

Does Labor Have a Future?
By Melvin Dubofsky

13

New Orleans Raises Minimum Wage
By David Swanson

14

Ehrenreich on *Nickel and Dimed*
By Kathy Quinn

15

Low-Wage Workers on Campus
By John Strauss

20

The IMF vs. Global Stability: Review of *Globalization and Its Discontents*
By Ellen Frank

COMING SOON TO THE DSA WEBSITE

(www.dsausa.org)

Responses from Our Readers

and

Video from DSA's

Low-Wage Economy Conference

Cover art: "The Resurrection of Wesley Everest" by labor muralist Mike Alewitz (see article by Paul Buhle in Fall 2001 Democratic Left).

Can the Greens See the Forest for the Trees?

By Frank Llewellyn

In the year 2000 progressive voters were tormented by the dilemma of Ralph Nader's candidacy: to vote for a progressive Green Party candidate with no chance of winning or a corporate-supported, establishment Democrat. The votes were counted, stolen, and contested, and ultimately the Supreme Court declared Bush president.

Most progressives were concerned with the "spoiler effect" of voting Green, but thought it was limited to the presidential contest. Few realized that in at least two cases—the eighth district in Michigan and the ninth district in New Jersey—Democratic congressional candidates lost by margins well under the Green candidate's vote. A swing of just seven seats would have given the Democrats control of the House of Representatives.

The Green Party gained ballot status in ten additional states as a consequence of its three percent showing. It failed to get the five percent necessary to qualify for matching funds—the stated goal of the campaign in 2000. Now the party is getting ready for 2002.

Water under the bridge, you say; *it's 2002 and thankfully we don't have to worry about that this year*. Tell that to Paul Wellstone! Who controls the Senate could rest on his bid for a third term in Minnesota. He squeaked by twelve years ago and was narrowly reelected against a scandal plagued Republican opponent six years ago. Despite the advantages of incumbency, Wellstone is vulnerable precisely because he is the most progressive member of the Senate. Now the Republicans are pouring money and Presidential visits into Minnesota, and a Green is running! (See box for DSA's response.) The stakes could not be higher. But it's not just about this



race. The Greens are running fifty candidates for the House, and at least seven of those races are in districts that are considered toss-ups.

The twelfth district in New Jersey is a good example. Rush Holt, a progressive from Princeton, barely beat hard-right Republican Dick Zimmer in 2002 due to the Green candidate, affluent stockbroker and former Democrat Carl Mayer, who garnered 1.94 percent to Holt's and Zimmer's 49 percent. This time Holt faces both Republican Buster Soaires and, again, Mayer, in what should be another squeaker. In California the Greens were ready to run against Barbara Lee, the only member of Congress to vote against a military solution in Afghanistan, but thankfully backed off.

But it is rare that the weight of progressive opinion influences the Greens. In interviews throughout the 2000 campaign Nader made it clear that he accepted no responsibility for a Bush victory and did not care about the progressive credentials of adversely affected Democrats. "The Democrats," he said in an *In These Times* interview in October 2000, "have got to lose people whether they are good or bad." As we go to press Nader has responded to progressive pressure about Wellstone by

appearing with him at a press conference but has stopped short of a formal endorsement.

The Greens are often inconsistent in their stance towards progressive Democrats. At the recent Green Party Mid-Term Convention in Philadelphia, the Greens invited Democratic city councilmember David Cohen, probably the council's most progressive member, to address their rally. Shortly after Cohen's excellent speech, the Green candidate for governor of Pennsylvania calmly told the delegates that there were *no* progressive Democrats in Pennsylvania.

The Greens are running a number of candidates for governor. In Maine, their candidate will qualify for nearly one million dollars in matching funds under the clean money system. In California, Gray Davis, a centrist Democratic incumbent, has an eight-point lead over archconservative Republican William Simon, Jr. and Green candidate Peter Camejo. Many leftists are deeply concerned that Simon might squeak through.

In New York, Green candidate Stanley Aronowitz seeks to maintain the Party's ballot status against Republican incumbent George Pataki and Democratic challenger State Comptroller Carl McCall. Pataki has yet to poll over 50 per-

cent despite the hype that he is a shoe-in. McCall could become the first African-American governor if he convinces Democrats to vote like Democrats. A labor-led third party that works to influence the Democrats—The Working Families Party—is supporting McCall.

At the Greens' Mid-Term Convention I asked Party officials what they would consider a victory in the mid-term election. "Doubling the number of officeholders" is the answer I got. Given that most of their officeholders win in local non-partisan races, in which party identification is not emphasized, that would not be much indication of a stronger American left. Increasing the percentage of the vote, increasing party registration, or—most importantly—increasing voter turnout would all be much more significant indicators that the Green campaigns are actually expanding the American left, but their campaigns are not producing those results.

Of course, there are times when supporting a third-party candidacy makes sense. In Vermont, Bernie Sanders built an organization and established enough of a following to win office. Many DSA members have been involved in third-party efforts; both Aronowitz and Camejo, for example, have paid dues to DSA. But surely more momentum for progressive causes would be generated if the Democrats hold on to the Senate and take control of the House of Representatives, despite the limitations of what they could achieve, than if the Greens actually did double the number of office holders they can claim. It is the possibility of victories that moves people to organize.

Radicals, trade unionists, and progressive political leaders who reject third-party politics are often more frustrated with the limitations of the Democratic Party than most third-party activists. But, until a third party is able to elect candidates to state legislatures and Congress in partisan elections most of these institutional leaders will be unwilling to change their stance. The stakes for their members are too high to trade something for nothing.

The Greens cannot be said to have "broken through" in any serious way. In the last presidential election George Bush received a higher percentage of support from African-Americans than Ralph Nader did. Polling data indicates that Green candidates receive a higher percentage of well-educated, affluent voters than the Democrats do, but receive very little support from low-income and less-educated vot-

continued on page 19

Send a student to Minnesota

DSA's national electoral project this year is the Minnesota Senate Election. Together with YDS, DSA's Youth Section, we are mobilizing to bring young people to Minnesota. Minnesota is one of the few states that allow same day voter registration. We will focus our energy on registering young people. Wellstone will need a high percentage of young people to register and vote for him if he is to stave off the campaign that Bush and the Republicans have orchestrated against him. He is the right's number one electoral target.

Because we are focusing on issue based voter registration, this electoral work can be supported by tax-deductible contributions and the DSA FUND is soliciting such contributions to support this project. Contributions are needed to underwrite the costs of transportation as well as to provide stipends for expenses. DSA members wishing to contribute should make their check payable to DSAFund and return it to 180 Varick St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10014. Contributions can also be made on-line at www.dsausa.org.

* * *

Detroit DSA remains active in the electoral arena. Over the spring and summer, its work focused on Rep. David Bonior's gubernatorial campaign. The local endorsed Rep. Bonior almost eighteen months ago. He was the keynote speaker at its last Douglass-Debs Dinner. DSA helped with the early fundraising for his campaign, collecting signatures for his nominating petitions, distributing literature at Detroit churches, and walking door to door in Macomb County on his behalf on the weekend before the primary. On the weekend of July 20-21, the local brought Rep. Danny Davis (an African-American congressman and DSA member from Chicago) to Detroit to campaign for Bonior. Detroit DSAers chauffeured Rep. Davis to a Trade Union Leadership Council picnic and other campaign stops including four different Detroit churches. Detroit DSA also contributed to the primary campaign of State Representative Hansen Clarke, who ran against incumbent State Senator Ray Murphy in the first district. The local did some early fundraising and conducted a postcard campaign on Rep. Clarke's behalf to our members in the first senate district. Rep. Clarke achieved an upset victory, winning comfortably by thirteen points.

* * *

East Bay DSA supported Wilson Riles in his mayoral campaign and is currently supporting a Just Cause Eviction municipal referendum. The local has worked through a coalition—the People's Electoral Project—that includes the Committees of Correspondence. It also put together a forum that included progressive Democrats and Green Party gubernatorial candidate Peter Camejo.

