## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bulletin Matters</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Death of Communism, G.P. Maher</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Letters, Ed Jahn</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Comments on Howard Hawkins’ Piece Entitled “Libertarian Municipalism, Workers’ Control, and the Cooperative Commonwealth,” Mike Ballard</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter, Monroe Prussack</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Message from the Swamp; Some Thoughts on Internationalism. “Turning Points,” and the Methods of Marxism, Chris Faatz</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Letter to Internationalism, Frank Girard</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Working Class Organised Practice, N. Ramesh, Om Das</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Letters to the Editor, Sam Leight</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Exchange on “Anarchism and Marxism,” per Subversion</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical List</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster, Anti-Authoritarians Anonymous</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter, Ben Perry</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Huncy, In Memoriam</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * *

**BULLETIN MATTERS**

This issue of the Discussion Bulletin begins with Gerry Maher’s observations on the collapse of Soviet capitalism, a subject that I would assume interests all DB readers. Next Ed Jahn responds to two recent DB articles: Ben Perry’s thoughts on the SLP and Larry Gambone’s views on the nature of capital. Comrade Gambone’s views on
the nature of revolution and accusation of unfairness in my DB51 review of his article in the journal Any Time Now precipitated my letter, which follows.

Mike Ballard then answers the attack on "workerism" in Howard Hawkins' DB51 article "Libertarian Municipalism: Workers Control, and the Cooperative Commonwealth." Monroe Prussack's letter expresses a belief he holds in common with all of us: that the interests of everyone demand socialism now.

The next two pieces answer Internationalism's concern about the articles on the Left Green Network that have appeared recently in the DB. Chris Fantz concentrates on Internationalism's view that by publishing articles on the environmental movement the DB is "unMarxist." My letter questions Internationalism's understanding of the purpose of the DB and also its views on what constitutes appropriate activity for revolutionaries.

This is followed by an article from India, which I believe may have been presented at the Communist Enanti Conference announced in DB51. The author discusses the matter of how revolutionaries should organize, and his concerns about replicating class divided society in revolutionary organizations should interest any of us who have found ourselves in authoritarian socialist groups.

Next are Sam Leight's letters to the editor, which demonstrate the use of one of the few methods still available for publicizing socialist ideas. Subversion's article, "Marxism and Anarchism," prompted an interesting exchange in Britain. It was sent to DB because we had reprinted the article in DB51.

Instead of occasionally publishing a list of just the names of journals in our political sector and then reviewing them as space allows, we have tried something new. This issue has what we think is a complete list of such journals including their addresses, frequency, and political persuasion. We will run the list as often as space permits. The frequency with which journals appear and disappear renders updating important. We would appreciate information on journals that should be listed but aren't, as well as those that have expired and should be removed along with information on any other mistakes. Perhaps the main opportunity for error lies in the bracketed description of the politics of the journals. With some trepidation we have used a new term "left Leninist" for some, as well as the questionable expression, "individualist anarchist" for others.

Next is AAA's poster, which may reflect some DB readers' feelings about the election mania the media are trying to create. Then comes Ben Perry's response to Laurens Otter's review of The Socialist Labor Party 1876-1981. We end on a sad note by informing readers in general, and DeLeonists in particular, of Ralph Uney's death.

Again we solicit your articles and letters for publication in this forum. Please single space, use a dark ribbon, and set narrow margins (a seven inch typed line is ideal).

FINANCES: As usual the accounts are all screwed up. The problem is...
"THE DEATH OF COMMUNISM"

By G. P. (Jerry) Mahor; Dec., 1991

The point is made with great celebration that, because of the collapse of the Soviet economy and its society, COMMUNISM IS DEAD and our system of private enterprise capitalism has emerged as the unchallenged, superior system which will prevail into the foreseeable future. Observations in my paper, "MY COUNTRY, TIS OF TREE..." to the contrary, showing the Soviet system to have been fatally flawed from the outset and doomed to eventual failure from its dawning day, remains the gnawing question as to the survival of capitalism.

There can be little question as to its unmistakable trend toward monopoly as a continuing, inevitable objective of its international players. Meanwhile, evidence mounts that its problems are pinching all populations under its jurisdiction. While the economies of most of the leading capitalistic nations began to show some signs of dynamism in the later 1980s, their rates of recovery were very uneven. Some regions and sectors grew rapidly while others continued to stagnate. Their unemployment rates declined very slowly, remaining high by historical standards. In the Second and Third Worlds, economic stagnation and rising debt problems continued throughout the 1980s with few exceptions such as Taiwan and South Korea.

More relevant to this focus is the economic situation in the U.S. From early 1980 to early 1990, as we are so vigorously reminded by the proponents of the Reagan & Bush administrations, the U.S. economy enjoyed almost seven years of uninterrupted expansion. The rate of capacity utilization in manufacturing grew from 70 percent to 84 percent and the rate of price inflation was brought down from double digit levels in the late 1970s to almost half that in the late '80s. The "official" unemployment rate fell from 10 percent to a little over 5 percent (although we continue to ignore the unpublished jobless who have given up the search and, thus, are not counted as unemployed—what a neat idea—or the part-time workers who want and need full time jobs or the minimum wage workers whose earnings do not qualify them as consumers). By selective use of such evidence, one can spin a yarn of magical success attributable to the right wing policies of Reagan & Bush.

But, upon closer inspection, the surface appearance of economic progress in the U.S. masks an underlying reality of social and economic deterioration. It is not just a matter of the well known and much lamented twin deficits of the federal budget and trade balance. Nor is it simply the low rate of savings or the high rate of borrowing that characterizes the nation. These are all symptoms—not causes—of underlying economic failure. Economic indicators demonstrate clearly that the much vaunted recovery did little to pull the country out of a crisis that began in the late 1960s and deepened in the '70 and early '80s.

Real GDP Growth (%) 3.5 4.0 2.8 2.6
Productivity Growth 2.7 2.1 0.3 1.0
Source: Business Conditions Digest

Comparative economic Performance in the Advanced Economies in the 1980s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Productivity Growth</th>
<th>Investment Share %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
United Kingdom 1.8 4 13.0
United States 1.0 5 12.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

We are all well aware of the fact that the U.S. economy is the largest on earth and it is an historical fact that the health of our economy can affect other economies around the world. We also know from experience that, when our economy seriously falters, as it did in the Great Depression of the 'Thirties, the other large, capitalistic economies of Western Europe suffered a similar fate, resulting in social and political upheaval which produced Hitler and Mussolini in Germany and Italy and Japanese militarism in the Far East. Without recounting all of the disastrous consequences of that crisis, it is sufficient to remind one and all that IT DID HAPPEN HERE AND IT CAN HAPPEN!

Meanwhile, let's take a look at how the other half lives. In each of the last ten years, Forbes Magazine has published an annual issue detailing the wealth-holding propensities of our 400 richest individuals together with an estimate of their aggregate net worth. In 1962, their total holdings were estimated to be $92 billion--in 1983, $116 billion--'85, $125 billion--'85, $134 billion--'86, $156 billion--'87. BINGO, $220 billion.

Most of us understand that this tiny minority of people attribute much of their wealth to their stock market holdings. In May, 1987, the Dow Industrial Average reached what was, up to that point in time, an all-time high of 2739. Later that year (October), it took a sudden plunge downward, wiping out thousands of investors while leaving other, better insulated holders, a long term recovery period--some in excess of two years--to gain back their losses. Not so with our plucky 400. With the publication of its 1988 October issue, the famous 400 were right back where they left off in '87 at $220 billion. NOV THAT'S INSULATION!

It is interesting to note that the same Dow Industrial Average, as of this writing (9/25/91) and, for a number of months, has been hovering around the 3000 level--a little over 280 points above that previous "high" of May, 1987. Net results over that times span is a little over 10 percent for the four years of "growth". Assuming the purchase of a basket of industrial stocks in May, '87, their dollar value would have lost something in the range of 24 percent to inflation alone--interest that would have been otherwise earned from CDs, for example, would have meant further loss.

There are many variables in playing the stock market that may have altered this example, so it should not be taken as an actual average. But, let's look at those numbers compared to what happened to the fortunes of the Forbes 400 over that same time span. In the Autumn of 1990, the annual issue estimated the aggregate net worth of the 400 to be $273 billion and in 1991 $288 billion. Of those listed in the 1990 issue, 66 were rated to be full-fledged billionaires; by 1991, 73 had reached that lofty status and, in case you were ready to make that familiar declaration; "ONLY IN AMERICA" and, in case you were interested, worldwide, there were 274 billionaires. THERE, NOV. DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER?

With reference to the protection of an individual's property rights against government infringement, was it the intent of the Founding Fathers to protect monopoly? How would we otherwise categorize the trend pictured above? In an economy with a finite amount of wealth, at what point do we determine that the trend toward monopoly at the top automatically eliminates the majority at the bottom from ever acquiring anything resembling a viable share. Further reference is made to my paper, "MY COUNTRY, TIS OF THEE..." in which I quote Wm Greider's book, "SECRET OF THE TEMPLE" regarding a study by the Federal Reserve Board, looking at the assets held by individuals (excluding those held by institutions) and calculated the financial net worth of American families---
their assets minus their debts. "...54 percent of the net asset value was owned by 2 percent of the families and 85 percent by the top 10 percent...next came the 35 percent that shared the remaining 13 percent of the wealth. (If you wish to call this group the "middle class", be my guest) ...below were the majority, the 55 percent who had ZERO OR NEGATIVE NET WORTH! In other words, they OWED MORE THAN THEY OWNED! And, it doesn't just apply to wealth already accumulated but the mal-distribution is all pervasive in that it applies to earnings, as well.

