

The College

VOICE

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Stop The Cuts!!

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CAPITALIST CUTS HIT CUNY AGAIN:

CUNY Students and City Workers: Same Enemy, Same Fight!

by Roy Rollin

Picking up where he left off last year, Republican Governor George Pataki again aspires to "balance" the state budget on the backs of working people and the poor. Having already presided over the greatest retrenchment in government services in decades, Pataki plans yet another \$2.1 billion in cutbacks aimed at healthcare, welfare, education and other social programs that benefit millions of working people. At the same time he plans on going ahead with further social service cutbacks for the poor, Pataki has his mind set on even more tax cuts for the rich, with over 40% of the returns slated to go to less than 5% of the population. The state's budget gap is thus the direct doing of Pataki and his Robin Hood-in-reverse routine, rather than the result of any

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Hold Your Penetrals... Cultural Icon Allen Ginsberg's Interview Next Issue

The First Step or the Last Request

CSI RALLIES TO STOP THE CUTS

By JP Patafio

Wednesday March 21 — Over fifty CSI students and faculty gathered by the fountain today to protest the proposed \$250 tuition increase and \$56.7 million budget cut. The Speak-Out organized by the CSI Coalition Against the Cuts, a bloc of the *College Voice* and NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group), was the first campus action opposing the attack on CUNY. Though the rally was small, the organizers hope it will act as a spark to ignite bigger and stronger mass actions.

Approximately starting at 1:30 p.m. lasting till a little past 3:30 p.m., the focus of the rally was to inform the student body of the impending cuts and organize them into a broad based coalition. The demands of the coalitions are; 1. No budget cuts, 2. No tuition increases, 3. No cuts to financial aid, and 4. No layoffs. A mass action will be planned for the end of April.

Emceed by *College Voice* Editor Sarah Husain, the rally started off slowly with a thin crowd but quickly moved into high gear. All of the speakers stressed the need for students to participate in the struggle to defend CUNY.

Adjunct Professor Harry Casen of the Political Science department urged students to defend "their right to a higher education." He discussed why "education is a right due to the changes in nature" where jobs, skills, technology and complex social relations demand that each person be educated so they can live appropriately. He underscored the dilemma in this day and age, that what should be an elemental right for all people, education, is not. Instead he pointed to a trend where education, like other public services, increasingly is a high priced privilege.

One of the only student organizations to show up in force was the Spanish Club, adding an positive element that helped the rally along. Like last year this student group is one of the few clubs on campus to support the struggle for public higher education. Despite letters going out to every



Will it be another round of layoffs for faculty? Students and Faculty at the rally fight to reverse the cuts.

student group, many placed their club's agenda before defending the institution that allows for their existence in the first place. If the governor's budget becomes law many students will not be able to go to college, never mind joining a student club.

Where is Student Government? Not Fighting the Cuts!

The most resource rich student organization on campus played no significant role in organizing the rally, nor did most Student Government (SG) senators bother to show up. Despite repeated attempts by the Coalition to include SG, these "student leaders" voted with their feet, and the vote was negligence and betrayal.

Throughout the weeks prior to the rally there was only one Student Government (SG) senator who did any work. Senator Charlo drafted a letter and distributed it to

other student clubs. He also participated in two of the three organizing meetings. Despite organizing leaflets placed in their mailboxes no other SG senators helped in any significant way. The same was true for the rally where there were only a few senators in attendance.

The most obvious absence from the rally, was SG President Meri Kaufmann. In the last issue of the *Voice* she promised to fight the cuts and organize with other students groups. She has done neither, making her the worst SG President in all the years of SG opposition to the cuts. The SG President appears to have no problems with the proposed budget cuts and tuition increases since she has not done anything against it.

The role of SG on the CSI campus has always been a marginal one. This year SG is filled with bureaucratic and career

minded opportunists whose conservative views mimic those of their mentors in the administration, City Hall and Governor's office. With over \$250,000 in the bank, SG can be a valuable resource in the campaign to defeat the cuts, however, their biggest concern is to stay in power. In order, however, to defeat the proposed budget students will have to hurdle this body of apathy that stands as an obstacle to independent mass action.

Faculty Shows Up - Too Little Too Late?

In the past faculty participation has been isolated to one or two professors either from the History Department or adjunct professor Harry Casen of the Political Science Department. In short it has been disgraceful. The faculty union delegate, Muhamed Yusef, and the "progressive faculty" on campus have shown little regard for CUNY, except when it came to their work hours and wages. The conservative attitude of the faculty and its union are part of the reason CUNY students, faculty and staff are in this dilemma today.

Professors Dobos and Holder of the History Department spoke to students reinforcing the message to get involved in stopping the attack on CUNY. But from the small turn-out of full-time and tenured faculty it seems that the message of encouragement must be passed on to their colleagues as well.

Sarah Husain remarked about the sour role faculty has played in the past when it came time to organizing students, staff and their peers. With 15% of CSI faculty and staff threatened with layoffs perhaps the motivation to stop the cuts will be there this year.

The speak-out ended on an upbeat note with students and faculty talking about future actions. Over fifty students signed up to help organize, or to be contacted about future events to stop the attack on CUNY. The Coalition called for another action, either a campus walk-out, or a larger rally in the city with other CUNY schools.

A "Mighty, Mighty Student" Demonstration

by Sarah Husain

On March 21st, a rally was held at Times Square by Student Liberation Action Movement (S.L.A.M.), a student organization mostly consisting of activists from Hunter College. Approximately 800 students attended the protest against budget cuts and the tuition increase that Governor Pataki is proposing. The turn out of high school students at the protest was huge despite the fact they faced difficulty by the high school administrators and police officers. It was announced that three high school students were arrested outside of Martin Luther Jr. King High School when attempting to leave the school and join the protest. Two students who made it to the rally stated that the entire school was surrounded by police. At last years monumental rally at City Hall more than half of the students there were from public high schools.

With a permit obtained by the organizers, a rally was held at Times Square which led to a march to 24th Street and Madison Square Park. Originally the march was planned to go to City Hall, but the Police Department denied the permit, only allowing a distance of 20 blocks to march from 42nd street.

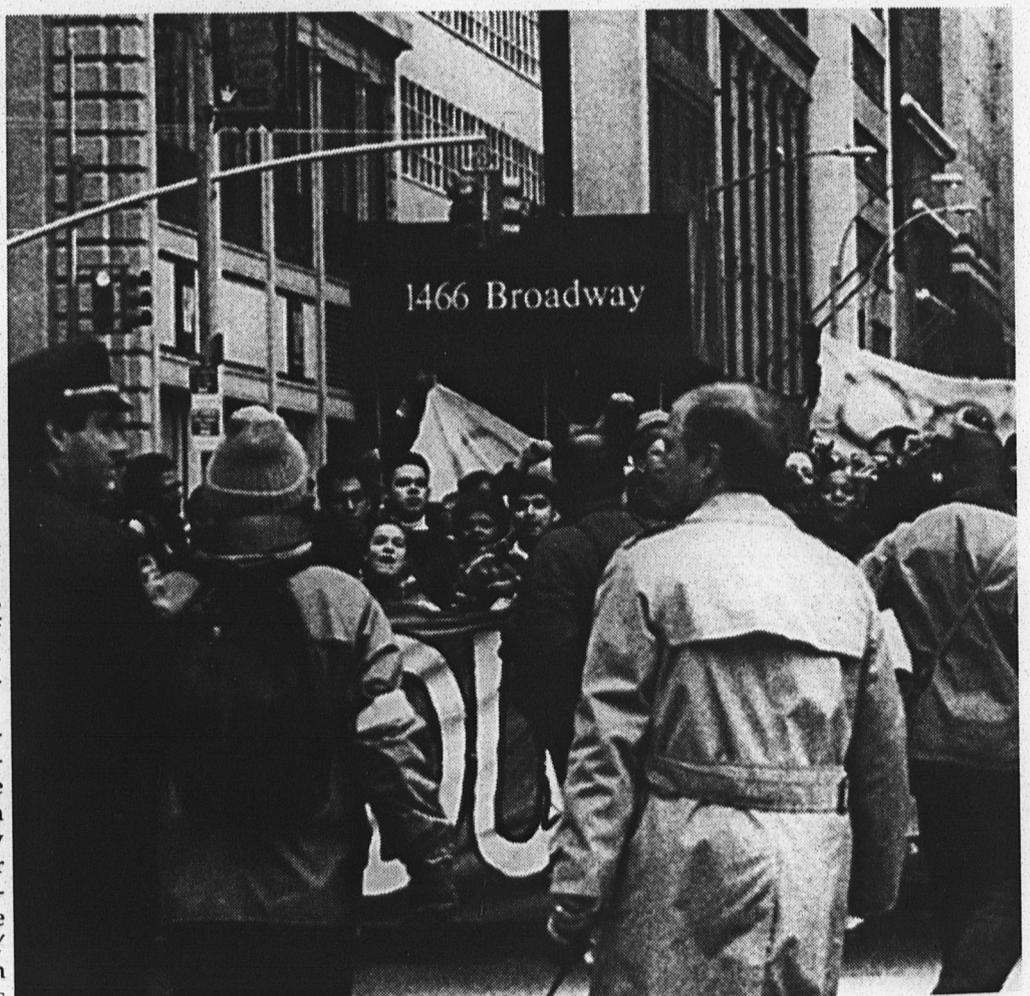
The issues briefly spoken at the rally ranged from cultural topics, such as styles of clothing to political topics about the cuts, to chants about freeing Mumia Abu-Jamal, a political prisoner in Philadelphia who is on death row. An activist from Student Power Movement, Suheir Hammad, pointed out that everyone was looking great wearing Tommy Hilfiger clothing. She questioned the students participating, "What has Tommy Hilfiger done

for us?" Some students from the crowd responded that it has emptied their pockets.

Police out-numbered the demonstrators; they could be seen on horses, motorcycles, in big vans and on the streets in riot gear with billy clubs in their hand. The outrage by the demonstrators on the huge number of cops was expressed by one student asking the speaker to recite a prayer from the podium before marching on the streets. The speaker from the podium was caught in a dilemma that people demonstrating might have different beliefs and ways of praying. This, however, was shortly resolved, people held their hands together while the speaker from the podium recited a prayer for a peaceful march without confrontation with the cops.

Students marched twenty blocks chanting different chants, one of which was "We are students, mighty, mighty students. Fighting for justice and an education."

Compared to last years demonstration in March this was comparatively smaller, however, it was the first CUNY wide demonstration against the cuts. The support of many people who looked out from their work, houses and restaurant windows and those who cheered the from their cars shows that the CUNY movement cannot be sectarian. In order to defeat the cuts, CUNY has to link with community organizations and unions.



The cops put up a red light for the marching students.

Immediately Recall the Current Student Government

by Louis Bardel

3/5/96—The CSI Student Government came into office by less than 280 people voting for them, out of the approximately twelve thousand students on the roster.

On the ninth day of this past February, the College Voice interviewed the CSI Student Government President, Meri Kaufman. For all objective purposes, for the moment, it was a positive interview. Under the light of the latest round of budget cuts to the City University of New York (CUNY), like a near sixty million dollar cut in operating funds and 11.2% reduction in financial aid, Kaufman spoke righteously of wanting to, "get the message out;" and she said excitedly, "...what I want to do is mobilize student government."

She followed these rally cries by saying, "I think that if we can be willing to work together, and the BANNER, and everybody else, to get this news out to students and start getting them incensed. Because what's happening is that their education is being taken away from them."

Forty six days later, not a peep was heard from any of the student senators against the budget cuts, no organizing for rallies, not even the usually ineffective letter campaigns was being enacted. Not until March 27, when a rally was held here on campus, which was organized by NYPIRG and the College Voice, did we hear from the barely elected student government. Senators Natalie Williams, and Joseph Canale got up and told the students to "Register, and vote!", and spoke all that

power to the people rhetoric that rings hollow coming from these apathetic representatives of the student body.

It was a real case of opportunism on Student Government's part, because for all their fanfare and feigning to be student

It was a real case of opportunism on Student Government's part, because for all their fanfare and feigning to be student leaders, they had not even remotely organized anything except maybe their personal resumes.

leaders, they had not even remotely organized anything except maybe their personal resumes. With one exception, that is Senator Charlo Almeda, who showed up to organizing meetings prior to the March 27 rally.

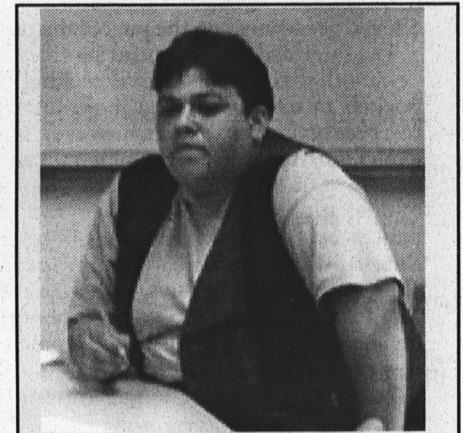
Obviously embarrassed by the March rally, which they did nothing for, as well as their ineptitude as student leaders, the Student Government held a meeting the day following the demonstration. The meeting was ironically called, "Special," since Student Government had known

about these cuts for at least three months. It is truly representative of the type of leaders twelve-thousand students pay twenty six (Part time) to fifty three dollars (Full time) a semester for. Perhaps they need to get kicked in the ass some more and all of the student body should pour into their office and demand that their elected positions be immediately recalled. With leaders like Student Government, next year's enrollment is sure to drop again—just like it did last Fall by one-thousand students! Meri Kaufman should be the first position to be ousted.

So Student Government Finally Had A Meeting!

What was discussed at this "Special Meeting?" Let's see, Senator Genduso had a revelation; and then stated that student's voices and concerns needed to be heard. Senator Natalie Williams reincarnated last year's rendition of 'Beating a Dead Horse,' by suggesting that a postcard campaign be launched similar to last year; last year being the year that CUNY students saw their tuition raised by \$750. Senators Tom Watson and Tina Jefferson also wanted to beat a dead horse, by seconding and thirthing Natalie's proposal, but offered to spend \$2490 doing it. Senator Genduso felt that Student Government should make up the postcards as well, for another five hundred bucks. The sum total of this operation is \$3,000 of student money being spent. For what, we shall see.