OPINION

continued from page 3

the principle that capitalists are the source of all value and wisdom, and that whatever they do to promote their own material interests is what's good for the rest of us; that the rule of capital is not only inevitable but the best of all possible worlds?

Eichenwald has a different account: "Capitalism, at its most basic, dictates that the company providing the best product at the lowest price wins." Any user of Microsoft products knows in her heart that that's hogwash. Capitalism dictates only that the company generating the largest profits wins. Quality of products, like honesty in financial reporting, is nice, but hardly a requirement.

But at least he's put the question on the table: Can capitalism survive? The socialist answer is yes in the short run, no in the long run. And it has nothing to do with the personal moral qualities of Ken Lay or Martha Stewart. The scandal is not corporate crime or dishonest accounting or the looting of employee pension funds, bad as those are. Capitalism itself is the scandal. Capitalism itself is what capitalism ultimately can't survive.

That's what's so great about today. No one remembers anything any more.

—Coach, *X-Force*
(Marvel Comics, 2002)

Efforts to regulate corporate behavior have always been resisted by the powerful, most recently in the triumph of the libertarian right and DLC Democrats over the past twenty-five years. But mass movements have sometimes succeeded in pressuring government to curb corporate excesses (such as the regulatory reforms of the New Deal and the environmental and health and safety regulations of the '60s and '70s) and have thus improved the lives of ordinary citizens. Socialists should join efforts to re-regulate financial and banking industry, as well as greater worker and citizen control over pension funds.

But as socialists, our task is to argue that in the long run, it won't work. The current push for regulation is part of a cycle of abuse that has repeated itself, in synch with the business cycle, at least since the late nineteenth century. And even more clearly now than in the past, the people writing the new rules will be in the pay of the people who broke what was left of the old rules, after spending the last twenty-five years gutting those rules and making sure that their enforcement would rank very low on the list of government priorities. (Didn't we just finish repealing the 1934 Glass-Steagal Act?)

Capitalism with rules is still the rule of capital. The payoff for cheating will always be greater than whatever penalty business owners decide to set for their own misconduct. Only when we're collectively and demo-

cratically running our own economy and government, for our own interests, will we break out of this cycle of abuse. It won't happen today, and it probably won't happen this year. But it's our job to make it happen.

John Hogan is the Co-Chair of Greater Philadelphia DSA

German Elections

The Social Democrats' "employee of the month" was what the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* called Dick Cheney a few weeks before election day. A Cheney war speech on Iraq had mobilized Social Democrats to come out strongly against military action—even threatening to withdraw military assets from Kuwait—and this position, along with successes in fighting this summer's record floods, carried the SPD-Green coalition government to an unexpected victory.

Besides working out policy differences with the US, the new government has three other challenges ahead: fighting an unemployment rate only slightly lower than four years ago, especially urgent in East Germany where voters switched from the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) to the SPD en masse; enlarging Europe in the East while simultaneously pressing for reform of Europe's institutions; and promoting ecology, poised to becoming more important with the Greens having had their best election result ever on the national level.

Other outcomes of the elections: Schroeder's Iraq position denied the PDS the opportunity to present itself as the sole party of peace, and the PDS scored badly, losing party status in the new parliament. Schroeder thus stopped the rise of another left party in a way the SPD was not able to do with the Greens twenty years ago. And right-wing extremism played no role in the election. Unlike in some neighboring countries, the extreme right received less than 2% of the vote. The Libertarian Party (FDP), one of whose leaders had made overtures to the extreme right, was punished for this and scored below expectations. (In fact, the recent victory of Social Democrats in Sweden and Macedonia, and the collapse of the right-wing coalition in Austria may indicate a general pendulum swing).

The red-green coalition, a tactical alliance four years ago, evolved into a closer alliance, with Schroeder and his Green Party Secretary of State Fischer campaigning together in Berlin. The issue of Iraq also improved the relationship between Schroeder and his own party.

But there remains one major problem for the SPD: The 'Third Way' is dead as a doornail but the party still lacks a 'project,' an overall vision for democratic socialism in which her policy initiatives are visibly embedded.

Stephan Peter is a member of Twin Cities DSA and the German SPD.

The Deal on Steel

By Bill Dixon

Last March the Bush administration imposed tariffs of up to thirty percent on steel imports, and critics from all points on the political spectrum cried foul. The pundits were just about unanimous. Everyone from Paul Krugman to *Doonesbury* to George Will attacked the decision for its obvious opportunism; after all, it is hardly a coincidence that the steel industry happens to be concentrated in a handful of key electoral battleground states. Buying political advantage with protectionism means higher prices for steel products and the grim possibility of a trade war with Europe and Japan, particularly in the brave new era of globalization. Whatever the problems facing the steel industry, better its fate be decided by the market, not by the grubby machinations of presidential politics.

But in this case W's critics were only half-right. In protecting US steel, Bush in fact did the right thing for the wrong reasons. Unfortunately, it won't be long before those wrong reasons backfire. Tariffs by themselves won't save American steel, and neither will the "discipline" of the world market. Without more radical remedies, the American steel industry will at best remain crippled by deep structural failings that hobble many sectors of the US economy in world markets. If the steel industry is to be restored as a national provider of steady jobs at good wages, then government must undertake a bold new venture toward responsible economic planning. Saving American steel requires nothing less than a modernized national industrial policy, a concept anathema to most US politicians. As in Europe and Japan, America needs an industrial policy

that creates new export-markets *and* new jobs—a progressive economic nationalism that's also internationalist.

met along with demand. Thanks to the Robert Rubin-led free-trade wing of the Clinton administration, rescue of the Asian economies and



PHOTO COURTESY OF BETHLEHEM STEEL

Of course, this view doesn't have champions in the political mainstream, except for the United Steelworkers of America. Led by its president Leo Gerard, the USWA has stood as a voice of sanity during the past five years, as a complex and protracted crisis has threatened to extinguish American steel-making. Recently both government and industry leaders have slowly begun to signal support for parts of the USWA's program. But they have not gone nearly far enough, and time is running out.

Market Flood

Since the 1960s the US steel industry has suffered from intense foreign competition and astonishingly bad management. In the early nineties the industry began to show signs of revitalization, until the 1997 Asian economic crisis caused global steel prices to plum-

stabilization of the global system was accomplished through an IMF program of accelerated exports. For Korea, Japan, Russia and other countries this meant flooding the world market with steel sold below cost. Over the next five years a surge of cheap imports would swarm the US market, leaving fifty thousand steelworkers unemployed and thirty-five companies bankrupt. By contrast, European steelmakers were protected by both import quotas and the greater concentration and efficiency of the sector overall.

The Clintonites stuck stubbornly to their free-trade script, and dismissed the USWA's campaign for temporary relief from the import surge. Even at the height of the 2000 campaign, candidate Gore defended the anti-tariff position

continued on page 8

The Deal on Steel

(continued from page 7)

while key steel-producing states like Michigan, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia wavered in and out of the Democratic column. The Bush campaign knew better. While touring steel states Dick Cheney repeatedly gave the quiet but clear assurance that steel would be protected, a promise that would win crucial electoral votes to the GOP from Tennessee and West Virginia.

In office, the new administration vacillated on the issue for more than a year, but eventually did impose tariffs. But they passed over the other massive problems facing the industry. What made US steel so vulnerable to cheap imports? The list is long, and would include industry health and pension benefits to 600,000 retirees and 400,000 eligible family members, with a current active workforce now of only about 150,000. The administration ignored this issue in March, and later actively fought Democratic efforts in Congress to help fund those benefits. The administration has also kept mum on how best to restructure the industry through mergers of the main steel firms. Will mergers mean downsizing and shutdowns, devastating cities and regions with unemployment and idle, environmentally hazardous plants? Or can communities and jobs be saved, along with profits and market share, by government-sponsored restructuring, for which even some foreign competitors have voiced support on the grounds that a stronger, streamlined industry would lower protectionist heat? Meanwhile the Bush administration has done virtually nothing on the issue.