A recent report by Wa Neikirk, a Washington based financial writer for the Chicago Tribune, published salary incomes compiled by House Ways and Means Committee staffer, Wendel Primes. From 1977 to present, the richest fifth of American families enjoyed an inflation-adjusted increase of more than 24 percent in both pre and after-tax income. The next fifth have seen a modest rise of 2 percent before and 1.5 percent in after-tax income. The other three quintiles suffered real declines in income. Those declines have been most pronounced since 1968. The lowest group has seen its income fall by 13.2 percent. Looking at it another way, in 1977, the wealthiest 1 percent of American families earned 8.7 percent of all income that year. How they are earning 14.6 percent which is MORE THAN THE BOTTOM 40 PERCENT!

In further consideration of trends, the point should be re-emphasized that, like Marxian Socialism, Adam Smith's Laissez Faire free enterprise capitalism has never existed. Most Western European, North American and Pacific Rim economies are neither fish nor fowl but mixed economies. Depending upon the extent to which governments influence a wide variety of economic activities, "experts" tend to label them as more or less "socialistic". BALONEY! This is pure nonsense because, as long as private property and private profit exist, capitalism remains. In that capitalism and socialism are diametric opposites, they cannot co-exist. One may call it any name one wishes; state capitalism, mixed economy, whatever, but it is NOT socialism.

The Soviet system was a perfect example of state capitalism. Government ownership is not "social" ownership. Nationalization is not "socialization". One party political rule cannot be democratic. Yet, misleading references by politicians, media people and academ (who should know better), continue to perpetuate the confusion in this regard; some the the more pedantic members of such groups go so far as to encapsulate capitalism and democracy as though they were the same thing. Kings, Sultans, Emirs and dictators of all hues and stripes are as capitalistic as they can get and, just about as undemocratic as they can get. Worse yet, due to a general condition of an uninformed and misinformed public, there is widespread opinion that human nature is, somehow, incompatible with socialism—that the homo sapiens preoccupation with greed prevents us from freely sharing our largess with each other. MORE BALONEY!

Any anthropologist worth his or her salt will tell you that there are very few universally held, basic facets of human nature. That is to say, we are endowed without having to LEARN them—such as survival, the herd instinct, procreation (sex). These characteristics and "drives" may be stronger in some than in others but, we all have them by reason of our natures. All other facets and personality traits are LEARNED thru environment, culture, history, education, etc. The equation is quite simple. Those things which are learned are the outgrowth of life's all-encompassing experiences. Those which are not, are parts of our nature. A jungle native would have difficulty adapting to the environment of Holywood and Vine or Madison Avenue culture. By the same reasoning, the Hollywood Hippie or New York sophisticate would have lots of trouble living in a wild jungle. They are both homo sapiens blessed or cursed with the same nature, but had LEARNED different "ways of life".

Greed is a conditioned reflex to scarcity or the fear of scarcity. If there is
more than enough of anything of value, we have no reason to worry about not being able to get it. If there is a shortage of food, fuel, money or whatever, or if access to them are threatened by competition, we tend to worry about them and attempt to hoard against the possible denial. For reasons of the fact that capital is controlled by a tiny minority of the rich and super-rich or by institutions controlled by them, capitalism has created a scarcity of capital. Competition for it exacerbates our anxieties which produces the fear and greed.

In their frantic pursuit of the "COMMUNISM IS DEAD" theory, proponents of private enterprise capitalism overlook or ignore the potential of a relevant "CAPITALISM IS SICK AND DYING" theory. If its unmistakable trend toward monopoly were not sufficient evidence, its irrevocable dedication to worker exploitation might supply the extra, needed ingredient. In order for that to occur, public realization of the extent to which exploitation takes place, must be widely known. The knowledge that it takes place on a regular and on-going basis and that virtually all of us are victims, could provide the ultimate coup de gras.

Have you ever noticed the newspaper articles claiming that workers must spend increasing portions of each year to pay taxes before they work for their own needs. One tax reform outfit, for example, claims that "tax freedom day" for the average American worker did not arrive until May 6th this year. BALONEY! The truth of the matter is that taxes, directly or indirectly, are paid out of SURPLUS VALUE—the share of value contained in the products and services that the working class creates and is taken by the employer—the capitalists. It is very easy for the workers to become fixated on the deductions listed on their paycheck stubs, believing that the amounts shown are the wealth that is stolen from them. The real robbery lies far greater than the SURPLUS VALUE that they create with their labor but that they never see or enjoy.

The key to understanding how the working class is robbed is to recognize that wages do not reflect the value of the workers' product. A wage is the price of the workers labor power, or their ability to work. The law of value governs the price of commodities and, like other commodities, labor power has a definite exchange value around which the price (wages) of labor tend to gravitate. Basically, capitalism operates so as to make workers, on average, accept a "living wage". There are many variations for different kinds of labor, of course. A factory worker might command a higher wage than a garbage collector, a machine operator, more than a cleaner; a doctor more than a nurse, etc.—the variations are numerous. But, on the whole, workers receive enough to support themselves and raise another generation of workers.

Exactly, how much they receive determines their "standard of living" which differs by occupation, region and from one country to another depending upon the degree of successful industrial development. Another factor can be measured by the extent which each worker employs the factor of thrift and investment. However, and again on average, the value of the workers labor power and the value of the workers' PRODUCT are two vastly different things. Workers create far more value than they receive in wages, otherwise it would be impossible for the employer to make a profit. Typically, in an eight hour day, the value of the workers' product in the first 1 1/2 to 2 hours of labor will equal their days' wages. For the other 6 to 6 1/2 hours, workers are creating SURPLUS VALUE—value in the form of real wealth that goes to the employer, not for working but for OWNING! It is out of this SURPLUS VALUE that the employer makes his profits and pays for the other expenses of doing business—including taxes.

Exploitation is not something which exists only in theory. The robbery of workers can be measured in any number of ways. You may be familiar with figures I quoted in "MY COUNTRY, TIS OF THEE..." taken from the U.S. Statistical Abstract for the year 1969 during which our Gross National Product (GNP) was five
trillion, one hundred 600 million dollars. Divided equally among the 133 million workers who produced that wealth, we come up with $63,460 per person per year. Figures of such magnitude are difficult to deal with realistically but there are many similar increments of work and production which can be used to measure SURPLUS VALUE.

The following figures were taken from the 1987 Census of Manufacturers conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. According to that census, U.S. workers in TWELVE manufacturing industries produced, on average, $95,519 worth of product per worker per year. In one week, therefore, the average would be $1,897.00. Yet, the average gross wage for the same set of workers came to $304.00 per week. For purposes of this illustration, typical tax deductions were taken for a married worker with two children. The workers' actual take-home pay was a "living wage", alright; $329.60—and, that is for workers in better paying manual occupations. Joining to the burden of $64.11 is but a small fraction of the $1443.00 in total SURPLUS VALUE confiscated from each worker in one week.

Clearly, if workers get involved in a push for tax relief measures, they are missing the real target that should concern them: SURPLUS VALUE itself. And, even if another tax relief reform were passed, any gain that workers would receive would be minimal at best and fleeting, as well. The economic laws of the system would soon act to adjust wages accordingly so that workers' actual "take home" pay would end up about where they were before. The same holds true if taxes were raised. The fact is that wages tend to adjust to changes in the price of basic living expenses. That is why, for example, that wages tend to be higher in Alaska where the cost of living is higher than that in other states.

Thus, the tax issue is a capitalist issue. The idea that workers have something to gain or lose in the debate over taxes is a deception. One consequence of accepting this deception is that many working people, including those who have been propagandized into believing that they are members of that vast "middle class" of overburdened taxpayers, become embroiled in schemes designed to benefit the rich and super-rich at the expense of the unemployed, retired, disabled and otherwise disadvantaged workers.

There is the anticipation among some radicals that, as problems of the economy deepen, modern capitalism will succumb to its own internal contradictions. DON'T YOU BELIEVE IT. This politico-economic system is the most important force that corporate America has at its command. The power to use the police, the military, the power of eminent domain, the power to tax, spend, legislate, use public funds for private profit, the power of limitless credit, the power of the printing press to create money or the Fed by way of computer punch, the power to mobilize highly emotive symbols of patriotic loyalty and legitimacy—these are all their insurance for survival.

Contrary to the admonitions of liberal critics, it is not stupidity which prevents those who control the property and institutions of this society from satisfying the demand for change. Changes are not embarked upon because they would threaten the survival of the privileged interests. Like most other social groups, the elite show little interest in class suicide. The problems are the rational outcomes of an irrational system—a system structured not for the satisfaction of human need but for the multiplication of human greed.

The opposing question of free trade vs. government protection of consumers and workers has no direct interest for those of us who would rather do away with that system. Indirectly, it interests us insofar as we must desire the system to expand as freely and as quickly as possible. Along with it will develop those economic phenomena which are its necessary consequences and which, left to its own devices, could destroy the entire system.

Overproduction which develops periodic gluts accompanied by panic and stagnation
of trade, creates a division of society into a small class of big capitalists and a large class of workers whose wage slavery status is exacerbated by labor-saving machinery and methods with additional layoffs due to cost reductions needed to fend off the ever-present competitors. In short, society brought to a deadlock, out of which there is no escaping but by a complete remodeling of the economic structure. Liberals of all camps (Democrats, moderate Republicans and pseudo-socialists) who formulate palliatives, reforms and protective laws, only serve to delay the day of reckoning and the day of eventual, true socialist revolution. For this reason, and this reason alone, Karl Marx did declare for free trade.

The "do-gooders" and reformers have so cluttered the political and economic landscape with protective gimmicks that it is going to take several more administrations of Reagans & Bushes, together with the elimination of Soviet styled state capitalism, in order to get the job done. Concentrations of conservative members of the House, Senate and Supreme Court will help turn the trick. Every act of deregulation and privatization will hasten the day of eventual collapse. And, when may we expect that day of reckoning to arrive? Allegorical reference is made to the story of a sotten drunk who, in his stupor, fell into a gutter occupied by a mud-splattered pig. Upon viewing the scene, a gentle-woman passerby was heard to mutter: "You can always tell one who boozes by the company he chooses", and the pig got up and deliberately walked away.