Now that student government has become militant users of the post office box,



When it came to fighting the budget cuts SG President Meri Kaufman was full of hot air.

we hope to see them out there in the coming days getting the message out, as SG President Kaufman used to say. By the way, our esteemed president Ms. Kaufman—the one who talked about working together—did not bother to show up.

For his part, Senator Canale asked that everyone coordinating the different aspects of the anti-budget cut efforts have a progress report by the Student Government meeting on April 11.

For those students interested in confronting lethargy, the Student Government office is located in room 1C-207.

THE CUT OF THE AX MORE FACULTY AND STAFF LOSSES

By Marco Sainte

Because of the proposed budget cuts of the 96-97 academic year, The City University of New York Board of Trustees declared a "state of financial exigency," which could lead to the liquidation of around 1,330 full-time faculty and staff positions. This proposed event goes along

A retrenchment plan becomes active 10 days after submission to the Chancellor by a college president. Within 15 days staff and faculty members are notified if they are on the lay-off list.

with senior college presidents' claims of 10 to 15% faculty and staff reductions if the new budget cuts were to be instated.

The president of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), Irwin H. Polishook, is not at all pleased with the situation, saying that "It's premature to decide that we have a financial emergency without knowing what the budget is." He also felt that the situation would ultimately be used for questionable purposes, stating that they would use the emergency to "get rid of people and programs that they don't like."

This is a different direction that PSC is talking, for they were part of the retrenchment committee last year, much less debating its existence. However, because of the doom of unemployment hanging over their heads, they can no longer afford to keep silent on this issue. PSC members are beginning to see administration in a new light, slowly realizing that it's hard to have a buddy-buddy relationship with them. Mohammed Yusef of PSC commented on the situation, stating that he

felt "betrayed" by them. This particular feeling gives some insight into how PSC dealt with management in the past.

The number of people fired will depend on how many join the state's new retirement incentive program. Those in it would receive one month of additional service credit for each year of service, up to 36 months. The program's requirements are that the participant must be at least 50 years age with ten years of service. Those under 55 would have their benefits reduced by 5% for every year under 55.

The one worry spreading among faculty is that not even tenured members are safe in this fiscal exigency, for the university can dismiss them, giving them one year's notice. This goes for CUNY's School of Law, Central Office, Graduate School, 10 senior colleges, and one technical college.

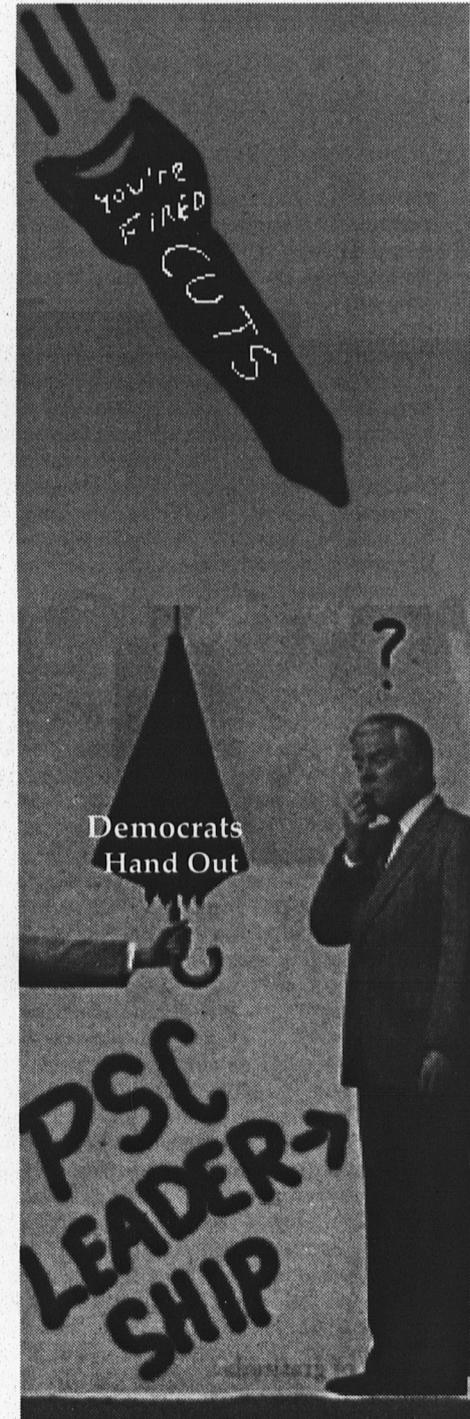
Staff and faculty are not the only ones to suffer reductions. CUNY officials estimated that around 5,000 class sections will be cut, as well as financial aid, registration, child care, services for students with disabilities, library service and faculty maintenance, information which has already been known and spread by anti-budget cut student groups, among them the CSI Coalition Against the Cuts. After being shunned by the masses and sometimes even ridiculed, both students and staff are beginning to see what's been going on, mostly thanks to these groups.

CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman William P. Murphy commented on the whole scenario, stating, "We will continue to work with the executive branch and the State Legislature to ameliorate the impact of proposed cuts." He added, "The proposed budget reductions, however, have triggered the process for retrenchment, appropriate consultation and timely notice for faculty and staff." It is highly unlikely that the Board will be very effective in combating the cuts, seeing that the Board was part of the retrenchment committee last year, and is already consider-

ing laying-off staff and faculty even before the cut proposal was passed. Further preparation for the action is expressed in a resolution passed by the Board stating, "As in past years, faculty and staff participation in a retirement incentive program will reduce the number of involuntary separations due to budgetary exigencies and help preserve recent gains in affirmative-action."

A retrenchment plan becomes active 10 days after submission to the Chancellor by a college president. Within 15 days staff and faculty members are notified if they are on the lay-off list. As mentioned before, tenured staff are given 12 months' notice. Nontenured faculty are given 6 months' notice and full time, noninstructional staff are given 60 days' notice. Ann Reynolds is said to be inclined to advise colleges not to have any retrenchment planning should financial circumstances improve, to go along with the claims she made on being against any type of education cuts. Time will tell, however, whether she'll be part of any more retrenchment committees like last year.

It is a fact that the new cuts would represent the worse since the fiscal crisis 20 years ago. 800 hundred staff positions were already diminished in this present date. Assessments by college presidents reveal that the colleges expect even more lay-offs by at least 10%. York, Queens and Hunter Colleges expect to make reductions 15% or more. These headaches are being caused by the proposed 96-97 state budget, which calls for a net operating cut of \$57.6 million for the senior. Plus according to CUNY officials, the university faces a shortfall of \$96.3 million. The entire CUNY community is now beginning to wonder if they will ever be free of this harrowing situation, and are now going to see if those leaders who promised that they would lead them out of this will surely do so, or if those stating non-tolerance of the budget cuts truly have that temperament.



CUNY Students and City Workers:

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alleged greediness on the part of the poor.

The intended cuts in social services are yet another clear cut case of picking the pockets of the poor to put more into the reserves of the rich. Pataki, however, is far from being the sole culprit when it comes to dishing out crippling cutbacks. The state budget adopted last year was, in fact, the handiwork of the Democratic-controlled state legislature. Indeed, Assembly speaker Sheldon Silver didn't even need any Republican help to get it passed since opponents to the cuts amongst the Democrats were few and far between.

Behind the cuts: soaking the poor to bail out the rich

With workers' living standards steadily declining and deteriorating while corporate profits continue to skyrocket, pleas for "fiscal responsibility" by representatives of the ruling rich thus ring more hollow than ever. For ever since the onset of the NYC fiscal crisis of 1975, Democrats and Republicans alike have taken turns at slashing social services while doling out corporate welfare checks and tax cuts to big business. That is supposed to provide "incentive" for the corporate kingpins, who

Meanwhile, rather than defend CUNY against the cuts, the bosses' PC-pushing lackeys in the administration haggle over just how, when and where to "retrench," ie, how to better make CUNY more cost efficient for their capitalist cronies.

monopolize the wealth that working people create for them, to get the economy going again. Yet it is those same Wall Street concerns and real estate interests who are responsible for the steady loss of thousands of NYC jobs in the first place through their shifting resources away from economic development and social services here to investment elsewhere along with what amounts to outright financial speculation. The same holds true on the national level, as Clinton, Gingrich and Dole stage a shadow boxing battle over the federal budget. All agree on curbing welfare for the poor and needy while increasing it for the rich and greedy. The only difference is over how much to take from the former and give to the latter.

Both Democrats and Republicans agree that in order to make American capitalism more competitive on the world market, workers wages must be slashed even more and already inadequate social services cut back even further. In other words, workers must foot the bill for the bosses; tightening their belts around already thin waists while bloated bankers and bondholders continue to gorge themselves at either the "free trade" troughs of GATT and NAFTA or the always popular Pentagon budget, now more than ever a high priced handout to the military industrial complex which couldn't cut the mustard without such government generosity. Working people must respond, as our French brothers and sisters did, by demanding that it be the bosses who take the losses and that there be no more cutbacks, no more layoffs and no more givebacks. Instead, all social services should be extended, expanded and made free to all who need them by canceling the debt, taxing the rich and slashing the military budget! Insofar as CUNY is concerned that means restoring open admissions and free tuition and providing a state stipend to all students who are in need of such assistance to make ends meet. That requires

militant mass action that goes beyond the boundaries set by pro-Democratic party union bureaucrats. In other words, breaking with the Democrats once and for all and building a labor party based on the unions and a class struggle program and leadership. Ultimately, that means workers making and taking the power for and by themselves by overthrowing capitalism altogether through socialist revolution!

"Retrenchment" and repression...

Needless to say, CUNY is amongst those services slated for severe cutbacks even though the last two years have already seen state spending on higher education decline by 4% on top of a 28% loss in state aid per student since 1989. At the same time tuition has risen 104% at community colleges and 156% at senior colleges making CUNY one of the highest priced "public universities" in the the US. The working class and minority youth who attend CUNY can ill afford yet another tuition increase of \$250 on top of last year's \$750 increase, since, in addition, it is proposed to cut the Tuition Assistance Program by half of recipients PELL Grants. This comes alongside of a further \$60 million worth of cuts in CUNY's operating budget which will mean even larger classes for fewer faculty. Already most classes are being taught by overworked and underpaid adjuncts.

Meanwhile, rather than defend CUNY against the cuts, the bosses' PC-pushing lackeys in the administration haggle over just how, when and where to "retrench," ie, how to better make CUNY more cost efficient for their capitalist cronies. At the same time they make clear what fate they have in store for those who challenge their plans: City College activist David Suiker was suspended for two semesters and banned from campus for his role in organizing opposition to the cuts. Suiker thus becomes the first victim of the CUNY subservise squad cobbled together in the wake of last year's outburst of student activism. Like the federal, state and city governments, which prefer to spend allegedly scare resources on incarceration instead of education, the capitalist educational establishment itself has no trouble coughing up the big bucks when it comes to repression. Instead of abolishing programs badly needed by working class and minority youth, including many won through hard fought student struggles of the sixties, the overpaid overseers that constitute the capitalist educational bureaucracy should be abolished and replaced by student-faculty-campus worker control of the campuses; a far more democratic, not to mention, cost efficient, way of running things. David Suiker should be reinstated and Ann Reynolds and her ilk should be given their walking papers instead.

...Capitalism's priorities for working class youth

The intent of those wielding the axe of austerity is more clear than ever: finish the anti-working class and racist purge of CUNY that begun in 1975 when open admissions and free tuition were gutted by making it impossible for working class youth to afford an education. With half of CUNY's students having family incomes below \$22,000 and nearly 25% helping to support children, it is obvious that should these cuts go through yet another exodus of working class youth away from the institutions of higher education will take place; some estimates range as high as 11,000. Mayor Giuliani responds that raising tuition will make these students more "responsible" by forcing them to get jobs in order to pay their way. Yet most CUNY students are already working to do so. Only the low-wage jobs available in NYC's recession ridden economy make it impossible to make ends meet without some form of government assistance.

Under capitalism, where private profit for a few takes priority over the public

needs of the many, working class youth only get enough education as is necessary to meet the requirements of the job market. In periods of economic decline or "downsizing" when jobs are few and far between, education becomes an unnecessary expense, no less than housing, healthcare and mass transit are for those deemed disposable by the ruling rich. And in today's export-oriented economy, where more and more workers are being relegated to the scrap heap amidst corporate "restructuring," it is the most exploited and oppressed sections of the working class, minority youth and young workers in general who are considered the most disposable since they are amongst the most vulnerable. So while educational opportunities become a luxury, police, prisons and the death penalty become more of a necessity, since the more misery the system spawns in its decline and decay, the more resistance it is bound to provoke in its wake. And leading the way, when it comes to the "war on crime," that is war on the rights of working people and the poor in general and Blacks and other minorities in particular, are Bill Clinton and the Democrats, who have no problem riding roughshod over the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as they do so.

Without struggle there is no progress, with the Democrats there is no struggle at all

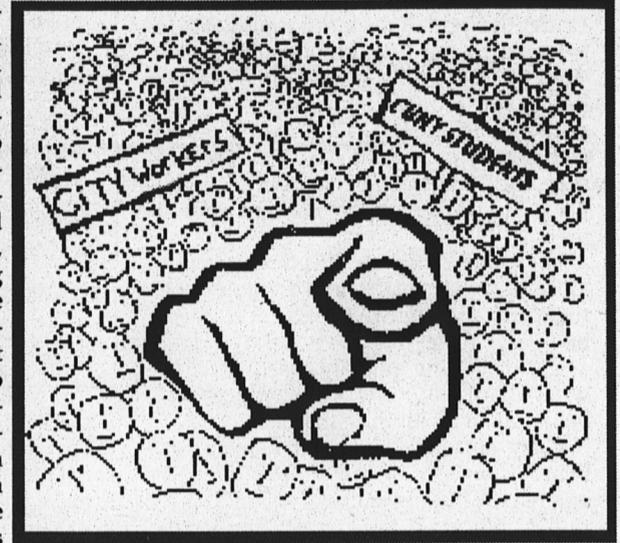
Open admissions and free tuition at CUNY were won by militant student struggles in the 1960s, just as the limited social welfare measures still on the books were products of the militant labor upsurges of the 1930s. *Without struggle there can be no progress.* In both those periods, America's ruling class still enjoyed enough elbow room on the world market so they could afford to grant reforms in order to contain and coopt such struggles. Today, however, the US faces stiffer challenges than ever before from its rivals, so *all* of capitalism's candidates, from Clinton to Dole, agree that even more austerity is on the order of the day for working people if the US to regain its place in the sun in the imperialist order.