Outside of the steel industry, mainstream business opinion is set against government subsidies for

mergers or health care or retiree costs, fearful of the precedent it would set for meddling by Big Government. Tariffs have not been well received either, as steel users face higher prices while other



Steelworkers' President Leo Gerard at an anti-NAFTA rally last year.

industries contemplate retaliatory measures from Europe and Japan. The European Union has targeted steel products as well as goods like textiles and citrus—products of key Republican states like South Carolina and Florida. That may explain why the Bush administration excluded over 170 steel products from the tariffs in August, mollifying Europe and US business to some degree, and throwing a number of steelmakers back into jeopardy.

The tariff controversy often distracts attention from broader structural threats facing the industry. Japanese and European steelworkers enjoy state-funded health care, while US firms must pay those costs alone. Without government aid for retiree and health benefits, the steel industry has little hope for recovery, except at the cost of slashing jobs and benefits, and breaking promises to retirees. European and Japanese steelmakers also benefit from state-coordinated production and export strategies (which typically target

US manufacturing). But America leaves those decisions to Wall Street. So when US banks invest in steel firms they go to Japan or Brazil. And since the US has no national transportation system capable of cheaply moving steel products across the country, some steel customers on the west coast still find it cheaper to pay tariffs on Japanese steel from across the Pacific than to pay trucking costs from Pennsylvania.

Nationalist Internationalism

The USWA has proposed not only government aid on mergers and health and legacy benefits, but also a new global steel commission to chart a course for international markets. In advanced economies the steel market will likely remain tight, but the developing world still needs steel for new roads, rails, hospitals, and schools. Since poorer countries usually lack the purchasing power to invest in badly needed infrastructure, analysts conclude that the steel market is “glutted,” and that US steelmakers must inevitably downsize, no matter the cost. But what if the right international combination of private sector planning, foreign aid, domestic subsidies, and market regulation, in other words, actual capacity and actual need, could somehow be translated into “effective market demand?” Then modernizing the global steel industry might mean producing more steel, not firing more steelworkers.

The idea would be easier for its opponents to dismiss as pie-in-sky if the new institutions of global capitalism weren't already laying the groundwork for it. The battle between the US and Europe over steel tariffs has reached the WTO, and the result has been an extraordinary degree of scrutiny and debate over the global steel market and its future. Among the free-trade

continued on page 15

Child Care Union Goes National

By Denise Dowell

In the words of United Child Care Union (CCU) Co-President Vickie Milhouse: "Building a national union for child care workers is more than a notion!"

In May 1998, CCU held its founding convention. Chartered by the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees (NUH-HCE)/AFSCME, the CCU now has over 800 members in the Delaware Valley and in Detroit, Michigan. CCU knows that the biggest problem in child care is lack of public support and funding for early care and education. This keeps wages low and makes it hard for parents to afford and get quality early care and education for their kids. We all know, and research shows, that quality of jobs is directly related to the quality of early care and education children receive every day. Recent studies show that only about 14 percent of child care services delivered in the United States today meet quality standards defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

CCU is building an industry-wide union to improve wages, benefits and working conditions for the child care workforce; improve the quality of early care and education delivered to young children; and ensure that every child has access to quality early care and education. We know that building a union is not enough. We are joining communities to build a movement to win public support and funding at the federal and state level that to accomplish our mission.

CCU leaders have drawn on the history of organized labor and years of experience in early childhood education to develop a model to transform the child care industry so it works better for everyone. That model:



CCU members at the at which they voted unanimously to ratify the contract with Allegheny Child Care Academy.

- Is industry-based. Its founding leaders are child care professionals with years of experience wearing many hats in child care—family provider, classroom teacher, center director, educator, trainer, and advocate, to name a few.
- Is inclusive of everyone in the industry—home-based and center-based child care workers at a regional and state level.
- Acknowledges that low wages are an industry, not an employer, problem. Most center-based child care programs would pay higher wages and better benefits tomorrow if they could.
- Builds strong member leaders at every worksite.
- Supports labor-management partnerships to develop resources and tackle industry challenges to providing quality jobs and care.
- Utilizes the political power of the labor movement to support public policy changes and win funding at the local, state, and national levels.

Last spring, CCU, along with Allegheny Child Care Academy and Childspace Management Group, founded the Delaware Valley Child Care Partnership, a non-profit labor-management association bringing together employers and unions to transform the child care industry. The Partnership develops resources and services to improve the business operations of child care providers, the qualifications and compensation of the workforce, and the continuity and quality of care for children in working families. Allegheny Child Care Academy, a for-profit venture, is the largest provider of child care services in Pennsylvania and one of the fastest growing urban companies in the United States, operating 30 sites in the Philadelphia area. Childspace Management Group is a worker-owned child care company that operates three centers in Philadelphia. CMG and ACCA serve over 20 percent of the families receiving child care subsidies in the Delaware Valley. To join the Partnership, child care program owners and managers agree not to interfere with a worker's decision

continued on page 14

Does Labor Have a Future?

By Melvin Dubofsky

Seven decades ago in the midst of the Great Depression, the president-elect of the American Economics Association observed that the labor movement in the United States was the last place to which workers could look for solutions to mass unemployment. Trade unionism, he said, had "lessening importance...in American economic organization....I see no reason to believe that American trade unionism will so revolutionize itself within a short period as to become in the next decade a more potent social influence than it has been in the past decade." When he spoke, the "official" labor movement resisted

state-funded unemployment insurance, maximum hour-minimum wage legislation for adult male workers, and social security. The labor movement rested at a level of union density not experienced since the end of the previous century. Today, we know that, instead of what George Barnett prophesied, the 1930s produced the "new unionism" of the CIO whose militant members transformed society.

Can we expect something similar during the next decade? Twelve years ago in writing for a previous Labor Day issue of *DL*, I asked the same question. I answered: on its own, labor lacks the numbers or power to realign national politics in a progressive direction. In coalition with movement allies, however, it may be able to use the issues of class, race, gender, and environment to build a new politics in which the community prevails over the isolated individual, comity over conflict, and altruism over selfish-

ness. And recalling Barnett's 1932 prophesy as well as the recent reunification of Germany, I added, even if we historians fail as prophets, miracles do occur.

Can we now expect the miracle that failed to occur between 1990 and the present? On the one hand, we can be optimistic. As the title of a recent book of essays on contemporary trade unionism says, this is "Not Your Father's Labor

organizers has won representation and collective-bargaining rights for student and non-student campus employees and used students' buying power to regulate "sweatshop labor."

The success of such organizing campaigns flowed from community-wide alliances that cut across lines of race, gender, and even class. The "new labor movement" invites the cooperation of intellectuals,

feminists, "queers," and environmentalists. Clearly it's no longer "your father's labor movement," one reflected by a pale, male face.

However, a little pessimism may be in order. When Barnett

spoke, trade unionism had been in decline for less than a decade. Today, by contrast, the labor movement has suffered for half a century. Having peaked in union density during the Korean War (1952-53), its penetration of the labor force declined steadily thereafter. For a time, the rapid growth of public-sector unionism masked the catastrophic decline of union members in the private sector. Today in some communities public employee union members represent the great bulk of the labor movement. The proportion of private sector employees today in trade unions, less than ten percent, is at a level last seen before 1897 and the rise of the modern trade union movement in the US. Labor's political influence has also steadily diminished, the aggressive political campaigns of the current AFL-CIO leadership notwithstanding. Imagine any president since Woodrow Wilson threatening to veto congressional legislation that denied

Can the labor movement and its friends build a coalition that will endure and alter the political balance of power?

Movement." The leadership elected to power in the AFL-CIO in 1995 is unlike the leadership that Barnett condemned as narrow-minded in 1932 and that Reinhold Niebuhr characterized as having as much imagination as a group of village bankers.

Not Your Father's Labor Movement

Today's AFL-CIO takes seriously its commitment to make the labor movement as diverse as the workers whose loyalty it must command. It recruits among women, minorities, and legal and illegal immigrants, rejecting organized labor's traditional antipathy to immigrant labor. New initiatives have unionized largely Latino and Latina home-care workers and janitors in the Los Angeles metropolitan area; Asian immigrant workers in the garment trades; Central American and Southeast Asian immigrant workers in the meat-packing industry; and on a number of college campuses an alliance of students and union

him the right to rescind collective bargaining rights and civil-service protection for more than 170,000 federal employees! (I can't even imagine Ronald Reagan going that far.)