Most of my papers on Marxian philosophy have been instructional because I have found an almost total lack of understanding among my friends and associates to whom they are principally distributed. Virtually all objections to such a system are directed to the failed Soviet experience. Certain "buzz words" serve to further confuse the issue as in: What to call it? So, let's get it right! Just what is the difference between SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM?

Marx and Engels both used the terms interchangably implying that they meant the same thing—and, they do. Initially, they used the term "communist" to describe their social form because of the association of "socialism" with the utopian socialists of that era. When the Manifesto appeared, they could not have called it the SOCIALIST MANIFESTO because only two kinds of people were considered to be socialists in 1847. On the one hand were the followers of Robert Owen of England (Qwenites), and the Fourierists, followers of Charles Fourier of France, both of which at that time, had dwindled to mere sects that were already dying out.

Additionally, in 1847 socialism signified a bourgeois movement and communism, a working class movement. In that Marxians believed that the emancipation of the working class had to be the work of the working class itself, they could not be in doubt as to what to call it nor did it ever occur to them to renounce it since then. Subsequently, as the utopian socialists faded into oblivion and were largely forgotten, Marx and Engels came to prefer the term socialism in their writings. There was no attempt on the part of Marx or Engels to change the meaning of the one term or another. The same cannot be said for Lenin.

The concept that post-capitalist society first goes thru a lengthy "socialist" stage before arriving at the classless society of "communism" was a distortion of Marxian invented by Lenin in his work, "STATE AND REVOLUTION". Marx did describe a "first phase" and "higher phase" of society in his; "CRITIQUE OF THE GORTHA PROGRAM". But, he was not describing a transitional process thru which classes and the state would still exist as socialism and the higher phase as communism at some unforeseen future date would produce a classless and stateless society. For reasons that are none too clear, Lenin described Marx's two phases as the scientific difference between socialism and communism. As a consequence, the Soviet Communist Party and socialism became associated with the state ruled society of bureaucratic despotism.
This gave Lenin and his progeny a reason to impose upon the Russian people a system that was not and, never could be, a socialist society, but, instead, a class divided society; the exact opposite. **NO SOCIETY CAN SUBJECT ITS CITIZENS TO THE DENIAL OF BASIC HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS; TORTURE, IMPRISON AND MURDER ITS DISSIDENTS BY THE WILLION; MAINTAIN AN INTERNAL NETWORK OF SPIES AND SECRET POLICE AND HOP TO DEVELOP A HAPPY AND PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE.**

As if this weren’t bad enough, the Soviets blithely ignored the most basic elements of Marxist theory by miscating the role of the proletariat, ignoring the need of consumer goods “productiveness of abundance” and retained an exploitive wage system that denied the ideal of equitable distribution of the wealth produced. They capped it off by establishing the Communist Party as the central political power, thereby creating a super-class of citizens in direct opposition to the socialist ideal.

Naturally, the capitalist class and their leading propagandists have been all too happy to seize upon any and all false definitions of socialism and communism in order to discredit both words in the minds of the workers. The capitalist celebration over what is called the “DEATH OF COMMUNISM” is not Marxist socialism but something more akin to the Nationalistic Fascism of World War II Germany and Italy—one party dictatorship, forcible suppression of political opposition and the economy under central government control. The turmoil now engulfing the Soviet and East European systems, and soon will be in China, Cuba and elsewhere, are a reflection of the contradictions of the flawed and distorted lie originally cast by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile there are many stones to be turned and rivers to cross before those countries bridge the gap between the economic torture they are now experiencing and what they have been and what they have to expect.

Private enterprise economies are no guaranteee of free political systems as can be witnessed in dozens of nations in today’s world. One or two elections do not a democracy make and, like the first robin of Spring, there is many a frost between the first of March and the full bloom of summer. Meanwhile the U.S. debts and deficits keep mounting; financial failures and “hocus pocus” accounting and misappropriations continue to form a huge snowball rolling down a hill, gathering size as it goes and gathering speed as it grows and no one knowing or wanting to turn off the switch until it may be too late. The much vaunted “DEATH OF COMMUNISM” might be a bit premature and the realization that, like the Greeks, Romans, Persians and the Imperialist West Europeans have learned, all epoche, sooner or later, pass on to oblivion.

Personally, I have little hope of seeing the “coming of age” within my lifetime but, I do hope that the day will come when a happy earth can look back at our time of pervasive global poverty, military slaughter, and environmental devastation and say; “How could they possibly have been so blind as to allow a tiny group of rich and greedy men impose and maintain such a cap-sized and corrupt system of needless waste and opulent over indulgence” We get so soon old and so late smart.

**THE WINNERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland 6,607,000</td>
<td>$121,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway 4,225,000</td>
<td>$117,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland 251,000</td>
<td>$116,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A. 243,400,000</td>
<td>$106,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan 123,200,000</td>
<td>$105,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden 8,462,000</td>
<td>$105,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Em 1,608,000</td>
<td>$105,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark 5,133,000</td>
<td>$104,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait 2,090,000</td>
<td>$94,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the nations listed as “winners” 10 of the 19 have populations of less than 10 million and, in aggregate, total only 45 million. The remaining nine total about one tenth of the earth’s five billion population. As is known from numerous studies, only small portions of each nation share in the largess.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>4,635,000</td>
<td>$14,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>76,048,000</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>56,123,000</td>
<td>$12,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>7,617,000</td>
<td>$11,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>14,850,000</td>
<td>$11,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
<td>$11,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>16,820,000</td>
<td>$10,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>24,334,000</td>
<td>$10,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>57,266,000</td>
<td>$10,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>57,586,000</td>
<td>$10,428</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE WARSAW PACT GROUP**
- Czechoslovakia 15,622,000 $10,130
- Soviet Union 288,742,000 $8,374
- Bulgaria 8,973,000 $7,540
- Romania 38,170,000 $6,570
- Hungary 10,562,000 $2,240
- Yugoslavia 23,701,000 $2,480
- Albania 3,190,000 $930

**THE RUNNERS UP**
- New Zealand 3,372,000 $8,239
- Saudi Arabia 14,733,000 $6,920
- Israel 4,371,000 $6,910
- Ireland 3,547,000 $6,900
- Spain 38,170,000 $6,010
- Oman 1,420,000 $5,870
- Libya 4,080,000 $5,500
- Greece 10,031,000 $4,350

**CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>$3130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>$2970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>5,600,000</td>
<td>$2280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>$2090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>$1810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>120,000,000</td>
<td>$1690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
<td>$1690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>70,000,000</td>
<td>$1590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>2,200,000</td>
<td>$1240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1,830,000</td>
<td>$1350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>$1060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Under $1,000-Over $500 Per Capita Per Year**
- Lebanon 3,300,000 $690
- Mongolia 2,125,000 $880
- Phillipines 64,907,000 $590
- Angola 8,530,000 $600
- Cameroon 10,817,000 $960
- Thailand 55,586,000 $840

**Under $500 Per Year**
- Malawi 8,827,000 $160
- Viet Nam 66,821,000 $198
- Laos 3,936,000 $140

**Cambodia 6,823,000 $90
- Ethiopia 49,763,000 $120
- Bhutan 1,534,000 $150**

Favored nations' populations were "well off" by American standards, they would represent less than 2 percent of the earth's total. Private enterprise capitalism is the predominant monetary and financial system of our world which, in turn, controls the central banks of each nation as well as their own creations, The World Bank and the Bank of International Settlements. The impoverished billions of this earth are denied the efficient use of the best capital of all, HUMAN CAPITAL, BY PIECES OF PAPER WE CALL MONEY!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Income per Capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afganistan</td>
<td>14,625,000</td>
<td>$220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>114,710,000</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>835,000</td>
<td>$220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>11,602,000</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>7,446,000</td>
<td>$280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>17,006,000</td>
<td>$260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>635,035,000</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>16,841,000</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>5,546,000</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>16,700,000</td>
<td>$160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>7,008,000</td>
<td>$270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>6,918,000</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>20,342,000</td>
<td>$230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,103,923,000</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>10,407,000</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>165,305,000</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a dozen more countries with over 80 million people whose per capita income per year will average less than $300. This page contains statistics on 52 nations with populations totaling 3 billion, which, on average, have PCIs of $400 per year or, expressed in American dollars, earn $1.10 per day. All figures are from the National Geographic World Atlas. PCIs are determined by dividing the population into the GNP. Of the earth’s 5 billion population, three billion are virtually starving, most others are deprived to impoverished—only a few are self-sufficient.

---

Dear Comrades,

Ben Perry’s letter published in Discussion Bulletin # 51 defends the constitution of the Socialist Labor Party on the grounds that the party bosses expel sections rather than individual members. I am left wondering whether Ben has any idea what democracy is! To expel a section for defending a dissident member is MORE undemocratic than just expelling the member. It’s guilt by association, or, in the language of the US constitution, a bill of attainder.

The SLP has the most thoroughly, consistently, completely anti-democratic constitution I have ever read. The constitution of the former USSR, enacted by Stalin in 1936, is a model of democracy by comparison. The Stalin constitution provides, in theory, for freedom of speech and association. The SLP constitution contains elaborate provisions against these freedoms. Members are prohibited from communicating with each other in any way that might involve discussing party policy, directly or indirectly. Communicating with an expelled member is grounds for expulsion. I have been told by party members that wives have been expelled for communicating with expelled husbands—like the original bill of attainder, that punished a family for the alleged crimes of one of its members.

"Circulating a lampoon" is grounds for expulsion. Tyrants fear laughter.