Therefore, letter-writing and lobbying, let alone voting for, the same Democratic party politicians who dance to the tune that Wall Street whistles, as the CUNY Faculty Senate, NYPIRG and the PSC counsel, is a deadly snare and illusion. It will disarm any effective fightback; just as any and all support to the Democratic party has always tied the hands of organized labor and the movements of the exploited and oppressed. Militant mass actions, up to and including a general strike by all city workers, are what's needed; not crawling and groveling before the same politicians who take turns in enforcing austerity.

"Love and Rage" SLAMs the United Front

Petty bourgeois protest politics like the civil disobedience stunts or "student power" rhetoric peddled by the anarcho-liberals of "Love and Rage" and their student front group, SLAM, provide no alternatives either. The former substitutes actions by a few for action by the masses while the latter, by focusing solely on students, ignores the fact that only organized labor has the social power to stay the hands of the ruling rich. What they all have in common is their attempts to appeal to the "conscious" of those in power rather than to confront them with a clear-cut working class alternative. Indeed, they are but the flipside of electoral illusions and Democratic party politics...one appeals with letters, the other with a clenched fist. Both see

abstract numbers, rather than social forces, as decisive, only one sees them in terms of votes while the other looks to large crowds at demonstrations...devoid of their class content. For when all is said and done both display the same illusions in capitalist "democracy," be it at the polls or in "the



streets."

Students and workers in NYC should look to the example of France, where massive protests and strikes by public sector workers forced a right-wing government to back off from its anti-labor agenda. Instead SLAM writes off the ranks of the city unions by identifying them with their bureaucratic misleaders. Thus the leaders of the March 21st demonstration chose to slam their coalition with the unions rather than attempt to expose the bureaucrats and their politician pals in front of the hundreds of workers who still have illusions in them. Only through joint actions, not through editorial columns in the pages of *The Spheric*, will the dead-end electoralism on offer from the PSC tops be exposed for what it is. Just as SLAM writes off a student-worker united front against the cuts, it cuts the ground out from under any kind of united action by working people altogether by writing off white workers en masse; pushing the same brand of liberal guilt tripping that was oh-so popular in the sixties when "Third Worldism" was the rage amongst the white middle class radical milieu. The problem is that now, unlike then, *all* workers are under attack, and a united, multi-racial working class fightback is not only desirable and necessary but possible...provided that militants fight for such a perspective rather than fight against it.

When the bosses say cutback, the union leaders say giveback

It is, in fact, organized labor which controls the creation and flow of wealth in this city just as in France. Real working class power is not in the streets per se, but in collective organization into powerful multi-racial unions, which by acting to withhold their labor power can stop that flow of wealth and rally behind them all of NYC's working population and poor just as French workers did. For no less than CUNY students do, they all have a stake in stopping the cutbacks and layoffs.

With their across-the-board attacks on the living standards of all workers, the bosses have laid the basis for a unified fightback by all workers. Teachers in the UFT have already voted down their proposed contact while 43% of the biggest municipal union, DC 37, voted to reject the sellout contact Stanley Hill and Giuliani cooked up for them. What stands in the way of a unified and an effective fightback are pro-capitalist union leaders like Hill, the UFT's Sandra Feldman and Dennis Rivera of 1199, who sabotage any and every fight before it begins through their ties to the Democratic party. For when the

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Same Enemy, Same Fight!

bosses say cutback, they say "share the pain," instead of fightback. As if those who inflict the pain in the first place have any intention of ever feeling it.

Ditch the Democrats...

This being an election year it should be clearer than ever that any struggle around economic alternatives to the cutbacks and layoffs proposed by *both* bosses parties entails a real political alternative: a labor party, based on the unions and a program of militant class struggle that will fight for

the interests of working people and not bow to those of Wall Street. That means fighting not just at the ballot box but on the battle lines and picket lines of *all* the struggles of the exploited and oppressed. And that can't be done by keeping one foot in the door of the Democratic party the way some of the leaders of Labor Party Advocates hope to do. By avoiding any kind of class struggle program they, in effect, ignore the interests of the most exploited and oppressed sectors of the working class in order to stay within the

good graces of the Democrats. This will ensure that if their labor party project ever gets off the ground it will be little more than a playpen for lower level bureaucrats to muck around in while they try to pressure Bill Clinton, not an instrument of working class struggle.

In a period when reforms are few and far between, a *reformist* labor party is no solution...it becomes part of the problem. Only a *fighting* labor party has the potential to unite behind it not just the working class and the poor, but those sections of the

middle class hardest hit by the current crisis, the so-called angry white males turning in despair to the likes of a Pat Buchanan because the labor leaders offer no alternative outside of "lesser evil" Democrats. Only Bill Clinton, the last "lesser evil" they shoved down workers' throats, proved to be every bit as evil as George Bush. For when both bosses' parties agree that soaking the poor to bail out the rich is on the

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THE STUDENT MIND DURING A FINAL EXAM.

The prof never covered this!

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe...

Actual knowledge on subject.

Prayers for a miracle flood, fire or tornado.

The T.A.'s kinda cute.

Summer break

Panic zone.

I knew I should have read the book.

I hope the curve is really low.

"Soon this will all be behind me"

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EDITORIAL

Break with Politics of the Past

As the month of April progresses a series of actions will take place throughout NY city and state, opposing the governor's budget proposal. The "progressive liberals", and union leaders with a stake in the Democratic party will try to rally people behind the second party of the capitalist class in order to defeat the severe attack on CUNY, as well as the other public services used by millions of working class citizens each day. Independent mass actions by workers and students must be built as a prerequisite to any effective strategy to defeat the cuts.

On March 27th, the CSI Coalition Against the Cuts (an ad hoc coalition of the College Voice, and NYPIRG) held a rally that over 50 students and faculty members attended to "voice their opposition", as one faculty member put it. The truth of this statement, no one can deny. However what is more important to us is the fact that other struggles can be won if students, faculty and staff unite like a clenched fist to stop the Corporate Downsizing of CUNY.

One professor brought over 15 students to the rally. What if a mere 15% of the faculty mimicked the actions of this professor, not only at CSI but throughout CUNY? The dynamics of the struggle would immediately reverse in the favor of the students, faculty, and staff. The problem however is the weak leadership of the faculty union (Professional Staff Congress). The current President, Irwin Polishook and his entrenched bureaucracy would rather cut a deal with the Democratic Party and work with administration in finding the best solution on how to fire their own. Actions like last years would not reverse the cuts but seek a means to fire those full time faculty members whose time has come prematurely.

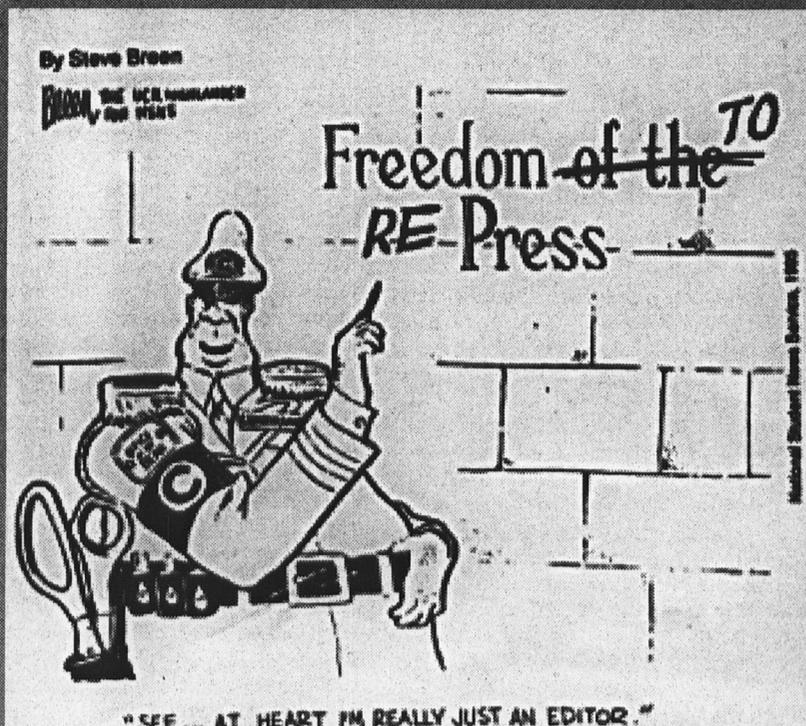
This year the story is apparently different at least on one level. Believing to be "betrayed" by their "partners" in administration who moved quickly to impose "fiscal exigency," which allows the administration to bypass contractual obligations and layoff an expected 1300 faculty and staff, without any consent from the unions that represent these workers. The PSC is posturing to fight their 'partners' in management. According to CSI PSC delegate Mohammed Yusef, the union is discouraging faculty members to join administration's management/labor committee, aptly dubbed the Retrenchment Committee. We welcome this step by the PSC, unfortunately it has taken a crisis situation for Polishook and crew to realize that the only relationship between the union and management is essentially antagonistic.

However given the shameful record of the PSC's record on organizing faculty against attacks on jobs and work conditions and the overall attack on CUNY and given that this record is based on the financial and social ties of the PSC to the Democratic Party we can expect the "angry" bureaucrats to sell faculty and students out once more. The independent organization of faculty and students in alliance with CUNY workers around an uncompromising program against the cuts is the surest way to hold the PSC leadership to their tasks and if/when they get into the sell out frame of mind replace them with a new leadership that speaks to CUNY's needs.

Hands Off Student Activist!

Once again the administration has breached that wall where their rhetoric for "democracy" crashes up against the wall of censorship. At City College the administration has suspended student activist David Suker for trumped up charges of breaking CUNY By-Laws last year while opposing the budget cuts. The two semester suspension is a blatant act of repression aimed at the most vigilant fighters for open admissions, free and fully funded public higher education. **Reverse the suspension of David Suker! Hands off student activist!!**

The suspension is an outright intimidation tactic by administration and their watchdogs in security. It must be opposed by all those who believe in the democratic right to free speech and civil disobedience in the face of an oppressive force. **We demand that CSI administration make a public statement against these actions.**



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The College Voice - Who We Are

The College Voice is a publication committed to the interests of the working class. We as students at CUNY recognize that we are very much part of the multi-racial, multi-national working class of New York City. The severe attacks that CUNY is facing are mirrored by the severe attacks on our jobs, our unions and on our democratic civil rights.

We oppose the poisonous divisions fostered on the basis of race by the bosses who make us fight each other for their crumbs.

We oppose the systematic attempts to reduce women to a defined feminine position.

We oppose the vicious attacks on immigrants who are the most vulnerable victims of the bosses marketplace.

We oppose every form of bigotry on principle as unbecoming our species and recognize that the fight for liberation will be achieved only in the course of combatting these divisions.

We oppose the use of the environment as a source of material goods to be conserved for future commodities.

The College Voice recognizes that it is the system of capitalism based in the private ownership of the means of production that is fundamentally responsible for the fantastic hardship and misery for the vast majority of our species across the globe, in the midst of plenty.

The CV recognizes that this contradiction far from being some "natural" condition is one maintained by the armed power of the capitalist state apparatus that insures the domination of the few over the many. The bourgeoisie over the working class.

The CV recognizes the possibility and the burning necessity of a system in which the productive forces are democratically organized through the cooperative association of workers and production based on human needs instead of private profits, and in harmony with the ecology.

The CV recognizes the necessity for creating a political party of the working class that will organize internationally and will be democratic in its decision making. Grass Roots in its action.

The CV seeks to engage all those who are committed to fighting exploitation and oppression in united front action.

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Oh What Fools These Mortals Be....

By Marco Sainte

Man, do any of you reading this now remember an article written in the *Voice*, published at September 12, 1995? There was a particular paragraph that began like this:

"Human beings have long held the belief that man is the superior animal simply because of the advanced organ in his/her head. It's time to start using it, CSI."

It's now March 18, 1996, and it seems as if no one was listening (or reading...). Cuts are smashing in left and right, financial aid is in danger of being slashed, even less classes and teachers are going to be offered, and of course, the good old tuition is going up once again. Does this mean anything to you?

All over CUNY, there have been students fighting against this. Dammit, coalitions have been formed! There are strong reactions resounding throughout just about all the campuses in the CUNY system; Hunter College, City College, Queensborough College, Brooklyn College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, everyone is fighting man. Everyone but CSI once again.

Do you know how degrading it is for us that everyone knows how damaging it is but we don't seem to? Compared to all the rest of the thinking minds out there we look like retards. OK, I'm not being fair, there are a few people in CSI with some brain energy, but it's such an alarming few that it's infuriating. Students are in danger of losing their education and, save for the newly formed CSI coalition, which hardly any are signing up for, practically nothing is being done about it. Everyone here has got an excuse: "Well, no matter what we do, they're just gonna cut us anyway." "I just don't have the time," "Well other people are already fighting, why should I?" "I'm gonna be out of here this semester," this is the type of attitude that runs rampant in this campus. And then they wonder why all these bad things are happening to them.

I mean, there are some professors, like Prof. S. J. Sterns, who tells students what's up and also uses the situation to motivate students to excel, but there are also many faculty that are basically contributing nothing toward fighting this. These people must be found out and exposed, because it's a real shame that both the students' education and their jobs are at risk and yet they do nothing. They're adding to the lethargy that's hovering over this campus.