Labor and the "New Capitalism"

Can the labor movement and its friends take advantage of opportunities and surmount obstacles? Can they build a coalition that will endure and alter the political balance of power? I agree with the historian David Brody who has often observed that the factors that most determine the fate of unionism—politics, market structure (domestic and global), and workplace relations—occur autonomously, and that they are not of labor's making. Labor made neither the Great Depression nor the New Deal. But when the economic cataclysm of 1929–33 produced the New Deal, the labor movement seized the moment, organized the mass-production workers theretofore resistant to unionism, and altered the balance of political and economic power.

No two historical eras are ever precisely alike nor does history

repeat itself. But just as the Great Depression proved that the 1920s "new era" and its "welfare capitalism" offered neither equity, nor security, nor justice to workers whose labor power became redundant, the 1990s "new capitalism" of the worker as independent entrepreneur, manager of her own 401K, possessor of stock options, enthusiastic participant in employer-employee joint management teams, and free agent in a competitive labor market has shown its true visage in the age of Enron, Adelphia, WorldCom, and other post-modern, post-industrial mega-enterprises. Even such exemplary modern corporations as IBM, Eastman Kodak, and Thompson Products (later TRW)—which bound their employees to the enterprise through the promise of life-time employment, fair wage and salary scales, generous health and retirement benefits, systems of profit-sharing, and forms of company unionism—shed employees, reduced benefits, and cut remuneration in the late 1990s. They behaved as competitive capitalists rather than benevolent manorialists.

Just as the employees of US Steel, General Motors, Goodyear Tire, and other giant industrial enterprises of the New Era and Great Depression felt themselves denied elementary justice at work and in their wrath turned to the new unions of CIO, the victims of Enron, WorldCom, Xerox, and IBM may be ready for a new form of unionism. Without Roosevelt and his New Deal, however, the aggrieved industrial workers of the 1930s would have been unable to build their new unions. The key question is how to build a successful political movement that like Roosevelt's New Deal will use the power of the state to overcome the resistance of employers to unionism.

Clearly, a movement that represents fewer than 15 percent of all workers, and even fewer in the private sector, cannot by itself shift the balance of political power. Labor needs allies. Demographic trends and the structural barriers to independent political action in the US electoral system, however, circumscribe labor's attempts to build

continued on page 12

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR FIRST 30 YEARS

**Edward W. Clark, Jr. Manager
New England Regional Joint Board
Executive Vice President of UNITE**

**867 State Road
No. Dartmouth, MA 02747
Tel: 508 997-2931**



Labor's Future

continued from page 11

community-wide progressive coalitions. Neither legal nor illegal immigrants enjoy the franchise. Worse, these immigrants compete in the labor market with disadvantaged citizens who do have the right to vote and often feel themselves losers in a tight job market; it is not easy to unite African American, Hispanic American, and Asian American workers. It is equally difficult to coalesce trade unionists with the key voting bloc in most elections—politically independent white-collar professional managerial types concentrated in the suburbs and committed to environmental controls, the regulation of privately-owned firearms, and women's right to control their own bodies. Environmentalism, reproductive rights, and gun control, especially the latter, are extremely divisive issues among trade unionists. The famous alliance of "teamsters and turtles" did not long survive Seattle 1999.

Real political choices

What, then, are the real political choices open to workers and their leaders? Once upon a time long ago and far away, Samuel Gompers' approach of "rewarding one's friends and punishing one's enemies" regardless of political affiliation—a policy recently re-endorsed by the AFL-CIO leadership—made a certain sense. Such Republicans as Theodore Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Robert LaFollette, George Norris, Fiorello LaGuardia, Irving Ives, Jacob Javits, and even Richard Nixon were open to the influence of labor and, in turn, influenced Republican labor policy. Today, to elect Republicans sym-

pathetic to unionism is to choose mute representatives in a party led by Trent Lott in the Senate, Dennis Hastert and Tom DeLay in the House, and George W. Bush and his corporate barons in the "big white house." A few exceptions notwithstanding, Democrats remain the only game in town for labor. Democrats cannot win national office without the support of

If we want a future in which workers have a voice and justice on the job, it will only come through the collective agency of a union.

organized labor and its allies. Which is why the Clinton Administration put such friends of labor as Robert Reich and Donna Shalala in charge of the federal departments most vital to the interests of working people and why it also proposed reforms to national labor law (the Dunlop Commission Report) that would have benefited trade unions. Yes, it is also true, that many Democrats elected from Southern and Mountain West states vote little differently on labor issues than their Republican counterparts. The way to change that, however, is not by running independent candidates whose presence insures the election of reactionary Republicans. The answer is for Greens, feminists, Hispanics, and labor to unite behind progressive candidates in Democratic primaries. Until labor and its allies succeed in electing more progressive Democrats from the South and Mountain West, anti-labor forces will prevail nationally. Not only will labor's efforts to reform labor law fail—health-care reforms, including prescription drug coverage, substantial increases in the minimum

wage, job safety and training programs, defense of social security as collective insurance, and a more equitable and progressive tax policy will meet similar fates.

If we want a future in which workers have a voice and justice on the job, it will only come through the collective agency of a union. If we want a future in which women have a right to control their own bodies and equal rights in the labor market, it will only come if trade unions thrive. If we want a future in which working people have full and equal opportunity at work and in the community regardless of race, ethnicity, or other markers

of personal and group identity, it will only come if workers participate in collective action through a union of their choice. To achieve such a future we must unite citizens around a common program that insures all their right to jobs that pay a "living wage," provide essential health care, and offer a stable, secure retirement.

The choices are clear: continued deregulation and worship of a market god that will produce more Enrons and WorldComs, or policies that serve the commonweal by making daily life safer, healthier, and more secure for the wage- and salary-earning majority of citizens and their dependents. Utopian independent political initiatives will guarantee us more of the former; a labor movement-led broad coalition to create a postindustrial, postmodern variant of the New Deal Democratic Party will open the possibility of achieving the latter.

Melvin Dubofsky is Bartle Professor of History and Sociology at SUNY Binghamton. He is the author and editor of numerous books on American labor history.

New Orleans Raises Minimum Wage

By David Swanson

The federal minimum wage has been dropping in real value for decades. For it to be worth what it was in 1968, it would have to be raised to over \$8 per hour, rather than its current rate of \$5.15. Had it kept pace with increases in productivity, it would be nearly \$14; had it kept pace with retail profits, it would be over \$20. The average CEO's wage is now 1,200 times that of a minimum wage worker.

A bill that would have raised the federal minimum wage to \$6.65 vanished from Congress's radar screen on September 11. Since that horrible day, there are ever more people in low-wage jobs, yet there seems to be a near ban on doing anything on their behalf in Washington.

Thankfully, the Living Wage Movement has picked up speed. States have been raising their minimum wages, and cities and counties have been passing living-wage laws at a faster pace than ever before. Most living-wage laws—there are now eighty-six of them—apply to both public employees and employees of companies with government contracts or that receive corporate subsidies. Santa Monica and Berkeley have passed living-wage laws that apply to private companies in certain sections of the cities that have benefited from public investment.

New Orleans runs on the tourism industry, and its tourism industry runs on the labor of African Americans paid poverty wages. Of those living in poverty in New Orleans, eighty-six percent are African-American. New Orleans raised its minimum wage by ballot initiative on February 2, 2002. New Orleans' new living wage law goes a step further than others: it raises the minimum wage to one dollar above the federal wage for all private employers in the entire city. (This is the same law that Washington, DC, has long had.) The city council, the state legislature, and New Orleans' monopoly newspaper all fought against this increase. Front groups for hotel and restaurant owners vowed to continue the fight in court after the vote. Having lost at the district level, they appealed, and the case is expected to be decided by the Louisiana Supreme Court in September.