I read the SLP constitution during the 1960's, because I was seriously considering joining. (Conceivably some of its provisions may have changed since then.) After reading it, I realized that I could not possibly join. And I asked myself the obvious question:

If a group treats its own members this way, what will it do to the rest of us if it ever gets power?

Ben says that the real problem is not the party’s constitutional structure but its compliant membership. But the membership is
compliant because those who are not get expelled -- along with

their friends, family, and associates. Or if they don't get

expelled, they find that they can't live with mindless regi-

mentation, and drop out. The party gets the kind of members it

wants, and members get the kind of party they deserve. And I, for

one, am thankful that this particular group is small and weak and

likely to stay that way.

Dear Comrades

Larry Gambone in his letter to Discussion Bulletin #52 says,

"One half of the stocks on Wall Street, worth two trillion
dollars, are held by worker's pension funds." That's an
UNDERESTIMATE. They really own more like two thirds.

He goes on to say, "The big move in the future is for workers to
actually control those funds". But these funds are controlled by
money managers. Workers who pay into them -- who depend on them
for our retirement -- have NO control over how they are used. In
fact, they are being used to destroy our jobs.

I am one of many whose jobs they have destroyed. The company I
worked for (Prime Computer, Inc.) was taken over in a leveraged
buy-out financed by pension plans. The biggest one involved was
the Michigan State employees' pension. This fund is big because
of the United Auto Workers -- whose organizing victories helped
raise the wages of all Michigan workers, including those employed
by the state government.

Also involved in the takeover was at least one Canadian bank,
which very probably used some of that Quёbecois money that Larry
seems so proud of.

The pension fund managers finance take-overs because this raises
the price of their stock holdings. Why do take-overs raise stock
prices? Because they raise profits. Why do they raise profits?
Because they enable corporations to fire the men and women who
have earned promotions, seniority, and raises -- and who have
paid the most into the pension funds.

The people who have given these funds the most -- who need them
the most -- are being dumped on the street by the funds they have
paid for. If you think this is going to change because the "big
move of the future is for workers to actually control those
funds", then I have some choice beachfront property in Arizona to
sell you.

Larry is correct in saying that capital is being "socialized".
But his apparent belief that this helps working people is
asinine.

Ed Jahn * 4409 Oak Creek Court #501 * Fairfax Va 22033
25 March 1992
Dear Comrades,

Larry Gambone’s letter (DB52) in which he accuses me of writing in DB51 an unfair review of his article “Socialized Capital and Revolution,” which appeared in Any Time Now, strikes me as being unfair itself. For one thing, my criticism consisted only of the sentence: “In the latter [article] Larry Gambone questions the likelihood of revolution in ‘a society which has achieved a high level of socialization,’ by which he means most advanced industrial societies.” Nearly all the rest of the review consisted of quotations I took from the article.

The essence of my unfairness seems to be that I interpret the word revolution to mean a sudden—and according to Larry “violent” change, whereas he would argue that social revolutions take place over long periods of time. According to his thinking the world is in the grips of a socialist revolution that has been going on for perhaps 150 years. Presumably it will end some day when our descendants discover that through the democratic process the state has been abolished and the means of production have become social property and we are producing goods and services to fill human needs, the profit system having been abolished.

But I think that it is Larry who has misinterpreted the word revolution. The English language has a word for the kind of slow change by which one form evolves into another. It is evolution. In the late nineties Kautsky’s protege, Eduard Bernstein, wrote a book revising Marxism in which he pointed out the many changes occurring in the capitalist system and concluded that the German Social Democratic Party could reform capitalism into socialism. The title was Evolutionary Socialism. It became the Bible of social democratic reformists and helped precipitate the splits that occurred in most socialist parties around that time, including the SLP.

Very clearly capitalism is evolving, and it is a process that changes the roles of capitalists and elevates some proletarians into that of highly paid managers. Also, capitalists often pay the slaves a few extra dollars toward retirement. Then they allow that money to return to their coffers by various stratagems so that they can use it as capital. The less realistic of us conclude that we now have a stake in the plantation. Marx and Engels also witnessed the concentration of capital, the growth of joint stock companies. We know that these are not steps to socialism except so far as they allow the further development in the forces of production that have made socialism a very real possibility.

This seems like a good place to scotch that misleading statement about the IWW and building the new society within the framework of the old. The IWW didn’t see the development of capitalist corporations as a part of the process; they were talking about the combat organizations, the socialist industrial unions, through which workers would organize and fight the bosses within the framework of capitalism and then, having built up support, commit the revolutionary act of throwing out the bosses, taking over the industries, and organizing production for use.

The point for Comrade Gambone to remember is that capital is capital whether it is in a corporation, a mutual insurance fund, a pension
fund, or a co-op. It is used by our masters to exploit us. And we will be free when we abolish capital and make it social property.

Frank Girard

SOME COMMENTS ON HOWARD HAWKINS’ PIECE ENTITLED “LIBERTARIAN MUNICIPALISM, WORKING CONTROL, AND THE COOPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH”

Thanks Howard. Your efforts are appreciated. Some of your ideas are attractive, others are provocative and still others quite wrong headed in my opinion. But before I can completely digest them all, I need to get something out of the system—wages.

It seems that most all writings coming out the green experience are fundamentally flawed as other left political traditions e.g. the Leninists and social democrats, in that they don’t address, or have forgotten to address, the question that the wage system of slavery poses, to wit the commodification of human relations. Transitional schemes never mention the essential questions raised in moving from commodity production to a system of production for use, based on need. As long as workers’ (or peoples’, if you will) abilities to produce are traded on the market, along with the goods and services which they produce, as commodities for sale with a view to profit, the objectification and degradation of humanity will continue no matter how democratic or libertarian or anti-capitalist or anti-statist our municipalities and communities become.

An absolutely essential ingredient of our understanding and the concepts which we put forward should be clarity on the effect that commodity production has had on our historical consciousness. We will never organize an effective, democratic movement toward freedom without destroying the reified consciousness which is generated in the commodity production process itself.

The commodification of almost every aspect of our lives, creates the conditions for the perpetuation of a kind of subaltern acceptance of everyday life under the thumb of capital and its various bureaucratic, parasitic structures.

The tendency toward the total commodification of human relations, which grows in proportion to the productivity of capital, has led both to the cheapening of commodities and the dehumanization of social relations. Society has become poorer in love, friendship, the commodity of human relations. In short, it has become an alienated society composed of individuals coming increasingly to view their fellow humans as objects and treating them as such. The decadence of our humanity is the awful social product of the commodification process, even as the potential for material wealth production grows exponentially to absurdly high levels.

To turn things around, we’re going to have to work at getting people to stand this process on its head every time we get the chance. Primarily, we must make our fellow workers clearly aware that they create the world and that as its creators, they can change that world. We produce; we are producers, not vice versa. Workers produce the wealth and consume part of it. Workers live in the environment; they reproduce in the environment. The environment is not an object—a commodity—to be bought and sold to make profits for the capitalists and jobs for wage slaves. It is our biosphere. People do not become objects because they come from another region of nation state, have different skin colors, eye configurations or hair densities. Exchange value cheapens even the most intimate of human relations.

The kernel of class rule is located in the ‘mystery’ of exchange value and how it shrouds use value and human creativity. Creating a free society will involve the shedding of exchange value in the production process both as a means, where possible, and certainly as a goal of our organizing efforts.
On the question of control, it is not clear why there should be a contradiction between workers’ control and community control.

Wouldn’t everybody in the community be a worker, unless they were children or mentally disabled?

We should get our terms straight. Workers are really the producers of society’s wealth. They are also the consumers of that wealth. I should think that if one is assuming a future of social ownership in the cooperative commonwealth, the question of other classes competing for a share in the producers’ wealth will have been settled by default. So, the whole question of whether workers should be subordinated to community control or vice versa is a false one. As everybody, every mature person, in the community will be a worker, there should be no question of subordination of one group to another. The harmonization of need and productive capabilities should be subordinated only to environmental concerns, concerns about free time—reduction of the work day—and the aesthetics of the good life. That decisions about these questions should be arrived at in the most democratic way possible, goes without saying. But the whole project of cooking up preconceived democratic structures of the future is fraught with the very authoritarianism we wish to overcome now. This is not to say that we shouldn’t be thinking about tactics and strategy, based on principles. In the end, though, we should let the dead bury the dead, the living design their own decision making processes and leave future generations to do the same.

But then, the question is raised, just who is a worker in the late 20th century?

To be sure, a worker is a person who depends on selling his/her skills to people who own capital and/or control the state, so that s/he may make a living and they might make a profit (or in the case of the state, exploiting those who would make a profit) from selling the services and/or goods these self-same wage slaves produce. Contrary to what Mr. Hawkins believes, it appears that society HAS divided up into two basic classes—those who own and those who are wage slaves for those who own. Of course, within this system there is still an army of parasites in addition to the capitalists, most prominently the landlords who live by sucking up rent monies etc. from the land and property they own. Yes, and there are a few lawyers who sell their skills in sophistry to protect private property in bourgeois courts sometimes taking office in the political state to render similar kinds of services. But the vast majority of the people must sell their skills, hopefully, to the highest bidder, in order to make a living for themselves and their dependents, as they cannot live on interest, dividends or coupon clipping. Being caught in this dependency syndrome is itself the defining characteristic of the modern working class.