Sadly enough there are also a group of students that simply don't know what's headed their way. As unbelievable as it sounds, it's true. This information just doesn't seem to be played up by the administration, which is an atrocity because this concerns the student's education and their ability to receive it. I mean, if you were in charge of a particular campus, supposedly committed to the education of the college community, and there were cuts on the horizon which could hamper the students eligibility to function in society, wouldn't you spread the word? Wouldn't you warn everyone in the college community what was about to hap-

If you're going to turn your back on us, you're turning your back on your friends and your children if they attend CUNY in the future. That's all there is to it.

pen? I'm certain a sane leader would, but unfortunately, I hear nothing from them.

You know, if I was a student, and incidentally I happen to be, I would be questioning this whole scenario. I would be wondering why information so vital to the students education is not being spread by Administration and other main heads of CSI government, not to mention trying to do something about the cuts to CUNY and financial aid headed our way, not just sitting on my ass wondering about the next party I'm going to, mumbling that there's nothing one can do when confronted about this mess. Dammit, you're supposed to be college students. Do you have any idea what this means? College students all over the world when confronted with higher education cuts realize all the shit going on and usually try to think of ways to change it. That's probably why other countries have been kicking America's ass in many fields these past years. They value education and men and women of thought. Here you make fun of intellectuals and call them nerds. Have you ever noticed that whenever a major change or event for the good of humanity happens in a country, usually students are involved? They've started rallies, protests, revolutions even. Students have started organizations dedicated to bettering their society. Hell, on many of the trips that Malcom X took to different nations, he was invited by STUDENTS. They organized those major events in their countries. Those men and women in those nations knew the value of education. They were also aware of what was around them, while learning as much as they could. They were real students.

Take a stand and start being a student. You don't have to start a revolution or anything like that, but you could at least fight for your survival. The lowest life forms can do it; there's no reason why you can't. Here's a start: ask faculty what they are doing about the cuts. Their jobs are at stake, aren't they? Ask these people what they are doing about this situation; you might be surprised. There are a lot of professors who are not even warning students, much less doing something themselves. I mean, there are some professors, like Prof. S. J. Sterns, who tells students what's up and also uses the situation to motivate students to excel, but there are also many faculty that are basically contributing nothing toward fighting this. These people must be found out and exposed, because it's a real shame that both the students' education and their jobs are at risk and yet they do nothing. They're adding to the lethargy that's hovering over this campus. We do not need this here; we need action. The students of CSI should start motivating themselves and their mentors to action and vice versa.

Here's something for CSI students to chew on, to get those minds rolling. Ann Reynolds was here a while back, visiting and meeting with faculty and Administration. She gave some speech condemning the cuts, to make herself look like she's on our side.

Question: How many students heard that speech?

This is a good question to ask and to think about. The event was an "invitation only" event, which means basically that they only want select people there. Think

Hands Off David Suker! Stop Administration's Attack on Student Activist!

contact: David Suker, 212-942-4821

Rob Hollander, 212-642-2851 / 212-228-6152

Following a Campaign of Surveillance and Harassment City College Suspends Prominent Student Dissident Leader

A disciplinary panel at City College has suspended the president of the City College graduate student government (Graduate Student Council) for leading protests on campus against last year's budget cuts to higher education. The student, David Suker, was subject to surveillance and harassment from campus police last spring when his name appeared on a university administration 'black list' of student activists who had been arrested at various protest events. Harassment included verbal threats from campus police; an on-campus arrest by CUNY 'Peace' Officers for attempting to board a bus to Albany for student lobbying; attempts to bar his entry to CUNY campuses.

Suker's activism was directed towards saving the university from crippling budget cuts. He became a special target after embarrassing the university and college administration with accusations that CCNY president Yolanda Moses, and CUNY chancellor W. Ann Reynolds, had invited cuts in CCNY's budget by setting up retrenchment committees to recommend firing faculty and eliminating programs. "The university wants to make an example the most prominent student leaders so the Chancellor can avoid the embarrassment of unruly student protests that expose the public to what's really happening here at City College," said Steven Gottlieb, a recent graduate of the masters program in mathematics. The Nursing School, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Theatre and Dance, Classical Languages and Hebrew Departments, the School of Education, and the SEEK program (an Equal Opportunity Program) were all retrenched last year. This year the Black Studies Department was demoted to a program, losing seniority for its faculty.

Suker is highly regarded among students and faculty as a tireless student advocate and organizer in the defense of the City University system and known on all campuses, public and private, throughout New York City as a dedicated and effective student leader. "In the CUNY-wide student movement, he's the best organizer we've got. This is a calculated move on the part of the administration to undermine the voice of student dissent," said Rob Hollander, Co-chair of the Doctoral Students' Council at the Graduate Center. CCNY faculty chair of the Psychology Department William Crain, describing the disciplinary proceedings as "totally inappropriate and disgraceful," called the two semester suspension "excessive."

At his home tonight, his roommate was inundated with calls for Mr. Suker. His many activist friends will be organizing protests around his suspension in the days and weeks to come.

about it. Select people are there to hear a speech condemning the cuts. Isn't this a speech for the students to hear? I mean, the cuts ARE affecting the entire student body. All the students should have heard that speech. But they didn't. And I bet half the student population didn't even know about the event at all. If this doesn't get students to start thinking, I don't know what will.

I confronted a member of SG about this during an organizing meeting on 3/14/96, and of course I was not given a real answer. The conversation, in an abridged form, went something like this:

Why weren't student's allowed?

They were allowed.

But there were invitations. If you send out invitations that means you don't want certain people in.

Well, what I mean is, the student leaders were allowed in.

Like I said student weren't allowed in.....

Will you let me finish? If all the students were allowed in, there would be safety hazards. We needed to have things secure, so the leaders were sent in. It was the leaders job to let the students know what was going on....

.....and he happens to be one himself. I didn't play up on that, for there were other matters at hand, but I did that because I needed to show the students what they're facing, what questions they should ask, and what to expect.

It's time for CSI students to cut the bullshit. There's an important item at stake that needs attention: your education. To make things clear: YOU WILL MORE THAN LIKELY BE LOCKED OUT OF IT IF THESE CUTS COME INTO EFFECT. Students were already locked out from last year's attack; trust me, more will be if you people don't start doing something. For those students that I mentioned

before who were sadly ignorant of what was going on, a quick review: \$250 tuition increase, \$50 million cut to TAP, which means 50% off financial aid, State aid cut by 11.2%, and a \$57.6 million cut in the operating budget. Put two and two together, and it means trouble for most of the students in the CUNY system. The other schools have already been fighting, and it's past time for you to get on the ball. As for those damn excuses, give them up and do something, for they are just that, excuses. After talking to these guys I feel inclined to wipe their mouths with toilet paper. For the aforementioned excuses, 1. You never know until you try, and you don't get anything sitting on your ass, 2. If you say you don't have the time, you're saying you don't want to give the time for your education, and in that case, you don't belong here, 3. You don't use the same army to fight a battle over and over, you send reinforcements, and 4. If you're going to turn your back on us, you're turning your back on your friends and your children if they attend CUNY in the future. That's all there is to it. Your conscience should bother you if you're just sitting still. I don't want to hear any more excuses. And don't say that no real warnings were sent, because people like me, no matter how few, are everywhere. I put this in both papers, so for those who don't read *The Voice* you aren't off the hook either. If nobody here does anything and these cuts go down, I had better not hear any of you cynics and loafers complaining because I'll be inclined to kick your ass, for you had your chance and you did nothing. Please CSI don't let them take away our right for an education. Fight against this before it's too late.

MADONNA WILL BE PRESIDENT

by Bennet Maurer

Americans love media icons, in fact one could say that they have taken the place of the Greek Myth Gods in our culture. We sure worship them more than the real God people are supposed to be honoring.

Sonny Bono, Gopher from the Love Boat are members of Congress for our nation. Don't forget that sport icons such as Bill Bradley and Jack Kemp amongst others are in exactly the same position as well. So Why shouldn't Madonna be able to do a gig in the White House?

Ronald Reagan was president and he starred in *Bedtime For Bonzo* so why shouldn't Madonna be able to Vogue into the same post? Remember that when General Electric was receiving all bad publicity from helping to finance the Nazis amongst other sleazy business deals, they hired Ronnie to be their spokesperson to clean up their image. They started a trend of using Tinsletown to get involved in politics. Since it has worked so well for G.E., the movement has been used by others. Despite all the other naughty stuff that Reagan was doing politically, such as trying to remove "the commies" from Hollywood. And passing a bill so black people can't carry guns after dark, he was still adored by the American public so much that he would be elected again if the citizens had a chance to. All because of his image as a kind old grandfather like figure who could joke while screwing people over. I'm sure that Americans' love affair with icons had a lot to do with him getting elected four different times which eliminated his many sins.

Madonna like Bonzo, is great at manipulating the media which would make her great to be president. Ronald Reagan's press secretary would always talk about how with free food the media would get good and fed, which would make them

forget about the real story. Madonna could follow his blue print and make her perfect for the job. Playing the media like a fiddle seems the great skill needed to be president these days, and Madonna would be ideal for spin doctoring the truth from the public.

Politics is only a spectator sport for Americans anyway. Laugh all you want but where are the conventions held? They are held at arenas where basketball, hockey and concerts are being held, making the connection obvious. Madonna is used to playing these places so how could she go wrong with her experience? The only difference between the two is that in politics lives are being effected by the sewerage that spills out of politicians' mouths. Where as in sports only the participants get hurt.

I could already see the staff that she would need to get her elected. To get the masses behind her a republican position would be her hook to pull this off. David Gergen who proved that he would work for any president if giving the opportunity, he worked for Ronnie and Nixon and "Democrat" Clinton would be in charge of propaganda. I could foresee Rush Limburgercheese aiding in her campaign also. It would be one media megalomaniac communicating to another to help shape this campaign. With this type of backfield, Madonna would give the American Public exactly what they want to hear.

By this point I'm sure many of you are scratching your head and other body parts going: "Is he serious?" Yes I am!!!! If Madonna starts talking about Family Values and God, why shouldn't she have a chance? Bill Clinton talks about these worthless issues despite all the women that he has balled, so why can't Madonna do it also? As long as The Material Girl talks about lowering taxes and killing pris-

oners, whitey would vote for her in droves. This platform works every time. If Joe Stalin was running in America at the present time he would win if he followed this platform also. This

platform doesn't talk about anything of substance, but Americans aren't interested in the issues and policies that actually make a difference in their lives. These things aren't provocative or sexy enough, who better could push sex on the American public than Madonna?

Madonna already has the experience of being a politician. As all politicians she uses language that is of the ambiguous variety in her songs and interviews. Politicians as media icons love to talk in this format that way the consumer can't pin icons on anything that they say. It is called manipulation. With this dialect being used, the icon will always be standing on each side of the issue and come out looking like a groovy person in the public eye. They are never accused of being wrong, this way their Q rating never falls too far. The next time you hear some icon speak, listen to the language that they use. Language always gives you away and their speech are the key to this theory being true.

The other major similarity that Madonna and politicians have in common are the way that both of these type of people have to be chameleons. One glance at Madonna's career and you see her David Bowie like marketing skills to pimp this image to the consumer. First she is a virgin, then she is Marilyn Monroe and then

The other major similarity that Madonna and politicians have in common are the way that both of these type of people have to be chameleons. One glance at Madonna's career and you see her David Bowie like marketing skills to pimp this image to the consumer.

she is a business women amongst her numerous other transformations to Americans. The movie *Distinguished Gentleman* revealed that politicians have to do the same thing. They have to be everything to their voting constituency. Just watch all the news footage of politicians and you will exactly what I am discussing. They dress and talk differently for every situation, so my question is what the hell is the difference between the two?

The movie Bob Roberts showed how a media icon becomes president, why can't this movie be talking about Madonna? I could see the commercials now: "Vote for me or I will spank you." "Vote for the candidate that can REALLY please you." The possibilities would be endless and with the money and power that she has why couldn't she end up running for president?

Despite American males hatred for women that speak their minds, she is one person that men could really get behind. She has the *t and a* that they love, so why wouldn't they vote for her? In the 22nd century this WILL OCCUR and then the laugh will be on you. My suggestion to all of you is to start learning how to *vogue*, it is a necessity.

The Know-It-All At the Dinner Table

By Alec Caldwell

Well, this is my first article for this journal, and, well... these are my opinions on Politics, Science, and Life. Well, enough of the introduction... here it goes! (Wish me luck!).

At this time, Buchanan is running for the Republican nomination and to the Lord heaven above I hope he gets it 'cause then Clinton is guaranteed to win the presidential election. I don't understand why everyone hates Clinton. Look at what he had to work with: 12 years of that Trickle-Down-Theory nonsense that even Bush himself called "Voo-Doo economics," so that when Clinton came into office the economy was failing miserably, unemployment was rampant, and well, dammit, *life was hell*. Well... life is still hell, but at least 750,000 new jobs were created, and the situation in Bosnia has not exploded into an all-out war. As we all know, if Bush and Reagan were in the same situation, they would have gone in guns blazing, destroy-

ing everything in sight!

Buchanan... now HERE is a psycho. Look at this guy: his top advisors can all be linked to all those white supremacist groups, and this Bozo Buchanan STILL manages to get a majority vote!?! Give me a break!! The way I see it, Buchanan wants to cut off all trade to other countries to help the working class; I can understand some of the logic behind this, after all we currently have a trade deficit, which means we are spending more than we are receiving from foreign trade (that explanation probably wasn't necessary but I'm just making sure). However, if you cut off all trade many countries would be rather upset about this because America spends BILLIONS of dollars on consumer goods from other nations and what about their workers, hmmm? Don't forget about all those unpatriotic Japanese car owners here, where will they get parts for their cars at a fair price, well Mr. Buchanan?

"This [censorship by plutocratic and church forces] is a dangerous state of affairs, by which disinterested intelligence is partially muzzled, and the forces of conservatism and obscurantism persuade themselves that they can remain triumphant."