This fight began in 1996 when the community group ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 100, and their allies in the New Orleans Living Wage Campaign collected 50,000 valid signatures to force a referendum to raise the minimum wage. The city council refused to act. The Campaign collected the required number of signatures again. Again there was no action.



Louisiana ACORN press conference following the referendum that raised the minimum wage in New Orleans.

Then, in 1997, the state passed a law prohibiting localities from enacting wage standards. It was clear what the city had been stalling for. But the Louisiana constitution grants enormous powers of self-government and regulation to home-rule cities like New Orleans. The campaign challenged the state law in court, and, after a lengthy series of decisions and appeals, won the right to hold the public vote. The ruling left open the question of the state law's constitutionality until after a referendum passed. So, after the February victory, it was back to the courts.

On March 25, Judge Rose Ledet in civil district court ruled in favor of the voters' decision, writing:

The evidence presented in support of [the state law banning local minimum wage increases] was the testimony of Dr. Timothy Ryan, Dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of New Orleans who specializes in the analysis of the New Orleans economy. He admitted that he conducted no specific study of the impact of a one-dollar increase in the minimum wage in New Orleans and stated that it would be impossible to predict how the business community would react. Dr. Ryan's opinion to the legislature that localized minimum wage ordinances would have a negative impact on business development is based on economic theory premised on his belief that there should be no mandatory minimum wage whether prescribed by federal, state, or local law. His bias is highlighted by the fact that the effect of a municipally enacted increased minimum wage is based on perception and speculation since no specific study was conducted.

The only empirical data of the effects of

continued on page 19

Child Care Union

continued from page ___

to join or not join the union. Some agree to recognize the union voluntarily when a majority of workers sign union authorization cards.

The child care industry, with many small providers and few resources, is particularly challenging to organize. As the union organizes workers, it must develop and invest resources to collaboratively address the industry problems that employers, workers, and communities face in common. When employers agree to respect every worker's right to organize and not interfere with an employee's decision, CCU/NUHHCE/AFSCME can focus union resources on solving the big industry problems—securing public funding so employers and workers can raise wages, access affordable health insurance and pension plans, and support opportunities for professional development. Better jobs mean less staff turnover, and more consistent and better care for kids.

In Philadelphia, Jobs with Justice (JwJ) is supporting CCU—educating elected officials, clergy, and community leaders about the value of unions in raising wages, particularly for people of color and women. JwJ engages community leaders in supporting workers' right to organize and has established a Worker's Rights Board. The Board sends the message to child care employers and the broader community that respecting workers' right to organize is the right thing to do.

CCU in Detroit

CCU represents over 40 child care workers employed by Allegheny Child Care Academy in Detroit. Recently, CCU/AFSCME joined Allegheny Child Care Academy in filing a complaint with the Department of Health and Human Services about how the

state reimbursement system works. Unlike most other state reimbursement systems, Michigan's reimburses providers based on attendance rather than enrollment. This system fails to provide adequate payment rates to providers, who must prepare to provide services to all the children who are enrolled in their program but who are only reimbursed for those who actually show up. The system also lacks adequate co-payment schedules for parents, and does not allow parents to choose from a full range of providers. Fixing the reimbursement system so that it works better for providers, workers, and families is an important first step in organizing child care in Michigan.

CCU in California

A few months ago, CCU launched an exciting project in the San Francisco Bay Area. Working with Coleman Advocates (a non-profit advocacy organization that champions children and youth issues in San Francisco) and the San Francisco Family Child Care Association, CCU developed a

model to affiliate self-employed, home-based providers in the union in a special division. Two regional family provider associations in San Francisco and Sonoma County with over 300 members have affiliated with CCU. CCU is confident that membership in the family child care division will grow quickly in the Bay Area as word gets out. CCU is organizing center-based child care workers in the Bay Area and will establish a non-profit Bay Area labor-management partnership.

CCU is getting calls from activists, child care workers, employers and advocates from all over the country who are interested and excited about its work. If you would like to find out how to help us build a movement for quality jobs and quality care, contact Denise Dowell. The toll free number is (866) 236-4444.

Denise Dowell is Co-President of CCU, which was recognized for its work in organizing low-income workers at Greater Philadelphia DSA's Other America Awards banquet last November.



About 50 people turned out to hold an informational picket at the opening of a new Wal-Mart in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The action was held by the Philadelphia Shopping for Justice Coalition, organized by Greater Philadelphia DSA, and including locals of the UFCW, Teamsters and UNITE! and area chapters of Jobs with Justice and NOW

The Deal on Steel

continued from page 8

crowd there is also apparently a "post-Seattle" concern for "political sustainability," which is trade wonk jargon for the threats posed to the WTO by unions and anti-globalizers. This also means that IMF programs for steel-exporting nations like Korea, Brazil, and Mexico now must face possible US economic and political backlash. The growing disparity between the global "north" and "south" has also

inflamed world opinion, making the moment ripe for a new politics of development that goes beyond chasing US dollars through cheaper and cheaper exports. In response to 9/11, Britain's chancellor of the exchequer Gordon Brown proposed a new Marshall Plan to fight global poverty, and called on the US to take the lead in funding it.

True, no one really expects fervently unilateralist Bushites to entertain talk of a global new deal for steel. On the other hand, their cynical, shortsighted policy on US steel is a loser economically, and just

might backfire politically in 2004. Voters in steel producing electoral battleground states won't forget who lied to them when their jobs disappeared. But progressives still need to change the debate on the steel crisis, and move attention away from tariffs and toward the USWA's vision of internationalist economic nationalism. Battle-ground states? They ain't seen nothin' yet.

Bill Dixon is formerly of Chicago DSA and has recently returned to Albany, NY. He studies political theory at the University of Albany.

*Best Wishes
from Local 1180*

Arthur Cheliotis
President

Linda Jenkins
1st Vice-President

William F. Henning Jr.
2nd Vice President

Elaine Allman
Secretary-Treasurer

Gwendolyn Richardson
Recording Secretary



Members-at-Large

- Barbara Bailey
- Gerald Brown
- Joseph Calderon
- Charles Garcia
- Alan Goldblatt
- Gloria Middleton
- Lync Sealey-Payne
- Gina Phillips
- Doris Searcy

*Making Government
Work For You*

Tune in to "The Communiqué"
Local 1180's Own Radio Show

**FOR DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT EVENTS & ISSUES FROM A LABOR PERSPECTIVE
EVERY TUESDAY, FROM 5:00 P.M. TO 5:30 P.M.
ON WNYE 91.5 FM**

**LOCAL 1180
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO
6 HARRISON STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10013-2898
(212) 226-6565**

Ehrenreich on *Nickel and Dimed*

By Kathy Quinn

“Amazingly positive,” is how Barbara Ehrenreich describes the reaction to her best-selling book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. In fact, she sounds a bit overwhelmed at the response the book has received and the attention it has gotten from the public and the media. The account of Ehrenreich’s experiences working in different low-wage jobs (waiting tables, housecleaning, working at Wal-Mart) and trying to make ends meet, certainly seems to have resonated deeply among Americans. In addition to the usual book tour, Ehrenreich reports that she has been asked to speak by any number of union and student groups and non-profit organizations and has appeared on a long list of TV talk shows. She has also given any number of press interviews.

But *Nickel and Dimed* has done more than attract readers and garner Ehrenreich a lot of attention, it has also already spun off both a television documentary report and a play. A&E’s series *Investigative Reports* produced a special two-hour edition, “Wage Slaves: Not Getting By in America,” which focused sympathetically on five different low-wage workers and their families and featured interview segments with Ehrenreich. Playwright Joan Holden has turned the book into a play that opened in July at the Intiman Theater in Seattle and is currently running at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. Most recently it’s been reported that the book has been optioned for a movie.

Of course, not everyone Ehrenreich has encountered since the book came out is ready to run to the aid of low-wage workers. During her book tour, for instance, she was sometimes challenged by audience members from higher income brackets—the ones who actually employ housecleaners in their homes and other low-wage workers in their businesses. “How could I run my business,” an employer would ask, “if I have to pay higher wages?”