This is not to say that there aren’t people who are unemployed by capital or on retirement via social security or some other part of the delayed wealth they have already created. Then there are the workers who are ‘discouraged’ or underemployed etc. Some of these people find themselves in the ebb and flow of the production process and the prisons. Some end up replacing other workers, scabbing at the same workplace or being hired in another nation state as cheaper labor. Nevertheless, they are all part of the same class. Whether they work in a factory or an office, whether they’re hired to drive a truck or install a disk drive or answer phone calls at a video game parlor. The goods and services they produce are measured by other workers hired by the capitalist state to measure the gross domestic product.
By writing all this, I don't mean to throw caution out on the pursuit of rule by the people. Democracy, even more democracy, has been, is and will be a progressive thrust in the general struggle of the oppressed against their oppressors. That there is more democracy in the U.S. now than there was when slavery was legally protected by the state is a fact, a result of this struggle. Certainly, moving towards a society where the majority of people i.e. the workers actually rule their workplaces and yes, their cities, regions, and world should be a strategic objective of the progressive movements. Perhaps some of the tactics Howard Hawkins suggests should become part of the formula for getting us there. Of course, we should also know which class we're in and who is producing the wealth and why there would be no classes. If we actually had a complete democracy.

Mike Ballard
I.W.W.
I.U. 920

---

3-25-92

Dear readers,

Environmentalists and socialists as represented in D.B. believe they have an important message for the American people in these critical times. Let me remind you that the stakes are high because demagogues like David Duke and black racists are also competing for support. If the economic crises we are in continues to worsen, confusion will increase because of panic, instead of surviving. Under the circumstances I believe that some lessons from marxism could give us direction and have a chance of acceptance by all.

In all social systems based on exploitation of producers there are classes that struggle against each other. Currently those who own and control industry and production have control over government in this country. In other parts of the world that were or are referred to as marxist those who control government control industry and likewise clash with the producers. Currently the responsibility to find incentives to continue production rests with those who own and control industry. Once it is realised that our leaders have no incentive to continue production it is the responsibility of the general public to continue production with new incentives. So long as the incentive of self gain motivates people to perform in our society there will be exploitation and classes. People present conflict and compete with each other in business, government, the church and the family because it is considered normal. Only when people understand and agree that the business crises is disastrous and that the incentive of production for social use under socialism will save civilization, will class conflict and alienation change to universal harmony. Let environmentalists not expect intelligent decisions from people who currently are motivated by fear and hate that class rule generates. However, there is an opportunity for people who value marxist philosophy to associate on that basis to test ideas on each other and the public. Even during a revolutionary crises the revolution must first take place in our minds.

Frgaternally yours,

[Signature]

Monroe Pirecek
A MESSAGE FROM THE SWAMP: SOME THOUGHTS ON INTERNATIONALISM, "TURNING POINTS," AND THE METHODS OF MARXISM
By Chris Faatz

I read with interest Internationalism's "Open Letter" in DB #52. While some of the criticisms raised may be valid—for example, I share their belief that DB should "review the positions espoused within the political milieu on the major historical events of the present period" (although I certainly wouldn't phrase it that way)—I find it ironic that they accuse the comrades of the DB and of Workers Democracy of abandoning the marxist method. The questions raised in DB, and the manner in which they're raised, strike me as marxism at its best—critical, non-rigid, non-doctrinaire thinking that adapts to the realities of the world that we live in.

Marxism is not an approach to the world that is carved in stone, and its method was not bestowed unchanging from heaven above. It is a living, breathing, dynamic body of thought and practice that responds to experience and change in the world. Capitalism's appalling impact on the environment must become as much a part of the body of marxist thought, debate, and action as the sitdown strikes of the 1930s, the Paris Commune, or the collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe.

The environmental crisis has won the doubtful distinction of having become one of the primary contradictions of capitalism. While it remains undoubtedly true that the fundamental historic contradiction is that between capital and labor, if capital, in its frenzied drive to maximize profits, fatally undermines the environmental foundation of human life, then where are we?

Or, as Murray Bookchin eloquently puts it: "Capitalism's 'grow or die' imperative stands radically at odds with ecology's imperative of interdependence and limit. The two imperatives can no longer coexist with each other [my emphasis]—nor can any society founded on the myth that they can be reconciled hope to survive. Either we will establish an ecological society, or society will go under for everyone, irrespective of his or her status."

The task of revolutionaries is to use their unique tools to analyze history as it happens, and to intervene in it in accordance with theory tempered by past lessons. Theory should show us that capitalism is fundamentally incapable of addressing the ecological crisis, a crisis that is unquestionably an inherent part of its logic—and a crisis that, along with such already-understood repercussions of the capitalist system as war and economic collapse, threatens our very existence. History demonstrates that people will organize in response to threats to their existence, and that such resistance is not confined to the workplace alone. The task of revolutionaries is to intervene in such struggles, wherever they take place, clearly demonstrating the impotence of reformism, and to articulate a revolutionary, liberatory program. Or, to steal a sentence from Internationalism's open letter, "Revolutionaries must confront the ongoing events in the life of society and apply the historic
lessons of the class struggle using the methods of marxism."

Hear, hear.

It's ironic that Internationalism, an organization whose positions and activity seem to be frozen in some parody of 1920s German/Dutch councilist thought, should be critical of DB for failing to "apply the historic lessons of the class struggle using the methods of marxism." The world has changed a lot since 1928. Perhaps it's time for Internationalism to catch up with it.

OPEN LETTER TO INTERNATIONALISM

Dear Comrades,

This is in response to your "Open Letter to the Discussion Bulletin" in Internationalism No. 76.

Before discussing the concerns you expressed, I should point out that the Discussion Bulletin (DB) is not an organization, nor is it the publication of a group. Rather it is an independent forum for libertarian socialists of all varieties. It has no political positions of its own. When I write in the DB, I am expressing my own views, not those of the DB or of anyone else. The same holds true for other people who use the DB.

This means then that such expressions in your open letter as, "We had thought that the DB was a political formation coming from DeLeonism..." and "Discussion Bulletin is at a turning point..." and "Discussion Bulletin makes clear its new orientation..." simply reveal your misunderstanding of the DB's role. I mentioned this in an earlier letter to Internationalism, but I think that the idea of a socialist forum uncontrolled by a political organization is difficult for members of Bolshevist-style groups to understand.

What Internationalism's "Open Letter" refers to, then, is my personal opinions about how libertarian socialists can best reach the working class with the essential message. Here there may be a conflict between my views and those of the ICC. To me the essential message is that capitalism is the root cause of social problems and that the solution is the revolutionary act of abolishing capitalism and the state and establishing socialism. Is this Marxist, is it socialist, is it DeLeonist? If it isn't, I hope Internationalism and perhaps other critics of my article will get back to the DB on the subject. That is why this forum exists.

It goes without saying that I don't speak for Workers' Democracy (Regeneration) nor for other readers of the DB who may regard themselves as Marxists or DeLeonists or both.

What concerns Internationalism is my view about how best to get the message across to our class. Internationalism implies that the Greens and the Left Greens are not members of the working class and consequently that joining the Left Green Network and agitating for socialism among people who are concerned about ecology is "a move away
But I have some questions about this charge. First of all, just what does Internationalism mean by the proletariat? I have always accepted the Marxist view that in a capitalist society there were two classes: the owners of capital who lived on the labor of others and the proletariat, who own no capital and must rent themselves out as wage or salaried workers to the capitalist class of owners. After some years in the local Greens, I have not met a single capitalist who was a member. All are proletarians by the Marxist definition although, like nearly all the proletarians I have met in my years as a factory worker and an education industry worker, most of them identify their interests with those of their exploiters.

Next, just what does Internationalism mean by "the terrain of the proletariat"? Is the "terrain" in this instance limited to matters involving work and the workplace? Does it mean that we can agitate among our class only on issues relating to wages and the other conditions of our enslavement?

My two articles in DB52, "Libertarian Socialism and Libertarian Municipalism" and "About That Cooperative Commonwealth: Some Thoughts on Howard Hawkins' View of a New Society and How to Get There" were published after Internationalism's open letter was written and may have assuaged its fears. They make it clear that I am not advocating a departure from principled activity for revolutionists. In my view such activity is anything that promotes the idea among our class that the cause of their problems is capitalism and that the solution is the abolition of the system including the state. The fact is that if the suggestions in the articles are followed, libertarian socialists will simply be advocating these ideas in a new arena, that of the ecological (Green) movement.

Internationalism's second concern is that I am advocating the tactic used by the Trotskyists in 1934, the so-called "French turn," when they entered the American SP and then left a year or so later with a substantial part of the young members. (And in fact, it may be a concern of libertarian municipalist members of the LGN as well.) But the differences should be obvious. The clearest of these is that unlike the Trots in 1934, we libertarian socialists are not the disciplined members of a Leninist political sect. We come from all over the spectrum of non-market, libertarian socialism. Even those of us who are interested in environmental issues and see them as a fertile field for revolutionaries are at odds with each other ideologically and certainly are in no position to create a faction in the LGN.

Moreover, such efforts would be so transparent and so divisive that they would be self-defeating. In fact, I also oppose the efforts of some Left Green Network members to use this tactic in the larger Green Movement. The single thing we revolutionaries in the LGN have going for us is the rationality of our position and the hope that it will overcome the reformist ideas that appear in the LGN. Our task is to win converts to revolutionary positions. Political manipulation to take over an organization or to lead it will alienate people.

On another note, I am responsible for what appears in the DB and am open to criticism in that regard. But by and large the content
consists of letters and articles that readers send expressing their political views. The other component is articles and leaflets which I (and sometimes other readers) choose from periodicals in our "political sector." Here of course I do exercise an editorial function. Certainly I am responsible for the decision not to publish the large number of leaflets on the Gulf War which the different groups produced. My reason was that they all presented essentially the same analysis of the causes, with differences visible only to practiced hairsplitters.

This letter shouldn’t close without some final questions for Internationalism. 1) How does Internationalism “actively intervene” in working class struggles in ways that libertarian socialists including DeLeonists do not? 2) What does Internationalism regard as “political struggle” that can’t be carried on in the environmental movement? 3) How does advocating revolutionary socialism among workers who are concerned about the environment constitute “abandoning Marxism and the working class?”