Bertrand Russell

Rage Against the forces of Censorship!
Write for the Voice

The Dinner Table Has No Room For American Workers

by VJ

I share in the much justified venom that Alec has for the racist demagogue Pat Buchanan. However aside from Buchanan's Flat Tax scam which he shares with billionaire Steve Forbes, his policies are almost identical in intent to the anti-worker, anti-women, anti-immigrant policies of Slick Willie and Bob "No Jobs, No Dole" Dole. Buchanan for all his hot air populist rhetoric about helping the Ameri-

ate them" Democrats is a tough question. The Democrats have traditionally been the "party of war" whereas the Republicans have been more "isolationist" however to choose between two sets of butchers for corporate interests is in itself a trap. Clinton's Bosnia policy has not recieved a peep of criticism from the Republican dominated Congress for they both start from the same vantage point of "what is best for American Corporate interests". If

"Who are the bigger war-mongers?", the "incinerate them" Republicans e.g. Gulf War or the "starve them and then incinerate them" Democrats is a tough question.

can worker, wants to institute a Flat Tax that would be the greatest mugging of American workers by the ruling corporate rich since the days of corporate robber barons and child labor. To break it down further, a working class family of four earning \$50,000/ year would be taxed at the same rate as a CEO earning \$7 million/ year. One obvious consequence is the drastic depletion of a tax base that could sustain essential public services from education to medical care that working class people depend on. However if we look at the cutting and slashing of public tax supported institutions like CUNY, public hospitals, public transportation, public libraries, etc by the Republicans and Democrats alike, we can see that the more colorful rhetoric of the "outsider" Buchanan reveals the same political program as the "insiders" Clinton and Dole.

"Who are the bigger war-mongers?", the "incinerate them" Republicans e.g. Gulf War or the "starve them and then inciner-

an all out US invasion ala Grenada, Panama, Iraq, was not in the cards, this was because it was strategically not in their interests to do so not due to some hidden humanity in the heart of Clinton. Instead, as in Nicaragua, Angola and Afghanistan, the US has been waging a proxy war through its support to the "Bosnian Moslems" that has reduced this once relatively prosperous united "socialist" society to a bloody hellhole. In short, Clintons foreign policy like Bush's before him and Ray-Gun's before him is dictated not by the individual character of the President in question nor by the interests of the American worker but by the interests of a tiny handful of CEO's that own this country.

As for creating 750,000 new jobs, this lie comes from the same "what can statistics do for you?" "Foundation" or "Institute" that is paid handsomely to come out with

continued on next page

REACTIONARIES BEHIND THE VASSALS OF GOD

By J. P. Patafio

As the trial of the deranged Christian Crusader killer John Salvi, who murdered two women at an abortion clinic, came to close a few weeks ago, justice was served too narrowly. This Christian killer was indeed guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, but the forces that shaped this young man remain unchanged. Still the self-proclaimed vassals of God in the highest echelons of powerful political institutions in our society continue to agitate for hate.

Christianity is filled with contradictions, both in its doctrines of faith and history. Certainly the Catholic Church, from the Pope down, is an institution whose past is marred with the blood of innocent victims. Then there are the more overt political institutions, such as the Christian Coalition, where demagogues and opportunist use the Bible ("the word of God") to suck people into the religious war against "heretics" and "sinners," until the likes of John Salvi appear with gun in hand, chanting Operation Rescue slogans while mercifully killing his victims.

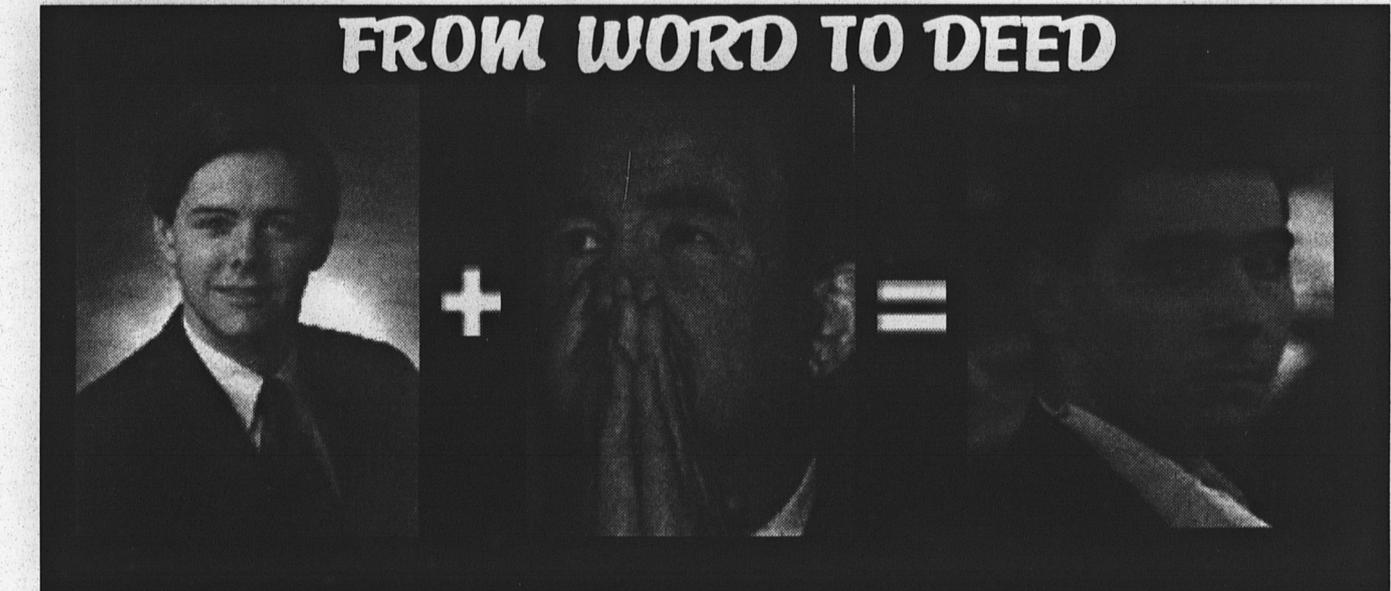
The Christian God and Choice

Where in the Bible does the Christian god ban a person's right to choose? I proclaim that the highest moral edict in the Bible according to God's actions is freewill (the right to choose,) and from this all other Christian ethics flow. Freewill is the first principle that the Judeo/Christian God does not cross. Contemporary religious bigots, like Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition and presidential candidate Pat Buchanan, however, preach restriction and control to the masses in the name of God. At the front of their venomous attack is the women's right to choose, at its core is the democratic rights of the masses.

In their campaign to ban, outlaw, the right for women to control their bodies a more fundamental premise is put forward by these bigots; namely that the almighty lord regards human life over freewill. Their moral crusade against a women's right to choose is nothing short of a hoax. A strategy to justify a reactionary agenda bestowing "religious leaders" the power to rule society with the iron will of the lord (Old Testament).

From the beginning of the Bible to its end "the almighty" never takes away peoples right to choose. In the story of the creation (Genesis) where the omnipotent being gives life to Adam and Eve the Bible demonstrates in the parable of Eden what is the highest principle of the Christian god; freewill. God's paradise in the Garden of Eden; paradise, eternal happiness, security, food and fruits, etc., where all the things a child can ask for from a benevolent father existed was placed before the mortals. He allowed for the couple to choose to leave "paradise." Now some may call it sin, or the weakness of mortals in the face of hedonistic desires, but this is not the point. The first act of God was to allow choice. How one interprets an action as morally good or bad for believers is relative to one's interpretation of the "word of God." Freewill was a principle that God had given, a fundamental right that even the almighty did not take away (though he could have) when he created the universe.

God even let his son (himself) be tempted by the devil, as well as to choose dying on the cross for all the sinners. The crucifixion personifies the dilemma of choice in the face of a brutal death. The metaphorical cross emphasizes the difficulty in *choosing* how to live in a society where corruption exists. Though the entire Bible is a biased collection of stories to help Christians choose "correctly," no where (in or out of the Bible) does God take away freewill/choice. The fact is that freewill is as natural as breathing, and these religious bigots want to bring conflagration upon the earth in the name of Jesus. Since many people still believe in the mythology of God/Christ these political preachers seek to capitalize on their religious beliefs,



especially in these uncertain times.

Why is it that the Christian Right wants to do something that their God is unwilling to do? Certainly the answer does not lie in the scriptures, but in the political motivation of these hypocrites preaching fear and hate, and a narrow interpretation

The result of their Christian crusade is political hegemony over society, hoping to replace the secular state, democracy, and civil liberties with the darkest days of the Spanish Inquisition.

of the Bible. Since their God is unwilling to zap sinners from the sky they want to change the law of the land so they can.

The Political Agenda of Fundamentalist — Changing Democracy to *Theocracy*

The aim of their Christian crusade is political hegemony over society, hoping to replace the secular State, democracy, and civil liberties with the darkest days of the Spanish Inquisition. These reactionaries do not want to persuade people through reason, truth and logic but through a modern day inquisition, cloaked with the good grace of Christianity.

The boyish, innocent face of Ralph Reed can not veil his aspersions for "non-believers," and the anti-democratic agenda he has in store. The Poster Boy for right-wing tele-evangelist (swindler) Pat Robertson supports the likes of Pat Buchanan because they agree that capitalism and the righteous must rule and exterminate with "godly fumigation" in the words of Pat Robertson, the "evil" enemy living next door.

The chemistry of Christian reaction, is a unity of contrasting drives, of diverging classes. On one side there are political zealots with the support of Big Capital wanting to become modern day despots, while on the other hand there is the desperation of the masses who want security and the right to live decently. The ideology used by the ruling class is one of identification and displacement. The working class identifies with "success" and places the guilt for their "failures" upon themselves. The lack of working class political independence, through the medium of a revolutionary workers' party, leaves the various bourgeois forces in a competition to rule not only their class but society as a whole. In America, religion is used by a section of the ruling class to channel the anger of the masses at themselves instead of at the economic and political rulers in society.

A fact remains. Indeed, there is not a

"holy war" between the forces of light and darkness, but between the two great classes in capitalist society, the working class and the capitalist class. When you follow the cash flow, the political role of the Christian crusaders is revealed. They are doing political dirty work of the ruling capitalist class..

The solution to society's complicated problems are not black and white, a question of good and evil, but are rooted in the inherent inequality of capitalist society. Let us cast off these vices invented in the perverted minds of these hypocritical-religious bigots with the sword of reason, the light of truth and the might of class

struggle. Amen!!!

The struggle around women's right to choose is not about saving lives but about political control over society at large. Posing as the forces of good the Christian Right, and all those people who sheepishly follow these righteous windbags, are indeed the forces of barbarism. Defending women's right to choose is only the first step in creating a truly democratic society where the majority of people, the working and middle classes, control the economic and political institutions, thereby erasing the inequality these Parasites of the Lord feed upon.

Holy Shit!?

Here are some tasty tid-bit from the leaders of the Christian Coalition. Are these Christian values or Christian secretion?

‡ "The feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."

Fundraising letter from Pat Robertson to the Iowa Committee to stop ERA, as reported in the *Washington Post*, August 23, 1993

‡ "There should be absolutely no 'Separation of Church and State' in America." David Barton, President of Wallbuilders and a close ally of the Christian Coalition, 1994 *Anti-Defamation League Report* (ADL).

‡ "It's like guerrilla warfare.... It's better to move quietly, with stealth, under cover of the night. You've got two choices: You can wear cammies and shimmy along on your bell or you can put on a red coat and stand up for everyone to see."

‡ "What Christians have got to do is take back this country, one precinct at a time and one state at a time...." Ralph Reed

"The church's conception of righteousness is socially undesirable in various ways - first and foremost in its depreciation of intelligence and science."

Bertrand Russell

The Dinner Table Has No Room

continued from previous page

lies to rationalize the destruction of jobs and communities. For example if you are a union worker at a GM plant earning \$18/hr with benefits and security and you are "downsized" to working at a "new" job flipping burgers for \$5/hr without benefits, Eureka!, a new job has been created. We need to look no further than our own lives and those of our families and communities to see the "great improvement in the economy" under Clinton means record profits for the capitalists and record misery for all workers.

Finally, the race baiting and immigrant bashing that is found in one degree or another from Clinton to Buchanan is the

poison with which the ruling class in this country aim to divide workers so they can fatten themselves off of all of us; Black, Brown, Yellow, White, Gay, straight, woman, man and child - workers.

We must break **definitively** with the two parties of the bosses - the Republicans and Democrats - and forge a party that speaks for and fights for all workers and oppressed irregardless of race, sex, religion and nationality. Only through the organization of such a Party will a new dawn rise in America and in the world, a world free of the absurdity of scarcity in the midst of abundance.

A CELEBRATION FOR HUMAN MISERY

by Bennet Maurer

"If we were all supposed to be created in God's image, then God must be dumb and a little ugly on the side." -Dumb All Over from Frank Zappa, 1981.

"Tell me Mr. Jesus, tell me if you can, when you see the world we live in, do you still believe in man?" -Black Sabbath, The Writ from Sabbathage, 1975.

You ask any person if they like a good celebration and they will tell you: "Fuck yes, just tell me about where one is and I'll go celebrate!" Now if this is the case, I propose that in the history of the human race there should be a celebration of what they do best. Which is creating misery for our fellow humans.

I could see this scene like Dean Martin's Hollywood roast. Charles Darwin, Jesus Christ, The author of Manifest Destiny, The Protestant Work Ethic, The Vatican Church, Sigmund Freud and other major philosophical/religious beliefs will be there to celebrate stupidity human style. I could foresee the toast: "Here is a toast to humans and the constant blind trust they place in their leaders!!!" Ronald Reagan would be the Masters Of Ceremonies for this extravaganza.

In order for the festivities to be done right, the White House should be used in this celebration of human misery. What other building for a day of this type of proportions be held in? I could already see the sponsors, everything in America must be commercialized and can't you vision the multi-national conglomerates as the

**Satire - the use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule, or the like, in exposing, denouncing, or deriding vice, folly, despicable situation, etc.*

financiers for this type of day? General Electric, Westinghouse, Time-Warner and the rest of the swine have to be the sponsors for this event. What institutions are bigger spreaders of human misery? It would only make sense for them to hold this type of holiday.