I asked Ehrenreich if she thought that some of the resistance to bettering the condition of low-wage workers was a continuation of the traditional undervaluing of women’s work—after all, most of the workers she describes are women. But she doesn’t really think the issue can be framed that simply now. She met



plenty of men in similar situations during her research—for instance, workers in Wal-Mart in departments other than Women’s Wear, the department she was assigned to. She does think, however, that the fact that many of these jobs have historically been stereotypically female does affect employers’ assumptions about what they should have to pay in wages to get workers.

So far we’d been talking about the reactions of people who were not themselves part of the low-wage economy. What, I wondered,

about reactions from the people with whom Ehrenreich worked? She has kept in touch with some of them and she says that at least one person has become a lot more militant. Bringing an outside perspective to their workplace may have helped them to look at their conditions in a new light. “You can get used to these things,” she says, and not even question your situation.

I eventually asked Ehrenreich the question that she told me was the top question put to her by her audiences: What can we do about it? She doesn’t profess to have the answer, or even to believe that there is one answer, but she does see promise in some movements. She mentioned particularly the Living Wage Campaigns going on around the country, something she has mentioned in other interviews. Students have been directly showing solidarity with workers on their own campuses, but she thinks that for most people Living Wage Campaigns are one of the best ways to directly support low-wage workers. Although living wage laws generally only apply to workers employed by companies performing services for or getting assistance from government agencies, she believes they can help to raise the bar generally by giving low-wage workers somewhere else to go, thus putting pressure on other employers.

I asked about a number of other tactics, such as campaigns at the state and local level (good for some issues, such as healthcare) and corporate campaigns (“Wal-Mart certainly deserves that attention”), and this led her to describe a current project—one dealing with an organizing approach to the problem. She is currently working with labor lawyer Thomas Geohegan on an article for *The Nation*, on a new approach for unions. The

continued on page 22

Low-Wage Workers on Campus

By John Strauss

American myth: low-wage work is unskilled labor, generally in service or sweatshop manufacturing; education is the route out of poverty.

American reality: over the past 15 years, a huge low-wage labor pool has grown among some of our most educated workers: community college, college, and university part-time faculty.

While the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has addressed the plight of part-timers since the 1960s, most people regarded it as a relatively minor issue. The typical part-timer was a person with a full-time professional position in the “real world” (i.e., “where people have to work,” in contrast to the “country club” of education) who came in to teach a course for which demand was too low or the subject too specialized to require a full-time faculty member. Because they were supplementing their regular pay and offering their time as a sort of community service, their low (very low) wage was not widely considered a problem.

However, the days of those occasional employees are long over. While the number of part-timers had been creeping up for a long time, since the mid-’80s it has grown exponentially, to a point where 43 percent of all higher-education courses are taught by part-timers—64 percent at community colleges. By the early 1980s, full-time higher education employment had reached a saturation point, making competition for jobs

tremendous, and leaving a huge pool of qualified academics unemployed and eager for positions, a classic “surplus army of labor.” So it was a buyer’s market for teaching, and the old-style occasional adjunct evolved into thousands and thousands of people trying to piece together a living by teaching several courses here, several courses there—sometimes as many as ten separate classes at three to five

which provides them as little as \$15,000 per year (unionized part-time faculty can make \$20,000 or more).

This amounts to anywhere from 25 to 60 percent per credit of what their full-time colleagues bring home. Pay is generally lower in community colleges than in four-year schools and highest at private colleges and universities (though the latter are equally skilled at

exploiting their teaching assistants, who are also beginning to organize). Part-time instructors generally don’t have health coverage or retirement plans; they have no guarantee of being re-hired from one semester to the next, no protection against arbitrary dismissal, no voice in campus or departmental affairs, often no offices and no compensation for office hours; they are often assigned (or even hired) at the last minute, sometimes even a week or two into the semester; they use pre-selected texts—and they get little if any respect from administrators and sometimes even from their full-time colleagues. But most people outside the academy don’t know about

this. Part-timers are an invisible underclass.

Faculty unions, such as the AFT, and other activists have taken various approaches to addressing this problem. The first is contractual: many unions have negotiated a specific ratio of full-time to part-time credits taught, so that administrations have to start hiring new

continued on page 18



What Do Elephants and Part-Time Faculty Have in Common?

Both Work for Peanuts!

Forty-three percent of college and university faculty in the United States are part-time faculty—nearly half. No matter what you call them—adjunct professor, part-time instructor or graduate assistant—the part-timers who teach these classes are highly skilled teachers, but they work for peanuts. The wages and benefits these faculty members receive are outrageously low, only 17 percent receive health insurance, and just 20 percent have a subsidized retirement plan.

The term “part-time” is a misnomer. A large number of these teachers are “roads scholars” or “freeway flyers,” instructors who teach full time by working part time at three or four different campuses.

Not only are these workers poorly paid, few receive fair treatment. Nearly all of these workers are left in limbo regarding course assignments, few are placed on a track for full-time employment and almost none are compensated for office hours.

It’s time for equal pay for equal work. Part-time teachers should be paid wages comparable to full-time instructors for teaching similar courses. Funds should be set aside for health and retirement benefits, and part-timers should be compensated for office hours to enable them to meet with and advise students. It’s not only fair—it’s the best way to maintain quality in our colleges and universities.

The week of October 28 through November 3 is Campus Equity Week. The American Federation of Teachers has joined with a large coalition of other higher education organizations to focus attention on the need for fair wages and fair treatment for part-time faculty. No more working for peanuts. Join us in supporting equity for part-time faculty.

SUPPORT CAMPUS EQUITY WEEK

AFT American Federation of Teachers
www.aft.org

separate institutions in one semester. Even this, with its impossible time demands (double a heavy full-time load, with travel thrown in), can bring a part-timer as little as \$36,000 or less per year for working the equivalent of two full-time jobs. One cannot sustain such activity for long without damaging the quality of one’s teaching—or one’s health. Most part-timers teach five or six courses per semester,

Part-Time Faculty

continued from page 17

full-time faculty (including, ideally, former part-timers) at some point. A relatively healthy average ratio is 60:40 full-time to part-time credits taught; the California system actually managed to win legislation calling for 75:25, though it has yet to be enforced. Unfortunately, administrations have managed to find ways around this, at least temporarily, such as getting unions to agree to relax the requirement during years following early retirement options—which can be worked into each year of a contract, thus effectively voiding the ratio.

Another approach is organizing part-time faculty, ideally into the same local and bargaining unit as the full-timers, though separate bargaining units within the same local have also had some successes. While the first part-time faculty organized in the late '60s and early '70s, it had been relatively uncommon until four or five years ago. Since then organized part-time faculty have negotiated salary increases of from 20 to 30 percent have begun to get some level of benefits; are starting to be included on college-wide and departmental committees; have a vote (though sometimes not a full vote) in the union and, in some cases, in their departments; and more. Much more rare are such amenities as rank, preference in new full-time hiring, and a job-security system similar to tenure, although some unions have successfully negotiated them.

However, part-time organizing has its problems—some of them very demoralizing. One is a long-developed mistrust between full- and part-timers, with some part-timers (sometimes justifiably) con-

cerned that full-timers won't stand up for them, and some full-timers afraid that less "qualified" or "professional" part-timers will take over the unions through sheer numbers. They are also concerned that once part-time teaching is made legitimate, full-timers will be phased out. It can take time and careful planning to build the trust and solidarity necessary to a successful unionization process. And even

Much of higher education has become a sweatshop.

when part-timers are part of the local, the two groups can be played against each other, with administrations using one group's needs as a bargaining chip with the other. A strongly class-conscious union (it comes down to a matter of class dynamics, even if faculty are not technically "working class" by income or occupation) can probably hold on to solidarity well enough to weather such attacks.

The third approach is legislative: put pressure on state lawmakers to mandate desired changes. Unions in California, Illinois and Pennsylvania have won legislative improvements ranging from state-mandated studies of part-time working conditions to actual pay raises. Probably the most positive campaign (in large part because of its high visibility) was a 1999 Washington Federation of Teachers intensive lobbying effort, which included parking a car on the steps of the state house with a sign, "My Office." The newspapers gave the lobbying positive coverage and decried the situation, the public sympathized, and even a Republican legislator came out and spoke to the crowd in support of their efforts. In the end, the state budgeted an additional \$10 million for part-time salary increases, improved benefits, and set up a study.