Frank Girard

Cont'd from p. 2

that I don’t think much about the business part of the DB except to record the receipts. Then innumeracy, coupled with a distaste for the job, creates problems when I have to do the financial statement for the next issue. What should be a very simple eighth grade math exercise becomes a mess. This time I find that what I recorded last month as a $5.45 deficit was apparently nearly $27. It makes me feel like a congressman, a most unpleasant and embarrassing experience.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Sam Brandon $20; Clark Dissmeyer $5; Tom Dooley $8; Monroe Prussack $7; Ken Ellis $7; Mike Ballard $2; Fred Gratist $15; Curtis Price $8; Mike Lepore $10. Total $78. Thank you, comrades.

BALANCE February 27, 1992 [deficit] $26.98 (corrected)

RECEIPTS
Contributions $ 78.00
Subs and sales 120.42
Total $198.42

DISBURSEMENTS
Postage $ 87.00
Printing 95.00 ($45.00 + $50 [150])
Postage due .70
Bank charges 6.80
Total $100.40

BALANCE April 19, 1992 [deficit] $18.80

Fraternally submitted
Frank Girard
for the DB Committee
Put forward are some views on working class organised practice. That there must be conformity between the aim of working class revolution of creating a society without repression-exploitation-fear and the working class organised practice to achieve this aim - has been the guiding principle throughout this exercise. After a process of cooperation with Faridabad Majdoor Samachar, Communist Internationalist (based on ICC positions) and again Faridabad Majdoor Samachar, it may be pointed out that often our practice obstructs the development of these very things we would otherwise like to see developed. As participants in working class organised practice all of us are responsible for such flaws. Our personalities under the daily grind of a dehumanising social system and way of life often give rise to distorted patterns of practice. But keeping in view our aim all of us must give serious thought to the relation between man and man.

1. Our aim is to abolish capitalist system the world-over through working class revolution and the creation of socialist society.

2. Abolition of capital as a social relation and establishment of the production of things for human needs on global-scale in place of production of commodities for market, is equivalent to this abolition of capitalist system.

3. Workers active, conscious participation is essential for this abolition of capitalist system and the creation of socialist society. Workers self-initiative, self-control, self-organisation are necessary condition for their active, conscious participation.

4. Hierarchical social set-up, control from above, special armed body to repress and coerce, middle-man culture, gulf between mental and manual labour and the importance of mental labour are some of the characteristics of capitalist social set-up. These characteristics are expression of the capitalist division of labour. Parties and organisations which operate to maintain this class-divided society and its social fabric bear all these characteristics - an essential feature of such organisations.

5. Our aim as we have stated above is the abolition of capitalist system and the creation of socialist society. To achieve this aim we organise our efforts. For organised efforts our organisational set-up has to be fundamentally different from that of status quoist ones because of the fundamental difference between the aims of the two. We cannot even emulate the best organised organisations operating to govern and maintain the capitalist system of production. If we let our organisational structure be determined by that of theirs, we will reproduce, perpetuate and strengthen the prevalent social relations despite our intentions to the contrary.

6. Capitalist system of production, place and activity of different classes in it and the analysis of the social process emanating thereof, gave rise to working class revolutionary theory. Organised practice of the theory which emerged from practical activity are steps in the process of working class emancipation. Only our practice can prove our claim of being in conformity with working class theory. In other words one can deduce our real theory and positions from our practice. And very often there is found a lack of conformity.
between one's proclaimed theory and practice. This double standard proves fatal to the development of workers self-initiative, self-control and self-organisation.

7. The concept of "professional" revolutionaries declares revolution a path which only specialists "professionals" can tread. This concept is in harmony with that of capitalist managers' and their argument "our management and direction is indispensable". The point of departure of working class organised efforts is "emancipation of the working class is the act of workers themselves". Working class emancipation cannot be the act of specialists "professionals". On the contrary, very often organisations of specialists "professionals" tend to develop their own independent interests and declare the survival of working class theory - working class itself - conditional upon their own survival. Its implications are dreadful.

8. Revolutionaries do not demand for themselves a special status and respect. Like others they are also a moment in the social process - a moment of same length and breadth. They are not some outsiders but are active elements in this movement as its integral part. Revolutionaries are a product of a complex process of the development of class consciousness, they are not its spokespersons. Neither are they personifications of the aim and content of working class movement.

9. Categorisation of workers as 'simple-worker', 'conscious-worker', 'revolutionary-worker', 'communist-worker', etc., widens and renders unbridgeable the kept existing gulf of permanent-casual-contract-canteen-skilled-unskilled-region-caste-language-race, etc, among workers. The first type of categorisers do not differ in content with that of their second type of counterparts. On the contrary, working class organised practice raises the slogan of workers unity world over without any qualifications and takes steps to strengthen this unity.

10. Very often non-workers write the history and provide information about working class struggles. With much difficulty and very rarely we come to know about the self-initiative, self-control, and self-organisation of workers in their struggles. Yes, we are always blasted with details of every big and small act of leaders and famous persons. This exposes such media's place in social production and its point of view determined to a great extent by this place. Lack of factual information perpetuates and strengthens such concepts as "leaders and followers", "individual-worship" etc. Working class organised efforts can only take a course against and towards the elimination of such concepts. Working class organised practice encourages self-articulation of their experiences by workers themselves.

11. The right to freedom of expression cannot be confined within the limits of a circle of one's followers. In its substance this is a right to disagree and differ in opinion. Freedom of expression has meaning only when it is freedom to our opponents, to those who think differently.

12. Working class organised practice cannot be in contradiction with working class' aim. There must be conformity between means and end. The principles which regulate the relation between a working
Workers are conned

Workers never serve the interests of the working class.
They are bought over private property, markets, trade routes, spheres of influence and national boundaries. “Freedom,” “democracy,” principles and ideals are never the real issue — they are the historical red herrings that are used to gain public support. The working class is being conned by political parties and politicians who represent ruling class, capitalist interests. Capitalism is the cause of modern wars.

The solution rests with the political and social awakenings of the working class. This would be followed by a worldwide system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and distributing wealth by and in the interest of society as a whole. Goods and services would be produced solely for use and not for profit. In such a society, war (together with poverty and insecurity) would have been eliminated.

This is socialism — nothing whatsoever to do with the dictatorship, state capitalism of the U.S.S.R. and China, a concept that is perpetually hidden, camouflaged and distorted by governments and the media.

Samuel Leight

Communism yet to be

The recent failed Soviet coup has nothing whatsoever to do with the much touted “failure” of communism or socialism. These terms are synonymous and describe a system of society that has never existed.

The 1917 Revolution heralded the introduction of state capitalism into Russia under the despotic dictatorship of the so-called Communist Party.

Modern capitalism, to operate most efficiently, requires democratic institutions, with the state functioning as an employer in a limited capacity only. Gradually this will be accomplished throughout the Soviet Union. Just like the working class everywhere, however, Soviet workers will experience poverty, insecurity, unemployment, racism and war, notwithstanding that they will have achieved a semblance of democracy.

It still remains for the working class to use the democratic process to peacefully establish a new society in which the whole of humanity will own and control the means for producing and distributing wealth. These ownership rights will enable all of us to free access to goods and services. It would be a world without wages, money and profit, with each of us contributing to the best of our ability.

Idealized and respected “leaders” will not disclose this concept — it would create a true democracy, one not to their liking — socialism.

Samuel Leight

Remove capitalism

The objectives of the “equal rights for women” movement in reality will guarantee that all men and women will be exploited under capitalism on the same basis, without discrimination. However, the wages system, no matter what the adjustments, will still ensure the production of surplus values (wages paid) and capital accumulation.

The workers, male and female alike, will receive no compensation for the labor time during which surplus values are produced. That is how exploitation and the genesis of profits is accomplished — a process tantamount to legalized robbery.

Your June 2 editorial, “Women in combat,” is apparently not satisfied with this sorry state of affairs. In addition, you aspire to women having the same rights as men to be slaughtered and enslaved in times of war — this for the private-property interests of the ruling minority.

Surely it is about time to realize that there is nothing accounant about capitalism. Why not adjust your slangs in contemplating its removal instead of its reformulation?

Should this ever happen, the wages system will be eliminated. Men and women throughout the world will then truly have an equality worthy of social and humanitarian acceptance. They will have free access to satisfy their needs, producing solely for use and not for profit, without money, coupons or barriers. Wars will be non-existent and neither of the sexes will ever be called upon again for senseless sacrifice. How about that for a “new world order?”

Samuel Leight
In the following exchange of letters sent for publication to DB by comrades of the British councilist publication *Subversion*, Robin Cox of the libertarian socialist magazine *Spanner* and Mark of *Subversion* discuss the article "Marxism and Anarchism," which was reprinted in DE51.--fg

*Subversion (letters page).*

Dear Comrades,

In the article on "Marxism and Anarchism" in issue no. 8 you refer to two distinct meanings of "centralisation":

"It can mean everything is run by the whole of society acting as a collective decision-making unit, as opposed to one group of people having exclusive control over their own patch of land, and another over another. It can also mean power being exercised by a minority of people in the 'centre' whether 'elected' or 'delegated' or not. This latter we oppose. The first, however, seems the ideal way for a communist society to organise, since if control over a part of the resources of the world resides in the hands of some people & not in others, then this is a form of private property which we adamantly oppose".

I have to disagree strongly with this analysis. The "whole of society acting as a collective decision-making unit"? Unless I have quite misunderstood what you mean, this is plainly daft.

"Society-wide" planning cannot possibly operate as a viable system for the reason which, oddly enough, you give in your excellent piece - "The Coup in the Soviet Union" - in the same issue: "As the ideologists of the "Free Market" system never cease to point out, it is hardly humanly possible to plan in advance every last one of the literally countless number of economic transactions involved in a complex large scale economy." Quite. So why then give credence to such an idea? Not only is it totally impracticable but, as importantly, is totally at odds with a genuinely libertarian communism. Confronted with the exigencies of the "The Plan" - a plan is not a plan otherwise unless it specifies in advance what needs to be done - individuals will have no option but to go along with it. Even substituting "moral pressure" for a state police force, the totalitarian implications of such scenario are alarmingly obvious.