The media spreads this type of philosophy, so it should be fitting that this type of scene be broadcasted and celebrated through out all of the mediums of the world. This would be much more profitable than any of Mike Tyson's fights. The fight couldn't be shorter than any of the tomato cans that he is "fighting". I guess for enough money, Tyson's mother would take a dive in the name of pugilism.

I feel that Indians, every third world nation and all poor human beings of the world, like all other events held by these mongoloids would be excluded. This scene would have the media just like they usually do, which is to pucker their lips and suck the butts to help spread the misery for Earthlings another day. Very rare occurrence if ever, do members of the media corps deviate from the script and question their surroundings. So why should this situation be unlike any other day? All long as the free food and drinks keep coming to

fill up their bloated stomachs, the status quo will be maintained. The struggle of the working class will go unnoticed for another day. This metaphoric day moves onward with very little complaints offered.

Metallica, a skinhead band and country/western musicians would be on hand to provide the musical entertainment. Metallica proved that they would play anywhere and this would be the most perfect venue for them to play at. The Pope and The Christian Coalition would be provided with "spiritual guidance" for the gathering of this celebration.

Hollywood will be on hand to glorify the festivities for prime time. Charlton Heston, Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenager and many of those types will be on hand to exult John Wayne's philosophy in grand Tinsel town style. Bob Hope and Johnny Carson will be on hand to be the shtickmeisters of this catastrophe. Just like all other events, that are seen on the boob tube, Americans will be totally passive in this activity. The fireworks and all the other visualizations that we love will be present for the consumers to give their collective thumbs up! on the event. You think that the Super Bowl was a big event? This will make

those ratings appear quite meek in comparison.

I could see the event now, a visual documentary of all the events of the last two hundred years on display. All of their tools will be indicated for the world to see. How these conglomerates have been able to censor all printed material to fit their slant on the world. The various torture tactics that are used to help control and occasionally kill humans that speak their minds. The Final part of the program will reveal how these sloth with assistance of the Church, are able to control many citizens of the third world. Like all Hollywood extravaganzas, their will be song sung by this colossal cast for the finale and here it is:

*"We are the rulers of this world,
We think all of you are worthless fools.
Thank God for Jesus, God and The Bible too,
As it blinds you all as we rule.
There's nothing any of you could do,
Just bow down and pray to us,
Give us all your dough, while we work
all of you to death.*

*We will increase your taxes,
Just give us more and more
Keep showing us your love.*

(The big ending is happening; the top hats are off their heads and the arms are waving out as its finally time)

*Because we are the rulers of the world!"
Fiction or not? You make the call, For The
Celebration Of Human Misery!!!! You could
purchase the video of this at CSI's book store for
the low price of \$24.95. **

BLOODSUCKERS DIE IN PLANE CRASH

By Barry Lituchy

4 April 1996 — It was payback day in the former Yugoslavia.

In the biggest loss of American life since the U.S.-instigated civil war in Yugoslavia began, some 33 Americans died in a plane crash outside the port city of Dubrovnik as their U.S. military jet approached the city's airport on the Adriatic coast. On board were some 27 elite figures of the U.S. political, military, corporate, media and intelligence establishment, along with a military crew of six.

The most famous of those killed was U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown. Brown, a long time Democratic Party faker, had been under continuous criminal investigation for years for illegally using his various political posts to build a massive fortune in the hundreds of millions of dollars in a long series of conflict of interest deals. Ron Brown was widely regarded by Washington observers as the single most corrupt individual in the Clinton administration.

Also among the dead are at least six military personnel, one State Department official (probably an intelligence operative), one translator, one N.Y. Times reporter, and at least ten top corporate executives, as well as an unknown number of "government officials." The identities of all those aboard will not be released until the ruling elites decide "the time is right." But that time may never come.

This accident offers us a unique opportunity to view a highly important but not normally observed aspect of U.S. imperialism close up. U.S. military and political power is used to help U.S. multi-national corporations control and exploit the world economy and impose their economic and political power on the peoples of the world. Moreover, this power is used in the interests of a single, elite socio-economic class. It is used against the interests of the majority of Americans and against the interests of the human race in general. However, it is rare that the public gets to see in the media the direct connections between American military aggression and the economic interests driving it.

The very fact that representatives of all

Indeed, not only are the borders between these various ruling class institutions seamless, but in fact the biographies of some of the deceased on board this plane neatly illustrate how these ruling elites are interconnected by revolving doors....

segments of the American capitalist ruling class were on board this plane with a single economic objective dramatically illustrates the truth about U.S. imperialism far better than any theoretical treatise. The borders between the government, the corporations, the media and the military are non-existent when it comes to imposing U.S. military and economic power abroad. Their interests are those of a single socio-economic class. U.S. foreign policy always amounts to one thing: the rape of the world for the benefit of the tiny elites at the top of U.S. capitalist system. U.S. foreign policy is a class policy for plunder, violent aggression and exploitation on a global scale. These are the true inner workings of contemporary imperialism.

Indeed, not only are the borders between these various ruling class institutions seamless, but in fact the biographies of some of the deceased on board this plane neatly illustrate how these ruling elites are interconnected by revolving doors that allow military leaders, corporate execs or journalists to become government or intelligence officials, and vice versa, and always with ever greater loot.

Among the deceased take Charles Meissner. A former vice-president of Chemical Bank, Meissner also served on the World Bank, in the Treasury Department, in Congress, the diplomatic service, and finally the Commerce Department. Take Robert Donovan. Prior to his executive post with the electrical generator manufacturer Asea Brown Boveri Inc., Donovan served around the world as a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. military, including in Vietnam. Take Paul Cushman the 3d. Cushman's duties as executive vice-presi-

dent and head of international banking for Riggs National Bank in Washington DC involved handling banking accounts for U.S. embassies in Europe. Take New York Times reporter Nathaniel Nash. As the financial reporter for the Times in the European financial capital of Frankfurt, Nash nurtured close ties with financial and corporate elites as well as with the U.S. government and intelligence agencies, with whom he had already had close ties as a result of his post in Latin America in the 1980's. Take Ron Brown himself. Throughout his career Brown hopped from government position to lobbyist and private business and back again. Now his hopping days are over.

The purpose of the ill fated trip was to ferry top corporate leaders across Yugoslavia, to seek out "business opportunities" and to present them to the new puppet regimes of Bosnia and Croatia put into power by the U.S. and Germany. The dead execs were conducted from place to place by top U.S. political and military brass, whose presence reminded the Croats and Muslims who's in charge, and guaranteed that the corporate bosses got whatever deals they wanted. Having secured the rise to power of these fascist regimes in Croatia and Bosnia after five years of civil war, the U.S. expects to bring in swarms of these corporate vultures, and with full confidence of compliance say to the Croats and Muslims: "Listen up, boys, we want this, this and this. Sign here." A difference of opinion at this point is unthinkable. Puppets are easily replaced.

That's what the visit was about. But this important visit by U.S. corporate leaders would have never received the massive

attention and scrutiny it deserves had these vultures not died in this crash.

Consider for a moment the types of corporations represented by the dead executives and what their intentions were. Robert Donovan of Asea Brown Boveri represented a company that manufactures electrical generator plants; Robert Whittaker and Leonard Pieroni represented multi-national heavy construction firms; P. Stuart Tholan represented the giant Bechtel construction firm specializing in oil production facilities; I. Donald Turner represented his housing construction business; Claudio Elia was the C.E.O. of Air and Water Technologies Corporation. The U.S. and Western sponsored war in Yugoslavia destroyed much of the infrastructure of Bosnia and parts of Croatia. Now these same countries will pour billions of our tax dollars into reconstructing it (not to the Serbs though!). But this money goes directly into the pockets of U.S. (and to a lesser extent other Western) corporations. It's a multi-billion dollar gravy train for the multi-nationals and their financial backers who will also control these assets in the future.

But guess what Yugoslavia's greatest export industry was before the war? That's right, construction. Communist Yugoslavia's construction industry was internationally renowned as one of the most cost efficient and technically competitive in the world. It won contracts for construction projects throughout the Third World. (An interesting example is the underground system of bunkers in Iraq which proved impenetrable to America's air strikes during the Gulf War and were built by a Yugoslav construction firm.) Now those firms will be shut out and shut down by U.S. firms. Yugoslav petroleum engineering firms were second to none in the world; they built facilities around the world. Now they too will be displaced by U.S. corporations. Consider two other dead execs: Barry Conrad of Barrington Hotels and Walter Murphy of AT&T. Conrad was there to buy up at bargain

continued on next page

Bloodsuckers

continued from previous page

prices hotel facilities in Bosnia and especially on the beautiful Adriatic coast. Murphy was there to take over and rebuild the former Yugoslav communications system.

All of these economic assets previously were built, owned and operated in Yugoslavia by the people of Yugoslavia for the benefit of the people of Yugoslavia. They were built by Yugoslav firms with Yugoslav technology and personnel and were publicly owned. As a result of U.S. military intervention, all that was created by several generations of Yugoslavs is now to be destroyed and replaced by enterprises owned and operated by U.S. or Western corporations for the benefit of the super-rich in those countries. Not only did Yugoslav firms build the infrastructure of their own country, but these corporations competed successfully on the world market for contracts in other countries with U.S. and Western multi-nationals, and were able to complete the same projects at a fraction of the cost. This alone was ample reason for U.S. imperialism to destroy socialist Yugoslavia and to partition it into several, economically unfeasible mini-states. Of course, had the U.S. really wanted to rebuild Yugoslavia they would have helped the peoples of Yugoslavia to rebuild their economy on their own — but that's exactly what they don't want. Imperialism is a system for plundering the world and reducing other countries to a position of permanent economic dependency, backwardness and slavery. It's the reason why countries have (and need) socialist revolutions in the first place!

The U.S. and Western powers made the decision to destroy the multi-national state of Yugoslavia in 1989 when it became obvious that Yugoslavia would be the one country in Eastern Europe that would not voluntarily overthrow their socialist system and Communist political leadership. In other words, one of the richest territories of Eastern Europe would remain beyond the grasp of the capitalist multi-national corporations and financial elites whose main goal since World War II was nothing less than the recapturing and plundering of the socialized wealth and property of the Communist Eastern European countries.

Having achieved their objectives everywhere else in Eastern Europe, the U.S. and Germany could not accept the continued existence of a powerful, multi-national socialist country smack in the middle of Eastern Europe. They therefore poured hundreds of millions of dollars into right wing nationalist-secessionist political parties in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo to tear the country apart. Much more went to provide covert military shipments and intelligence operations. Another sizable amount went to supposedly "non-governmental" cultural institutions — like the Soros Foundation, etc. — which served similar purposes (the undermining and overthrow of the existing pro-socialist leaderships through propaganda).

Having overseen the destruction of Yugoslavia for the sake of capitalist restoration and the creation of fascistic mini-nation states in Croatia and Bosnia with puppet dictators controlled from Washington — all at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives — the time had come for the U.S. government to present their prize to their corporate bosses. Like a flock of flying vampires, America's financial and industrial executives were flown across the devastated land to decide how to carve up the economic assets and markets of the former Yugoslavia, to decide what they can plunder and how much more blood and profits they can suck out of the long suffering peoples of the Balkans. Only this time it was the bloodsuckers' blood that got spilled.

And how the bloodsuckers' media let out such a howl when their bosses died! It was a mournful howl heard round the

As usual, the American media immediately turned the truth upside down and inside out. Instead of admitting the obvious, that these corporate executives were not there for charity, but rather for material self-interest, the media spun a web of incredible lies.

world. Truly the howl of a beast that has been mortally wounded.

As usual, the American media immediately turned the truth upside down and inside out. Instead of admitting the obvious, that these corporate executives were not there for charity, but rather for material self-interest, the media spun a web of incredible lies. There were two whoppers in particular. The first was the "we want to re-build Bosnia" lie. On the day after the crash, a New York Times editorial called the Ron Brown junket "a mission of faith and hope." Once again the New York Times comes away with the Joseph Goebbels prize for excellence in big-lie journalism. Not only is the U.S. responsible for the Yugoslav civil war, but it is also responsible for destroying the economic achievements of three generations of Yugoslavs. The other big lie was the heroic portrayal of Ron Brown as a legendary civil rights activist and rags to riches phenomenon. Actually, the opposite is true. Brown came from a privileged background: his family had money and he attended the best prep schools in Westchester and then the exclusive private college of Middlebury. While some literally gave their lives during the sixties for the civil rights and anti-war movements, Brown went into the ROTC, became an Army officer and then a lawyer. He later amassed a fortune by illegal methods and became an advocate in the Clinton administration for rolling back the very same social and civil rights legislation the New York Slimes claims he championed. This is not the profile of a great man, but rather of a slick and despicable con artist.

To top it all off, the media even tried to hold off the inevitable news that all aboard were dead. No they weren't dead, said NBC, CBS and ABC, they were just "missing!" Oh, sure, that made sense. They were just hiding out somewhere. Actually, this kind of deliberate mind control by the media serves an extremely important psychological and political function for the ruling class in times of crisis in that it preserves the stability of the system. Too much bad news all at once can destabilize or paralyze the political and economic system. Thus, the media withholds as much bad news for as long as it can, letting it seep out only in drips and drabs, thereby preserving the status quo. For a comparison, consider how the media rushes to report the deaths of working people, foreigners or criminals in disasters, often in unsympathetic or even gloating ways. Rather than respect for life — for which the media has none — the cautious reporting of bad news is inspired only by a respect for power and self-interest.

Typically, one must always expect cover-ups by the media with mis-haps like this. One detail that may be withheld from the public is whether the plane was shot down or blown up by Serbian or other Yugoslav forces. Contrary to the myth of a "free press," information not in the interests of the U.S. government is usually censored. Several Serbian shoot-downs of U.S. aircraft went unreported in 1994. A more notorious example was the shooting down of KAL 007 over the Soviet Union in 1984. The truth about how the Reagan

administration organized this as a planned provocation against the Soviet Union went unreported for years. Likewise, the media covered up the fact that the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle in 1986 would never have happened had the Reagan administration not rushed the take-off so that it would coincide with Reagan's State of the Union Address the same day and thereby advance Reagan's reelection campaign. The examples are too numerous to cite here.