Creeping capitalism is insinuating itself into all corners of our society. That much of higher education has become a sweatshop is a timely wake-up call to those who consider themselves safe from the market—those who feel that education is either a haven or the salvation from economic hardship. It should remind us all that the struggle of labor against management is not limited to blue-collar workers,

but that this struggle is universal, crossing lines of profession

and training. In this microcosm of the struggle, full-time faculty need to develop solidarity with part-time; faculty unions need to rekindle solidarity with other unions; and unions need to build solidarity with communities. While unionizing and putting rules into contracts will help hold back exploitation, it will only be totally destroyed when those rules are enacted into law—and when the people push their representatives to enforce those laws. That is a conscious, compassionate democracy.

October 28-November 8, 2001, was Campus Equity Week, when, all over the country, union members, students, local politicians, and other activists leafleted on campuses and in towns and demonstrated, generally at state capitols, to bring attention to the plight of part-time faculty. This was a great show of solidarity, and it certainly educated some people. But until all part-timers are treated fairly, every week needs to be Campus Equity Week.

John Strauss is on DSA's National Political Committee and was liaison between full-time faculty and part-timer activists during their organizing drive at Bucks County Community College in Pennsylvania where he teaches (full-time) in the English Department.

Green Party

continued from page 5

ers—the voters that are a key component of any progressive electoral bloc. As long as the Greens are only able to attract a minor portion of the middle-class that already participates in elections, they will not be a credible alternative for most voters.

If politics is to be pushed to the left it must be the work of emerging social movements. A left-wing trade union insurgency or effective peace movement is as likely to push Democratic politicians to the left as build a third party. If the Greens, or any other third party, are to be the beneficiary of such an upsurge, it will be evident and the dispute that divides so intensely will fade. An emerging political force brings new constituencies into the electorate, holds their allegiance, wins partisan elections and reshapes political calculus—that is the test.

In the meantime in Congressional, state-wide and most partisan contests the Greens are still only able to spoil the chances of

Democratic candidates who are progressive, or who are supported by progressive electoral forces such as the unions or minority organizations. And that is more likely to alienate most progressive voters, as well as progressive organizations, than increase Green strength among those constituencies.

Nearly everywhere in the country, the most progressive voters are the Democratic primary voters. That group dwarfs the Green Party and all third-party voters. Until electoral reforms like fusion voting, instant run-off and clean money provide more openings and remove the spoiler effect so that those voters feel free to vote for alternative candidates and change their party allegiance, no national third party is likely to get any further than the Green Party is now: able to throw elections to Republicans while getting little in return.

Frank Llewellyn is DSA's National Director.



Twin Cities' DSA hosts two visitors from Sweden: Jan A. Johansson, political advisor and press officer of the Swedish Left Party in the European Parliament (far left); and Fredrik Persson, Swedish Social Democratic party (far right).

New Orleans

continued from page 13

a one-dollar increase in the minimum wage in New Orleans was introduced by testimony of Dr. Robert Pollin, Ph.D., who testified based on his four month survey conducted in 1999 of 1,118 businesses in Orleans Parish. The effect of a one-dollar increase in the minimum wage on an average firm's operating cost was negligible, between 0.9 and 0.5 percent. Dr. Pollin opined that there would be no significant impact on the business economy of the state because of an increased minimum wage in New Orleans. These findings are uncontroverted by any contrary evidence directly relating to the impact of a dollar minimum wage increase in New Orleans.

It's hard to imagine a stronger ruling than that, but the matter now lies in the hands of the state Supreme Court. Having campaigned for this for six years, New Orleans ACORN and SEIU members know that, however the Supreme Court rules, they will fight on with the confidence of past victories and push for a state-wide minimum wage increase, which will provide every worker in Louisiana with the basic right to a living wage.

For more information, see: <http://www.acorn.org/acorn10/livingwage/neworleans.htm>

David Swanson is the Communications Director for ACORN.

Editor's note: On September 4, the Louisiana Supreme Court struck down the New Orleans minimum wage law under the 1997 state law that bans local wage standards. ACORN organizer Wade Rathke says, however, that the coalition that came together to pass the minimum wage ordinance is not done yet.

The IMF vs. Global Stability

By Ellen Frank

Joseph E. Stiglitz. *Globalization and Its Discontents*.
W.W. Norton & Co.. 2002, 192pp.

Before Thatcher, Reagan and Greenspan, before the public had heard of monetarism or supply-side, never mind neo-liberalism or the Washington consensus, the economics profession was quietly moving to the right. Milton Friedman, libertarian free-marketeer and guiding light of the Chicago School, was elected president of the American Economics Association in 1968. By the early 1970s, economists were using the new theory of “rational expectations” to argue that government efforts to provide full employment were, at best, futile and at worst inflationary. Liberal Keynesianism lived on as a political force in the United States until the 1980s, but intellectually, it had died a decade before. Economic models and theories based upon the premise that markets—irrationally—might fail to provide sufficient jobs or food or otherwise fulfill human wants and needs, were dismissed as archaic and PhD students interested in antiquated liberal policies advised to switch to sociology.

Bright critical thinkers like Joseph Stiglitz continued to model instances where market competition, due to lack of information or other “imperfections” in the marketplace, might generate unsatisfactory social outcomes. But when pressed to spell out the implications of their logic for economic policy, Stiglitz and other “New Keynesians” demurred, insisting that the theoretical failure of a market was not, in itself, an argument for government intervention—that “government failures” could prove as ubiquitous and intractable as market failures.

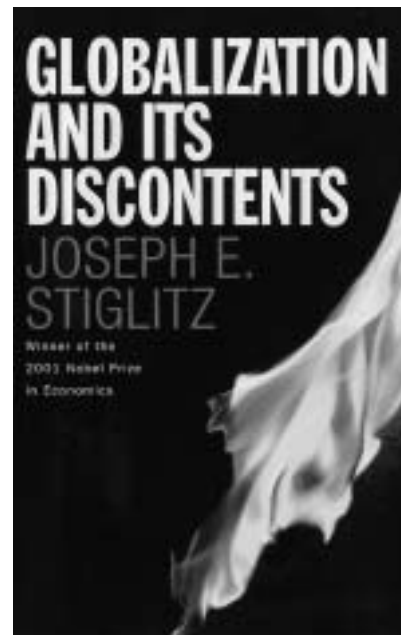
Nearly a decade at the forefront of economic policy making—

he served first on Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) then as chief economist at the World Bank—has forced Stiglitz out of the political closet and he has emerged as perhaps the most formidable intellectual adversary of the Washington Consensus and its approach to economic globalization.

At the CEA and the Bank, Stiglitz observed the inner workings of the US Treasury and the IMF as first the Mexican peso, then the Thai baht, Korean won, Indonesian rupiah, Russian ruble, Brazilian real and several other minor currencies collapsed, dragging the countries’ economies down with them. He participated in the high-level meetings and read the confidential reports that delineated the response of the IMF and Bank to growing international economic disorder. As opposition to IMF policies spread, Stiglitz’s misgivings grew more pointed and more public. By 1999 he was asked to resign from the Bank, at the insistence, rumor has it, of Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers.

Now back in academia, Stiglitz brings his considerable experience and intelligence to bear on the one of the most important political issues of our time—what is the proper balance between market and state, external trade and internal development, poverty relief and debt repayment? His new best-selling book, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, is at turns theoretical, anecdotal, thoughtful and polemical. Above all it is a profoundly moral book that critiques not simply the policies, but the priorities, governance and ethics of the IMF.