Society wide planning means that the totality of economic transactions are planned within the framework of a single vast plan. If this is not what you mean then I suggest it is misleading to talk about the whole of society acting as a collective decision-making unit. What then can you mean? Logically speaking, you are left with only one alternative i.e. that parts of society - distinct communities - would act as collective decision-making units within an economic order and that the total configuration of economic transactions within this order would not be planned but spontaneous. Certainly the parts that make up the total picture may be "planned" but not the picture itself. (I make no mention here of individuals who
would also affect the situation as individual decision-makers despite also being members of collectivities).

It follows then that a communist society would necessarily involve a decentralisation of control. (More accurately it will mean hierarchical differentiation of control. Some decisions have a global dimension and would need therefore to be taken at a global level. Vastly more decisions will be taken regionally and even more so at the local level. It all depends on the scale to be taken.) I cannot therefore understand why you object to the idea that "control over a part of the resources (would reside) in the hands of some people & not others". This is unavoidable - notwithstanding your fanciful suggestion that that the development of technology will "more and more" transcend the "natural association" of people with the economic Institutions. It is nonsensical to suggest that people of, say, Moscow would or could equally participate in decision affecting the deployment of resources in Manchester as their Manchurian counterparts. Mancunians would thus effectively exercise control - not total control since the local economy is part of a wider economy - over their own resources.

You chose to call this a form of private property. I would rather call it communal ownership by distinct communities vis a vis the rather rarefied notion of a world community. Private property denotes vertical differentiation - i.e. class society. What I am advocating here is spatial differentiation as a technical necessity and a human-scale alternative to giantism.

The real issue surely is not that some people exercise more control than others by virtue of geographical proximity to certain resources or otherwise (would we all democratically undertake the work of a brain surgeon or, more sensibly, let the brain surgeons get on with the job?) but the inter-relationships between distinctive communities. In this context, I would suggest that the notion of the gift economy is of vital importance. It provides the kind of intellectual framework in which we can begin to understand more clearly the dynamics of a non-market economy. Over-emphasis on free distribution of abundant goods in communism while, in a sense, pandering to a bourgeois consumerism, neglects the sense of responsibility and social obligation that will surely pervade communism. This is precisely where the gift economy fits in with its focus on reciprocity (whether direct or generalised), and for this reason revolutionaries should give it serious consideration.

Finally, a word about those "free marketeers". There is no question that the likes of von Mises, Hayek & co. were absolutely correct in regarding a centrally planned communist society as totally unworkable. However, what these people cannot handle, and where their argument falls apart at the seams, is the model of a communist society that is decentralised, spontaneously ordered and, as far as most economic transactions are concered, internally coordinated via a self regulating system of stock control.

In the aftermath of the collapse of Soviet state capitalism, partly due to the inefficiencies of central planning, and only
a watered down version of it at that - the pure model would be far more catastrophic in its consequences - it is important that revolutionaries should not be seen to be associated with such an idea directly implicated in this collapse. We should make it crystal clear that what we stand for is a free society, free in a way that the so-called free market cannot hope to catch. Free from the tyranny of market forces but also free from the injunctions of bureaucratic central planners.

Robin Cox
BM SPANNER
London WC1N 3XX

To: Robin Cox

Dear Comrade,

Thanks for your letter of 18 October in response to the article on 'Marxism & Anarchism' in Subversion no. 8. We accept some of your criticisms but don't agree with everything you say.

There is a body of ideas, with roots in syndicalism and collectivist-anarchism, which envisages that after the revolution all the decisions concerning how each separate industry is run will be made just by the people who work in it, and/or that there will be numerous autonomous and relatively self-sufficient communes linked by some sort of barter system or even monetary exchange. Such notions are popular in anarchist circles (and beyond), and we think that it's vital to oppose them, since they provide a recipe not for communism as we define it but for a form of self-managed capitalism.

The passage you singled out in the 'Marxism & Anarchism' article should be read partly in that context. We don't think it would be wrong or even improbable that most people would take a more active role in operating the particular means of wealth-production located in 'their own' area than elsewhere. What we are opposed to, as we said in the article, is separate communities having "exclusive" control over this wealth. People living in an area where there was, for example, a scarce mineral resource, would very likely have the most responsibility for the work of extracting that resource, but this is not to say that the accident of what lies beneath the soil where they happen to live should confer on them with a degree of control akin to rights of ownership.

Possibly we exaggerated our position when we stated that "everything" would be run by the whole of society. For a start, we don't envisage communism as being one huge permanent mass meeting! The most intensive phase of planning is likely to be needed during and immediately after the revolution, when we have to clear up the mess bequeathed to us by capitalism. Once the basic framework of a system of production for need has been established, it is possible that communism may evolve into a fairly stable type of society, free of the never-ending 'unforeseen' calamities and crises which are a feature of capitalism, and requiring only a few relatively minor changes here and there from time to time.

We also agree with you when you say that not every issue which had to be decided would have global implications, and that a lot of decision-making could be carried out at regional or more local levels. However, with many issues it's very difficult to draw a line and say that the implications go so far but no further. Certainly looking at things from an ecological point of view, for example, certain activities carried out in one locality can have a profound effect on the lives of people on the other side of the world, never mind the other side of the street. The logic of this points not towards the decentralization favoured by parts of the Green movement but rather towards centralised co-ordination of decision-making on a global basis.
Also, we can't agree that the inter-relation of decisions made on a local or regional basis could be left to chance, as you imply when you argue that "the total configuration of economic transactions... would not be planned... spontaneously." What in to prevent the activities carried out by one "distinct community" coming into conflict with the interests of another "distinct community"? In such cases there would have to be some means of resolving the conflict and ensuring that it did not recur - and this implies planning on a scale greater than just the local or regional level.

To illustrate this with a very simple, small-scale analogy: I might plan to make a bonfire of my garden refuse while my neighbours might plan to hang out their washing. A conflict arises because my neighbours object to their washing stinking of bonfire smoke. We get together and agree that bonfires may be lit on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while washing can be hung out on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The important point here is that the activities are planned by the parties involved getting together and agreeing on a co-ordinated arrangement which is acceptable to everyone - they are not planned by everyone obeying an edict issued by a Ministry for Back Garden Activities! The type of planning we envisage in this sort of collective decision-making 'from the bottom up'. And so, incidentally, it is quite mistaken, and a major surrender to current ruling class propaganda, to suggest, as you do, that the collapse of systems based on 'top down', totalitarian central planning in Eastern Europe has discredited all notions of central planning.

You suggest that "the notion of the gift economy" might provide a suitable framework for understanding how the "inter-relationships between distinctive communities" might work. We have doubts about this concept. For one thing, does a "gift economy" really have a "focus on reciprocity"? Surely the point about a "gift" is that it is given without any expectation of receiving anything in return? But our main doubt is that a "gift" is something which is within one party's ability to give or withhold - and that to us seems to imply a power of exclusivity more normally associated with private property ownership. You say that over-emphasis on free distribution of abundant goods perhaps panders to "bourgeois consumerism", but the concept of "abundance" is socially constructed and will have a very different content in a communist society compared to what it is usually taken to mean under capitalism.

Finally we would like to disagree with your remark that the idea that people's association with their geographical area might increasingly be transcended is a "fanciful suggestion". What causes most people to identify with one particular area at the moment is mainly that their job, home and family/friends are all centred on one place. The abolition of the division of labour and of the distinction between 'work' and 'play', free provision of housing and travel, and the disappearance of the family as the dominant social unit will all serve to loosen people's ties to a particular location. Besides this, communism will of course also see a thorough destruction of barriers such as nationality, race, religion, and so on. You refer to the existence of "distinct communities" in a communist society, but we don't imagine that everyone's material, sensuous and intellectual needs will all necessarily be satisfied within one geographical locality. Rather, everyone will belong to several different "communities", some local, some regional, some global, according to the nature of the activities they are engaged in at any particular moment.

We hope that this letter goes a little way towards answering some of the criticisms which you raised, and look forward to continuing the discussion with you.

Yours for communism,

Mark, for Subversion.

Subversion
Dept 10
1 Newton Street
Manchester M1 2HW
Below is what is meant to be an exhaustive list of English language periodicals which seem to be in the general area of libertarian socialism (although some would undoubtedly deny it). The bracketed characterization of the political views of each group is tentative and open to negotiation.

AGAINST SLEEP AND NIGHTMARE, PO Box 3305, Oakland, CA 94609; irregular [situationist].


ANARCHY, C.A.I., PO Box 1448, Columbia, MO 65205; quarterly [anarchist].

ANY TIME NOW, Affinity Place, Argenta, B.C. Canada V8G 1B0; quarterly [anarchismo-paciﬁst].

BAYOU LA BUSE, PO Box 5604, Tacoma, WA 98405; quarterly [anarchist]

BLACK EYE, 339 Lafayette St., #2, New York, NY 10012; irreg. [anarchist].

BRICK, PO Box 1153, Russellville, AL 35653; irreg. [anarchist].

BULLETIN OF ANARCHIST RESEARCH, PO Box 588, London SE5 8RL, England; quarterly [anarcho-academic].

CIRCULAR LETTER, Motiva Forlag, Postboks 9340 Valerenga N-0610, Oslo 6 Norway; irreg. [councilist].

CLASS WAR, PO Box 772, Bristol BS80 1BG, England; irreg. [anarchist].

COMMUNIST BULLETIN*, Box CBQ, 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT, England; irreg. [left Leninist].

COUNTER-INFORMATION, P/H C.I., c/o 11 Forth Street, Edinburgh, EH1, Scotland; quarterly [politics unclear].