In a related news story, the Stock Market set new record highs on news of the plane crash in Croatia.

Writer's Amendment Most Capitalists Are White Males

In the last issue of the Voice Karl Leibknect wrote, "The fight against racism is not just about race, it is about the economy, a fight between the capitalist (all white males) and the working class (a diverse pool of nationalities, ethnicities, gender)." It was incorrect.

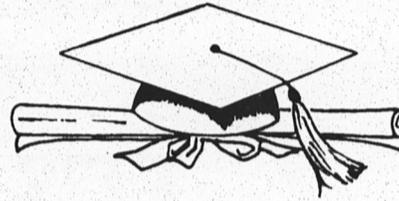
Though in fact the majority of capitalist in the United States are "white males," my point was not that "all white males" are capitalist. In short it was a slight exaggeration of the truth. A quick glance through the Forbes 400 list will detail how "slight" it is.

What I wanted to convey was that the racism in society (as well as patriarchy) is a mere reflection of the ruling class, and fascist purposely misplace the blame away from the Holy white males to the victims of racist policies, blacks and other "non-whites." It is about time that we understand the class relations beneath the race relations, and do away with both fascist and their ruling mentors.

-- Rosa Liebknect

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Same Enemy, Same Fight

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order of the day, there are no lesser evils...only the greater good of working people organizing a party for and by themselves based on a program that recognizes that reality and seeks to do something about it.

To do so, however, such a party must address the needs of all working people and not those of their common exploiters and oppressors as do those who support the Democrats...and thus accept austerity as an "inevitable" product of a system that the Democrats uphold every bit as much as the Republicans do. Thus, rather than organize militant mass actions against the cuts, let alone fight for a labor party, 1199's Dennis Rivera, touted by many as a "leftist" and a "progressive," echoes AFL-CIO top Sweeney, by telling workers that re-electing yuppie Democrat Bill Clinton is

the greatest challenge for American labor in the 20th century. With "leftists" like that, who needs the right? The struggle to build a political voice for labor entails a rank-and-file rebellion against all those pro-Democratic party bureaucrats who stifle labor's economic voice by refusing to fightback even at that level...because of their support to the Democrats.

...Build a fighting labor party

Through militant mass actions, French workers not only showed the world that "politics" need not be confined to electoral charades but what is possible when millions of working people refuse to accept those parameters to begin with and start to take their fate into their own hands. Their actions also smashed yet another rotten idol of contemporary capitalist conventional wisdom, that slashing payrolls and



paychecks is the only game in town. America's reactionary rulers, on the other hand, take it for granted that their two-party system, which, in fact means one party rule of the rich, by the rich and for the rich, will allow them to go on swinging the axe of austerity for as long as they please. Only by building a fighting labor party that can link up the struggles of workers, students and all the oppressed on a political level by articulating a class struggle program can American workers begin to pose a real challenge to the ruling class. Such a program begins with a fightback against the current round of cutbacks and layoffs but must end with working people making and taking the power for themselves through *socialist revolution* so that the rich and

resources created by the majority can finally be used to benefit that majority and not the minority that monopolizes them now.

The struggle to build a political voice for labor entails a rank-and-file rebellion against all those pro-Democratic party bureaucrats who stifle labor's economic voice by refusing to fightback even at that level...because of their support to the Democrats.

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1. Standard & Poor's Insurance Rating Analysis, 1995; Lipper Analytical Services, Inc., Lipper-Director's Analytical Data, 1995 (Quarterly).
2. Source: Morningstar, Variable Annuities/Life 8/30/95.
3. Of the 2,578 variable annuity funds tracked by Morningstar, the average fund has annual expenses of 0.78% plus an insurance expense of 1.24%. Source: Morningstar, Inc., for periods ending December 31, 1995.
4. Standard & Poor's Insurance Rating Analysis, 1995.

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Romare Bearden: An Homage to Paper

By Jennifer Scott

A must see exhibition titled "Romare Bearden: An Homage to Paper," opened at the Friedland Gallery on March 12th. If



founder of the National Council for Negro Women, as well as an editor for "The Chicago Defender." His father, Howard, worked for New York City. There was never a lack of visitors to the Bearden home. Such important literary figures such as Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois, and Charles Alston were frequent visitors to their home.

Romare Bearden was to say the least, a well rounded man. He was a renaissance man, a Harlem Renaissance man. While in school, he considered many careers. While at NYU, where he earned his degree, he drew cartoons for their humor magazine. After college, he enrolled in the Art Student's League, enabling him to meet many artists. George Grosz, an expatriate from Germany was one of those artists. He helped Romare Bearden to understand the social function of art.

In 1938, Bearden got a full-time job with the New York Department of Welfare. This was also important to his artwork. Many of his pieces show people helping people.

Jazz and blues play the most prominent roles in his artwork. Knowledge of music isn't imperative in looking at his work, but it broadens the understanding. Bearden spent much of his life listening to jazz music and trying to make a marriage between his artwork and that music. He even tried his hand at writing music. Bearden had a studio above the Apollo, where he could go listen to the greats such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Earl Hines. He wrote, "I listened for hours to Earl Hines at the piano. Finally, I was able to block out the melody and concentrate on the silences between the notes." This proved to be essential for his work.

The African-American experience is shown in a vast majority of his works. Everyone can understand, it crosses over any racial barriers. His work is emotional as well as visual. The viewer feels what is going on in many of the pieces, Bearden said, "You paint what you feel."

Influences are abundant, as well as themes. Social, moral and family values are so important in his work. The exhibit here at CSI encompasses many of these values such as schooling and reading (education), spending time with family, and conversing.

Bearden explores his African-American "roots" in one of the pieces, showing a large head of an African-American man with a smaller slave boat.

In "Homage to Mary Lou," Bearden looks back to Henri Matisse. This piece shows a piano lesson being given, such as Bearden was given a sort of lesson by Matisse. The composition has many things in common with Matisse's work titled "Piano Lesson."

The most remarkable works in the show, four oil on papers also looks back to Matisse. The fluidity and softness of these particular pieces are enough to lure any-

original in color



In, *Homage to Mary Lou*, the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance meets the style of Matisse.

one into the gallery.

Romare Bearden was a modern artist, yet looked back to earlier times. His lithographs tell stories, pull feelings from the viewer.

An interest in art is not needed to view this show. If you see it, you won't soon forget it. If you miss it, a visual and emotional experience has passed you by.

THE NEW BEGINNING: STATEN ISLAND BECOMES ITS OWN

By Stephen Shedrowitz

Enter the 90's. The Stapleton 'bar scene' is at its height, twenty establishments allowing you 'choice' in going blotto. The library system almost goes into default as book usage falls and falls. Sure there is still the Staten Island Poets Society, ever see them? I haven't - basically can't find them. And, of course Snug Harbors H&D Poets - O' beat the spoken word to death already, why don't you! I mean, like stuffy man, stuffy. What happened? WHERE'D ALL THE PEOPLE GO - fine art had almost reached a pinnacle at the Newhouse - so what happened to the word: the spoken and written word? Oh No! The Newhouse was an anomaly? Art on Staten Island? The country club set got too nervous - give the people what they want - how preposterous - get rid of that man, that troublemaker - he's showing 'our' bumpkins too much! Enter our heroine - Ms. Baltimore, the Georgia peach. Title: Curator; Job Description: kill ART dead here fast. Success rate 99.9%.

You can disembowel the artists and writers; you can scatter their bones about - even lay lime on them in an attempt to decompose, but, you can't kill the culture. Staten Island's official flower should be dandelion, a delicacy to many inhabitants, a stubborn pesky weed constantly lurking beneath the smooth cut of a well manicured lawn to most others. Dandelions and culture - dandelions make the culture - are the culture, along with all other pesky weeds. Its a time for fermentation, for regrouping, for organization, - find a better way, any way - some way. How?

Enter the "Staten Island Council on the Arts" - our fellow Staten Islanders working for you for your 'own' good. OOPS! - all the money disappears! I mean you can do what you want on Staten Island, can't

you? The stupid country bumpkins - a little investigation and it'll all disappear, right? Fermentation; regrouping; organi-

Wam, bam, thank you mam', home grown poetry, prose and song abound in multiple locations - for the first time ever on Staten Island.

zation: find a better way, anyway - some way. How?

Then the void finally pops. Home grown? Naw, import. Bring 'em in from the City - from the Village, from No Ho, from the Bowery - yo' ho', everyone wants to check out Staten Island! Enter Gallery ETC, you know - like Etch-a-sketch: create your "own" pseudo artistic poetry scene. Staten Island's role: gawkers, on-lookers, artsie types, you know the ones with their little finger sticking out as they hold their wine glass. Participants: every decent poet, writer, performance artist, ranter and raver, and hanger-on that could be convinced to come to "God's Country" - with or without a visa on that long romantic ride to nowhere, the Staten Island Ferry. Now why was this doomed to failure? Bad timing? Or was it because no one thought to look right here on Staten Island? Why was home grown 'art' good enough, (or was it), but yet home grown writing, wasn't? Didn't we buy into the country bumpkin bit too? I mean, just 'cause we live here doesn't mean we HAVE TO look around. I was one of those we's...I kept runnin' to da' City - to places like Fundibbles, or Max Fish, or Sidewalks, or Lite Cafe, or Garden on B, or ABC No Reo.

On Staten Island, you went to a bar - to get blasted - with booze, not culture.

Don't know rightly what happened, here in Saten Island. Maybe the natives finally got restless, maybe Gallery ETC awakened something - or annoyed enough individuals. Small groups started forming. The Utne Reader salons, Cornelia's on Stuyvesant Place, and others; informal groups, discussion, prose, poetry - grassroots style. Cracks has been found in the pavement, weal areas in the perfect lawns - separate entities fluctuating each time, struggling to stay alive. Home grown Staten Islanders and transplants alike, letting their voices be heard; some timid, some self-assured; small groups with everyone thoroughly enjoying the moment, as if the next moment it would all be gone. The fluctuations grew and, like a ripple in water, awakened the very particles needed to make up a sleeping giant. But the ripples weren't enough. Fermentation; organization; rejuvenation, how? Now!

Enter a totally new and untapped generation. Hey, whata's matter wit you guys - don't ya' know dis' is dumb? Hey, watta' u, a nerd?

A new generation? How did this happen? Where'd the apathy go; the MTV generation; the self self self me me me generations? Did the education system just finally start to work? It's them damn weeds, you just can't kill 'em. So the traditional cultural establishments choked off virtually all home grown Staten Island culture and the creators of that culture; so well meaning people, just like me, fell into the trap of avoiding what was really fermenting here - right here on Staten Island. So the very body of our peers ran off with all the money to develop home grown culture - the culture happened anyway. Enter Nanci Richards, Robert Levine, and the Cargo Cafe. Enter Rick Loftus and the

Brite Spot. Enter Gabrielle Walter into Garden in the Forest. Wam, bam, thank you mam', home grown poetry, prose and song abound in multiple locations - for the first time ever on Saten Island. The flowers really bloomed last Spring - the little weeds found a niche and bloomed and grew and bloomed even more. Pretty soon even the establishment tried it out - their way, half-assed, but at least they tried, not well, but they tried. You see you can't force a weed to flower - it does it on its own.

It's Springtime again - all through the cold dismal Winter month's culture - the spoken word, the written word, the sung word, has been strengthening. Leddy's Shore Inn on Richmond Terrace, just two short blocks from the CCWC, you know, the Cultural Center Without Culture, starts up with live music and prose - combined! But it's springtime now, will everyone still exist AND flourish? Well, at least Nanci's Cargo Cafe starts up again, Monday nite, April 22nd to be exact. HEY, CHECK OUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD! Maybe you'll just have fun, down-home style: check out a movement in the making and watch the hurricane grow!

*Editor's note = Whether or not book usage at the library has gone up or down in the last few years is debatable.

Poetry tells us whar it feels like to be alive in a given time and place.

-- Stanley Kunitz

Submit your feelings of the given time and place to the Voice; Rm. 230, Bldg 1C



STATEN ISLAND

NO TITLE MAN

I DREAM OF A PLACE WHERE THERE'S NOTHING TO DO
JUST CUDDLING CLOSE HOLDING ON TO YOU.

A PLACE WHERE THE WEATHER IS PERFECT ALL DAY
A PLACE YOU CALL BALI - A WORLD FAR AWAY...

WHERE DREAMS BECOME REAL FOR EVERYONE THERE
AND PEOPLE ARE LOVED AND REALLY DO CARE.

NO NEED FOR MONEY OR ELECTRICAL PLUGS
JUST WARM LITTLE KISSES AND GIGANTIC BEAR HUGS.

THERE WILL BE A TIME WE'LL VISIT THIS PLACE
BUT NOW IT'S OUR DREAM WORLD BEYOND THE RAT RACE.

I REALLY MUST THANK YOU FOR THIS WONDERFUL TIME
IT'S YOUR WILD IDEA AND MY LITTLE RHYME.

STEPHEN SHEDROWITZ

SONG TO THE SA MAN

By Bertolt Brecht

My hunger made me fall asleep
With a belly ache.
Then I heard voices crying
Hey, Germany awake!

Then I saw crowds of men marching:
To the Third Reich, I heard them say.
I thought, as I'd nothing left to live for
I might as well march their way.

The chief of staff wore boots
My feet meanwhile got wet
But both of us were marching
Wholeheartedly in step.

I thought that the left road led forward
He told me that I was wrong.
I went the way that he ordered
And blindly tagged along.

They told me which enemy to shoot at
I accepted their gun and aimed
And, when I had shot, saw my brother
Was the enemy they had named.

So now my brother is dying
By my own hand he fell.
Yet I know that if he's defeated
I shall be lost as well.

SHAPE SHIFTER

I can be anything you want me to be
a transformation in destination
I can be, yes that's me.