The policy critique is powerful though. Stiglitz reminds readers



that the IMF’s original mission was quite different from the role it has come to play in the past two decades. Founded in 1944, the IMF’s job was to provide “liquidity”—short-term loans of foreign exchange—to countries experiencing trade deficits. Before WWII, national governments faced great difficulties procuring financing for imports and were forced either into debt or to erect protectionist barriers, inviting hostility and retaliation from their trading partners. John Maynard Keynes, one of IMF’s architects, contended that, since one nation’s trade deficit was another’s surplus, deficit and surplus countries should share responsibility for redressing imbalances. An international lending institution, by providing credit on favorable terms to the deficit country while negotiating with the surplus country to revalue its exchange rate, could resolve disputes and avert the need for deflationary policies.

Today however, the IMF’s benign expansionary role has been overtaken by its “new mandate”—overseeing the debts of developing countries, micro-managing their economies to ensure repayment and acting as a bill-collector for G-7 banks.

The conditions it imposes on indebted governments—privatization of state enterprises, “liberalization” of capital markets, fiscal austerity, high interest rates and exchange rate stability—are, Stiglitz argues, inefficient, impracticable, and incoherent. More from an ideological attachment to “market fundamentalism” than from sound analysis of the institutions and needs of the borrowing country, the IMF—with little input from officials on the ground—demands policy changes that frequently prove unworkable or counterproductive. Further, because the details of IMF agreements are hammered out in secrecy—often they are not known even to World Bank officials in a joint mission, much less to the citizens of the affected countries—the agreements represent an intolerable affront to democratic process, something the G-7 countries themselves would never stand for.

IMF defenders counter that the IMF operates under duress so that its policies, while not perfect, are not necessarily worse than others—say Stiglitz himself—might devise. But Stiglitz’s complaint

against the IMF goes far deeper than quibbles over the proper way to privatize a bank or jump-start an export industry. The incoherence at the heart of IMF policy, Stiglitz contends, is not accidental; it flows from the fundamental conflicts of interest in the IMF.

Stiglitz is a breath of fresh air to the economics profession.

Effectively controlled by the G-7 countries and dominated by finance ministers and central bankers, the IMF purports to look after the stability of the global economy as a whole, but in fact pursues the narrow interests of G-7 creditors. Narrow creditor objectives—like ensuring repayment—often conflict with the IMF’s nominal commitment to global growth or macro-stability. “The tension is all the greater,” Stiglitz writes, “because this conflict can’t be brought out into the open: if the new role of the IMF were publicly acknowledged, support for that institution might

weaken and those who have succeeded in changing the mandate know this. Thus the new mandate had to be clothed in ways that *seemed* at least superficially consistent with the old. Simplistic free market ideology provided the curtain behind which the real business of the ‘new’ mandate could be transacted.”

Stiglitz, author of a popular undergraduate economics textbook, is a lucid writer and takes pains to define terminology unfamiliar to the general reader. Still, while this is not the only, nor even probably the best critique of IMF policy on the market today, it is certainly the most important. With a Nobel prize to his credit and a tenured position at Columbia University, Stiglitz is a breath of fresh air to the economics profession. Milton Friedman opened the intellectual road that Reagan rode to victory in 1980. Who knows what policy openings Stiglitz has cleared?

Ellen Frank is an Associate Professor of Economics at Emmanuel College.

James Chapin

James Chapin, who had served DSA as a Vice-Chair and who, as Director of DSOC, was the driving force behind the merger that created DSA, died suddenly on September 30th from a heart attack. He was sixty years old. A private funeral is planned. A memorial meeting on a date to be announced will be organized in New York City. An obituary article will appear in the next issue.

Eugene Prosnitz

Gene Prosnitz, long time DSAer and lifelong socialist, and *DL* Editorial Committee member, died recently after fighting a brain tumor. Gene was the first judicial candidate DSA ever endorsed in two close-call elections for a major judgeship in New York City.

Gene was a civil rights attorney with a specialty in employment law, and won many cases for women and men discriminated against by their employers because of their race, gender or disability. He was also director of the Legal Services offices in the Bronx, where he developed survival strategies for indigent defendants in that rather impoverished borough.

His last article for *Democratic Left* detailed the constitutional issues surrounding the Bush camp’s theft of the 2000 presidential election. Many readers found the piece the most succinct analysis of the machinations of the Supreme Court majority that they read on the matter.

A nationally-ranked competitive bridge player, Gene often beat captains of industry in high stakes bridge tournaments around the world. Gene was also interested in the rights of non-human species, and worked as a volunteer at animal shelters, and primate research centers.

Gene is survived by his wife, bridge and law partner Sandy.

Ehrenreich

continued from page 16

idea, which she credits primarily to Geoghegan, is similar to the proposal in Richard Freeman's and Joel Rogers's recent article "A Proposal to American Labor" (*The Nation*, June 24, 2002), except that, where Freeman and Rogers argue that unions should begin to recognize minority unions at workplaces, the Ehrenreich-Geoghegan article will argue for allowing people to join unions as individuals. In the low-wage job market, Ehrenreich notes, people change jobs a lot. And, when they attempt to organize they go through a "trial by fire initiation when the company will do everything to fire you." It would be better if people could join unions as individuals and have access to some kinds of training and knowledge that they can rely on when they go to a new job. If there were an easier way to become a union member, so that people could get some benefit from this connection up front, then they will be more willing to put something into building the union later.

Ehrenreich also still firmly believes in pressing for the tradi-

tional liberal agenda at the federal level: national health insurance, subsidized childcare, affordable housing, etc. There may not be much hope under the current administration, but we need to keep these issues alive for the future. As someone who has come relatively recently to organizing, I had to ask her a question that I have put to many other long-time activists: How do you keep doing

it? How do you keep from getting discouraged when we seem, at the federal level at least, to be getting further away than ever from getting these programs? Her answer: "We have no choice." These are still the programs that people need, as the stories in *Nickel and Dimed* show only too well.

Kathy Quinn is on DSA's NPC and the Democratic Left Editorial Board.

DSAer honored by union

Dorothy "Dottie" Gutenkauf, one of the founding members of DSA's predecessor, the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, receives the 2002 Albert Shanker Lifetime Achievement Award from Peter Boespflug, president of the the American Federation of Teachers Communications Association.



The award, named for late AFT president Albert Shanker, honored Gutenkauf for her "lifetime of service and dedication to the advancement of the goals of the AFT and the labor movement," and acknowledged her "leadership, support and encouragement in helping to raise the standards of excellence for all union communicators."

- Yes, I want to join the Democratic Socialists of America. Enclosed are my dues (includes a subscription to *Democratic Left*) of:
 - \$50 Sustainer \$35 Regular \$15 Low-Income/Student
- Yes, I want to renew my membership in DSA. Enclosed are my renewal dues of:
 - \$60 Sustainer \$45 Regular \$20 Low-Income/Student
- Enclosed is an extra contribution of: \$50 \$100 \$25 to help DSA in its work.
- Please send me more information about DSA and democratic socialism.

My special interests are:

- Labor
- Religion
- Youth
- Anti-Racism
- Feminism
- Gay and Lesbian Rights

Name _____ Year of Birth _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Union Affiliation _____

School _____

Return to:

Democratic Socialists of America
 180 Varick Street, 12th Floor
 New York, NY 10014
 212-727-8610
 Fax 212-727-8616
 dsa@dsausa.org
 www.dsausa.org

IUE-CWA

A **FORCE** FOR WORKING FAMILIES AFL-CIO

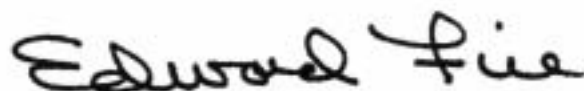
IUE-CWA thanks the

Democratic Left

for its support of the rights
of workers to join unions and
bargain collectively.

Working families are the
foundation of this country's
prosperity and strength.

We must be vigilant in ensuring
that workers' rights are
protected and expanded
in these uncertain times.



President

The USWA, serving nearly 700,000 members in the United States and Canada, proudly supports the 30th Anniversary of *Democratic Left*.



Leo W. Gerard
Leo W. Gerard
International President

James D. English
James D. English
International Secretary-Treasurer

Andrew "Lefty" Palm
Andrew "Lefty" Palm
Vice President, Administration

Leon Lynch
Leon Lynch
Vice President, Human Affairs