DELEONIST SOCIETY BULLETIN, P.O. Box 944, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 2N9; bimonthly [DeLeonist].

DEMOLITION DEBBY, CP 1564, Succ. B, Montreal, Que. Canada H3B 3L2; irreg. [Anarchist].

DISCUSSION BULLETIN, PO Box 1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501; bimonthly [libertarian socialist].

ECHANGES, BH Box 91, London WC1 N3XX, England; irreg. [councilist].

EWU NEWS AND COMMENTS, c/o IWW, 1006 Market St. #204, San Francisco, CA 94103; bimonthly [industrial unionist/syndicalist].

FIFTH ESTATE, 4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201; quarterly [anarchist].

FLUX, Box A, The Rainbow Centre, 180 Mansﬁeld Rd, Nottingham, England; irreg. [libertarian socialist].

FREEDOM, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England; fortnightly [anarchist].

FREE SOCIETY, c/o Youth Greens, PO Box 7293, Minneapolis, MN 55407; irreg. [left green].

“GREATEST” DEPRESSION ERA NEWSLETTER, PO Box 570042, Chicago, IL 60607; [left Leninist].

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, c/o USA, PO Box 40400, San Francisco, CA 94140; irreg [syndicalist].

GREEN PERSPECTIVES, PO Box 111, Burlington, VT 05402; irreg [libertarian municipalist/social ecology].

HERE AND NOW, PO Box 100, Leeds LS5 8AA, West Yorkshire, England; irreg [libertarian socialist].

IDEAS & ACTION, PO Box 40400, San Francisco, CA 94140; irreg. [syndicalist].

INDUSTRIAL WORKER, 1085 Market St. #204, San Francisco, CA 94104; monthly [industrial unionist/syndicalist].
INTERNATIONALISM*, PO Box 288, New York, NY 10018; bimonthly [left Leninist].
INTERNATIONALIST PERSPECTIVE*,[without mentioning name] 551 Valley Rd. #131, Montclair, NJ 07043; quarterly [left Leninist].
INTERNATIONAL REVIEW*, PO Box 288, New York, NY 10018 or BM Box 669, London WC1N 3XX, England; monthly [left Leninist].
KAMUNIST KRANTI, c/o Bhupender Singh, 679 Jawahar Colony, Faridabad - 121001, India; irreg. [left Leninist].
LEFT GREEN NOTES, 825 East Roosevelt #178, Lombard, IL 60145; irreg. [left green].
LIBERTARIAN LABOR REVIEW, PO Box 2824, Champaign, IL 61825; biannual [syndicalist].
LITTLE FREE PRESS, PO Box 54177, Minneapolis, MN 55454; irreg. [individualist].
LOVE & RAGS, PO Box 3, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012; monthly [anarchist].
THE MATCH!, irreg. [individualist].
MIDNIGHT NOTES, Box 204, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130; irreg. [autonomist].
THE MEANDER QUARTERLY, PO Box 14073, Minneapolis, MN 55414; quarterly [individualist].
NEW UNIONIST, 621 W. Lake St., #210, Minneapolis, MN 55408; monthly [DeLeonist].
ORGANISE!, c/o 848 Whitechapel High St., London E1 7QX, England; irreg. [anarchist].
THE PEOPLE, 914 Industrial Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303; fortnightly [DeLeonist].
PROCESSED WORLD, 44 Sutter St., #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104; irreg. [anarchist].
REBEL WORKER, PO Box 82, Broadway 2007, Sydney, Australia; monthly [syndicalist].
THE RED MENACE, BM Wild, London WC1 3XX, England; irreg. [anarchist]
REGENERATION, PO Box 24115, St. Louis, MO 63130; quarterly [left green]
SINEWS, 131 Spencer Place, Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 4DV England; irreg. [syndicalist].
SHLR, PO Box 3582, Madison, WI 53704; irreg. [situationist].
THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC, PO Box 80, New York, NY 10159; quarterly [DeLeonist].
SOCIALIST STANDARD, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN, England; monthly [world socialist].
SOCIALIST STUDIES, 71 Ashburne Court, Woodside Park Road, London, N10 2SB, England; irreg. [world socialist].
SOLIDARITY, c/o 123 Latham Road, London E6 2EA, England; quarterly [libertarian socialist].
THE SPANNER, BM Spanner, London WC1N 3XX, England; irreg. [libertarian socialist].
SUBVERSION, Dept. 10, 1 Newton St., Manchester M1 1HW, England; irreg. [councilist].
SYNDICALIST BULLETIN, PO Box '102, Hull, England; irreg. [syndicalist].
WILDCAT, BM Cât, London WC1N 3XX England or PO Box 3385 Oakland, CA 94668; quarterly [left Leninist].
WILDCAT, PO Box 40485, San Francisco, CA 94140; monthly [industrial unionist].
WORKERS INFO-RAG, PM c/o Zanisdat Press, GPO Box 1255, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10022; irreg. [situationist].
WORKERS SOLIDARITY, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland; quarterly [anarchist].
Voting is a gesture of faith in a racket that helps facilitate our continued imprisonment and the destruction of the planet. It reproduces and reinforces things basically as they are. The lesser of two evils, and representation itself, constitute a slavish acceptance of the false.

Why play a self-defeating game, one that is provided to keep us powerless, tied to a malignant organization of life? One feels worse after voting because as degrading as it is to be ruled/represented, it’s even more debasing to participate in that process. How much worse does it all have to get?
The Question of Legitimacy

Voter turnout keeps falling

WASHINGTON — The downward trend in political participation continued in 1990, according to a new report by the Census Bureau. Both registration and voter turnout was lower in 1990 than in 1986. The report said 45 percent of eligible adults voted in the 1990 midterm elections, compared with 46 percent in 1986. Turnout of white voters remained steady at about 47 percent. Turnout of blacks fell 4 percentage points to 30 percent, while Hispanic turnout fell 3 points to 21 percent. Voter registration slid from 64 percent of eligible adults to 63 percent. Black registration fell 3 points to 59 percent, while Hispanic registration declined 4 points to 33 percent.

Among those age 18 to 24, blacks and whites voted about equally, 20 percent. But in 1986, young blacks voted in greater percentages than young whites, 25 percent to 22 percent. Turnout among young Hispanic voters declined from 12 percent to 8 percent.

AND THE

CONTAGIOUS EFFECTS OF DISOBEDIENCE

AAA, PQ Box 11331, Eugene OR 97440
16 April 1992

Dear DB:

I would like to comment on Laurens Otter’s review of Frank’s and my The Socialist Labor Party 1878-1971. It is flattering that several readers have told us that the book’s main defect is its sketchiness. Perhaps our full-scale history, if ever completed, will be equally well accepted. Elsewhere, Laurens has suggested that we write a series of monographs on various portions of SLP history with a view to eventually amalgamating them into a single work. I think the suggestion is a good one. I expect to start working on a biography of Arnold Petersen. Needless to say, any help or suggestions would be most welcome.

Taking up some of the matters raised by the review, I think that a discussion of the Marxist/anarchist split in the First International would be insufficiently relevant to the story of the early days of the SLP. When the anarchists (proto-anarchists, really) left the SLP, the International was history.

More discussion could be made about the changes in De Leon’s thinking but I don’t believe that we want to attempt to include a detailed biography of De Leon. This has been done (and will be done) elsewhere, and we definitely don’t agree that a history of the SLP between 1870 and 1914 is nothing but a recapitulation of what De Leon did and thought. I agree that a full history of the SLP will have to spend a lot of time on De Leon’s development. Also, a fuller discussion of the De Leon/Connolly split will have to await not only a larger format but more needs to be learned (at least by me).

If the anarcho-syndicalists were not a majority of the anti-De Leon IWW opposition in 1908, they certainly were in control of the convention. It may be true that not all of the SLP members in the IWW left to join the Detroit IWW. But we are not aware that any prominent ones like Jusus Ebert who stayed behind were able to retain their SLP membership. If Laurens knows exceptions, we would like to know about them.

Eric Hass was not a part of the 1947 "disruption." It is true that he (and a majority of Section New York) initially backed the criticism of Petersen’s overly tolerant approach on the Soviet Union, but they backed away from going further. My memory may be playing tricks, but I think Hass may even have moved for Bershowitz’s expulsion. I do know that the expelled minority were bitter about the failure of nerve on the part of Hass and others. I think the book is not sufficiently clear about this. I hope to write in more detail about the history of SLP splits some time.

I hope that Frank and I will be able to complete our magnum opus on the SLP and satisfy to a large extent the desire by Laurens and others for more details. Expressions of interest like his certainly encourage us.

Ben Perry
RALPH MUNCY 1882-1992

Comrade Muncy died on March 28. The two-column story in the March 28 issue of the Ann Arbor News announced the death of a DeLeonist who influenced all Michigan socialists during the many years he was active in the movement. The article's headline, "Socialist Ralph Muncy Dies," demonstrates Comrade Muncy's willingness to be a publicly visible socialist at a time and place where such publicity was not the road to popularity.

His contributions to the DeLeonist movement include the use of his talents as a teacher, organizer, speaker, and writer. He was a frequent and effective Socialist Labor Party candidate for state office. The forthright way in which he advocated socialism was matched by a critical faculty that he was willing to use in his analysis of the movement itself. In 1969 he resigned from the party and was prominent in efforts to organize SLP dissenters. In the latter years of his life he was a member of the Industrial Union Party.

He is survived by his comrade wife Lydia, a daughter and grandchildren, and many comrades and friends who remember him with respect and affection.

--fg

LEFT GREEN NETWORK
CONTINENTAL CONFERENCE

May 22nd - 25th
Iowa City, Iowa

For more information contact:
Left Green Network P.O. Box 366, Iowa City, IA 52244 (319) 354 - 6441 or Left Green Network Conference Planning Committee P.O. Box 1342, Burlington, Vermont 05402 (802) 862 - 0121