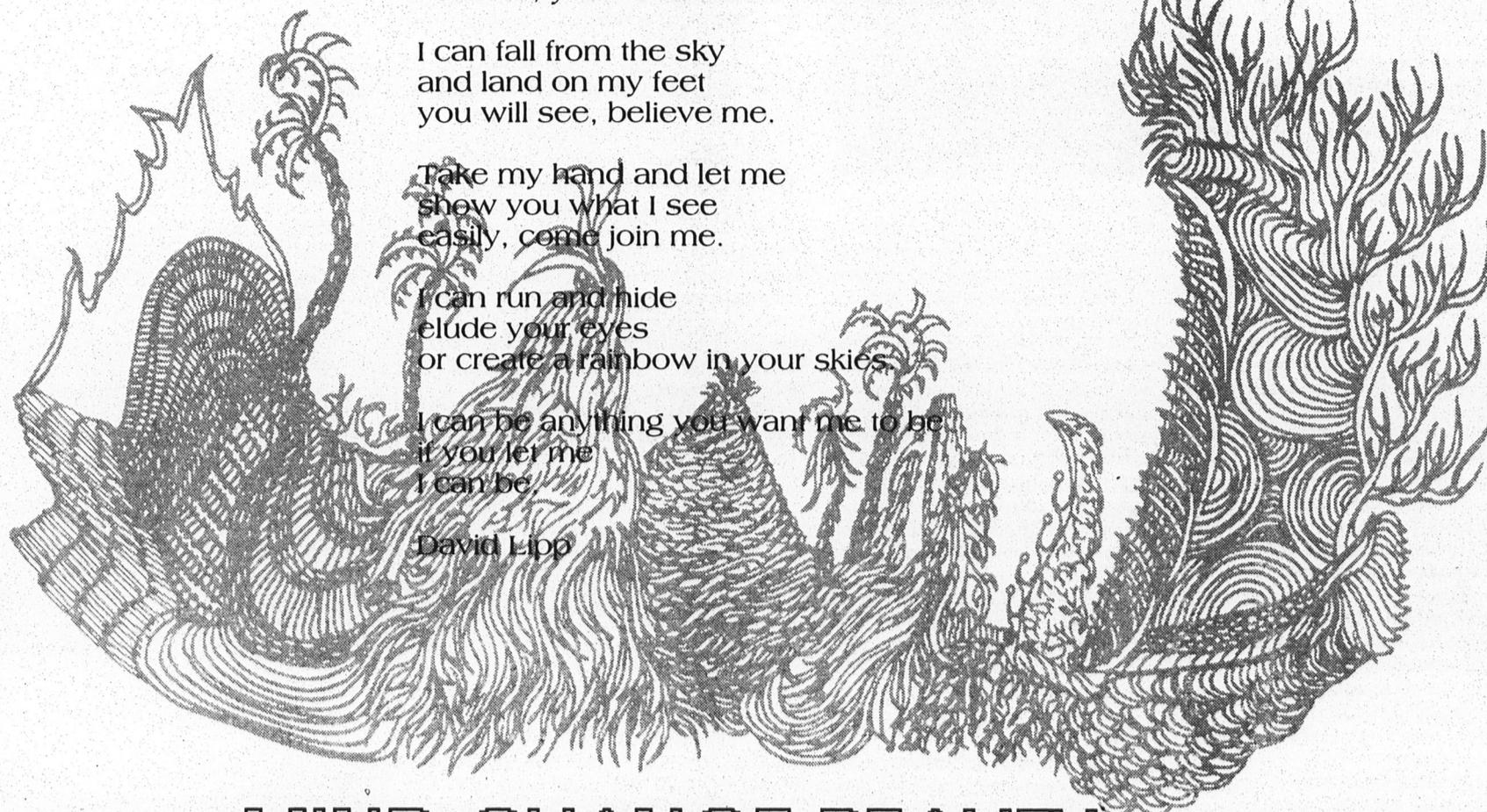
I can fall from the sky
and land on my feet
you will see, believe me.

Take my hand and let me
show you what I see
easily, come join me.

I can run and hide
elude your eyes
or create a rainbow in your skies.

I can be anything you want me to be
if you let me
I can be

David Lipp

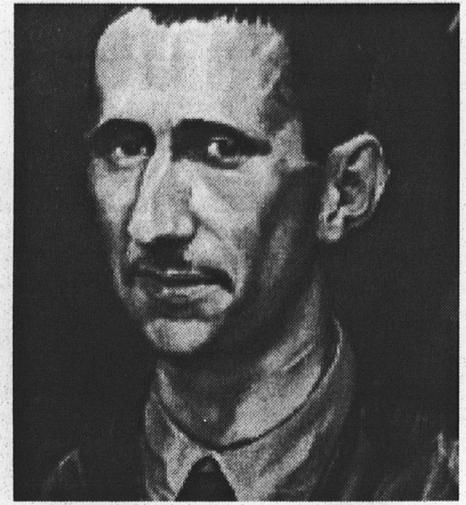


MIND CHANGE REALITY

BERTOLT BRECHT: BAD TIME FOR POETRY

"152 Poems and Songs" Edited by John Willet 156 pp. London: Methuen, 1995.

This past summer a new translation of Bertolt Brecht's collected poems was published in London. This in itself is a noteworthy event. Brecht is already regarded as one of the greatest playwrights of the modern age. But perhaps because his verse is less technically innovative, it is less appreciated than his work for the theater. However, this collection awakens us to the fact that Brecht is also one of the century's most important poets. The wide range of the content — images, ideas and experiences — found within the poetry are united by Brecht's vision of a new revolutionary, working class culture to which his life and voice were given. Brecht (1898-1956) lived through two world wars, revolutions, fascism and McCarthyism, escaping the last to settle in Communist East Germany. In East Berlin he established the Maxim Gorky theater to perform his work, which prior to capitalist restoration in 1989 was still one of the great companies in the world.



Now that the fat years of the Post-War era are over, Brecht's legacy has come full circle. The new generation coming up will need the insights of a Bertolt Brecht, for a new bad time for poetry awaits us. — Barry Lituchy

QUESTIONS FROM A WORKER WHO READS

Who built Thebes of the seven gates?
In the books you will find the names of kings.
Did the kings haul up the lumps of rocks?
And Babylon, many times demolished
Who raised it up so many times? In what houses
Of gold-glittering Lima did the builders live?
Where, the evening that the Wall of China was finished
Did the masons go? Great Rome
Is full of triumphal arches. Who erected them? Over whom
Did Ceasars triumph? Has Byzantine, much praised in
song
Only palaces for its inhabitants? Even in fabled Atlantis
The night the ocean engulfed it
The drowning still bawled for their slaves.

The young Alexander conquered India.
Was he alone?
Ceaser beat the Gauls.
Did he not have even a cook with him?

Philip of Spain wept when his armada
Went Down. Was he the only one to weep?
Frederick the Second won the Seven Years' War. Who
Else won it?

Every page a vistory.
Who cooked the feast for the visitors?
Every ten years a great man.
Who paid the bill?

So many reports.
So many questions.

SOLELY BECAUSE OF THE INCREASING DISORDER

Solely because of the increasing disorder
In our cities of class struggle
Some of us have now decided
To speak no more of cities by the sea, snow on the
roofs,
women
The smell of ripe apples in cellars, the senses of the
flesh, all
That makes a man round and human
But to speak in future only about the disorder
Ans so become one-sided, reduced, enmeshed in the
business
Of politics and the dry, indecorous vocabulary
Of dialectical economics
So that this awful cramped coexistence
Of snowfalls (they're not merely cold, we know)
Exploitation, the lured flesh, class justice, should not
engender
Approval of a world so many-sided; delight in
The contradictions of so bloodstained life.
You understand.

ALTER THE WORLD, IT NEEDS IT

Whom would the just man fail to greet, in order to stop
an injustice?
What medicine tastes too nasty to sane
A dying man?
How much meanness would you not commit if the aim is
To stamp out meanness?
If you'd found a way to alter this planet, what would you
Refuse to do?
What would you refuse to do?
Sink deep in the mire
Shake hands with the butcher: yes, but
Alter the World, it needs it!
Who are you?

DISCOVERY ABOUT A YOUNG WOMEN

Next day's subdued farewell: she standing there
Cool in the threshold, coolly looked at too
When I observed a grey strand in her hair
And found I could not bring myself to go.

Silent I took her breast, and when she wondered
Why I, who'd been her guest that night in bed
Was not prepared to leave as we had said
I looked straight between the eyes and answered:

It's only one more night that I'll be staying
But use your time; the fact is, you've provoked me
Standing poised on the threshold in that way.

And let us speed up what we've got to say
For both of us forget that you're decaying.
With that my voice gave out, and longing choked.

ON DANTE'S POEM TO BEATRICE

Even today, above the dusty vault
In which she lies, whom he could never have
Although he dogged her footsteps like a slave
Her name's enough to bring us to a halt.

For he ensured that we should not forget her
Writing such splendid verse to her as made
Us listen to the compliments he paid
Convinced that no one ever put it better.

Dear me, what an abuse he started then
By praising in a manner so arresting
What he had only looked at without testing!

Since he made poems out of glimpses, men
Have seen what looks nice in its streets attire
And stays bone dry, as something to desire.

FUTURE CHICKEN FARMERS

by Gabriel Lopez

I stumbled into the Shore Inn, and made my way through the crowd towards the corner, just close enough to see where the instruments were docked. I passed between the chasm that existed between the blue collars perched at their local night time bar, and the handful of aspiring poets and musicians and things who mostly stood hovering over the tables on the opposite side, hoping to slide into an empty seat that wasn't covered with a jacket or a book bag. A huge wall of silence divided the two crowds who more often than not, would not find themselves with the luxury of each other's company, so they amply avoided as much contact as possible. An exception was being allowed however: the tension in the air was being breached by an extended guitar solo, hands dancing across bongo skins, a leering bass, and the rat-at-tat-tata from the trap. Even some of the hidden ego-centric eccentrics had crawled out of their caves tonight, myself included. Tim and the boys were playing.

A sigh of relief can be breathed, or exhaled rather when the music begins to blare. It's rare to catch an act with such a motivated drive, especially in the streets of the neighborhood that the tunes leak out onto. Tonight is one of the few highlights of the dwindling culture that gasps to exist between The Cargo Cafe open mike, The Garden in the Forest Art Gal-

lery, and the Shore Inn; making it ironic that I sip my draft beer at a spitting distance from the "local cultural center"-Snug Harbor. But tonight the storm is coming.

The band gears up by a long instrumental solo that roughly sums up the style that the band has coined, "soul core." Whether or not, the work is deserving of it's own category is debatable, because the true caliber of a band can only be measured after a substantial amount of work has been produced and given a chance to evolve. So that the differential elements have become clearly established, and one is sure whether or not a band can stand the steps of time. However, for a garage band nearing the completion of a record deal and potential release, they are definitely focused on the right track, and seem to possess some sort of secret map, or guide to direct them there.

Peaceful Jon beats away on his double bongos and tambourine, in a somewhat tribal beat that sets the foundation for the rhythmic journey. The talent in his playing is realized effectively when the percussion is combined with a heavy back beat-supplied by a six piece trap set, a new addition to the mix played out by a fill-in member for the evening. It propels the more towards heavy rock-n-roll. Adam, the bass player, follows along with a focused eye attached to the frantically mov-

ing fingers of the guitar, hoping to maintain the bass beat to the unpracticed riffs and changes that he learned the night before. He skillfully maneuvers along, and it becomes quite obvious when he falls into the groove, because a smile perks across his lips and his shaky hands begin to experiment and expand with the harmonies in a graceful, but powerful way. Rightly, proving that he feels the music, and isn't just simply memorizing the notes to the point, a rarity in today's music industry.

Then there is Tim. The obvious and inevitable forerunner and frontman, that is an essential part of popular music today. Forerunner, meaning somewhat of a leader, even if being pushed from behind, and frontman, because the established rules of rock n' roll do not allow any other set up as an option. Truthful and real lyrics pour out of his mouth. Jon and Adam blend in their voices, words that are sometimes bitter, sometimes ambitious, sometimes hopeful, and sometimes full of despair; but all encompassing around the basic theory that sometimes all you can really do about it all is just giggle. Tim, the incredible guitar player, with a shy little boy smile that seems to be one quarter naive, and three quarters menacing, often slips into the shadows, letting the rhythm section take over the tune. Adam and Jon drastically change the feeling, capitalize

on their chance to shine, and allow themselves to drift back through the smoke, forward into the main picture.

Powerful songs arise from the trio, that with a bit more experience and willingness to accept feedback, and not just that provided by the amplifiers, maintain the capability of injecting a much needed jolt to the artistic merit flowing through the bloodstream of America. They may just be the heroin. I can easily envision the familiar acoustic renditions of the open mikes being prime material for the MTV unplugged. I look forward to being able to pass out with their songs still skipping and spinning in my c.d. player at night. I am overjoyed to have been able to observe their music while there is still no cover charge, reasonably priced drinks, and no back stage pass required.

As long as the band does not forget where they came from and why, and more importantly the real purpose behind creating music, and do not succumb to the temptation of their work being primarily a means for financial benefit, which should come knocking on the door quite soon. The Future Chicken Farmers hold a realistic chance of having a significant impact on society as well as leave behind some great memories along the way.

On Burroughs' Work

The method must be purest meat
and no symbolic dressing,
actual visions and actual prisons
as seen then and now.

Prisons and visions presented
with rare descriptions
corresponding exactly to those
of Alcatraz and Rose.

A naked lunch is natural to us,
we eat reality sandwiches.
But allegories are so much lettuce.
Don't hide the madness.

Allen Ginsberg - *San Jose, 1954.*

Ode to a Wild Horse, New God

Finely tuned libertarian; sharpness of
solidarity - still
Free Market stride remains,

beneath p-s-y-
cho-low-g. roots - confront;
Ride ye competitors! How common the
racehorse could be,
Recognized through hand and thigh, a
government for the hour...

To straddle long on means, high
streams, new morally bound
Closet lovers, addicts and dancers mesh
the force of ideas
Has an ideal in the details of gallup, con-
tact with ground
Ride steady, it's androgynous back, a
new fist for our years

A call to synthesis and revelry of
muscles, the big swift horse:
We become the horse and no longer the
stable, new artist snout
Make hooves out of computers, and
each soul with aim would drift
Sweet time anew and development, true
of an individual's bout

Burn them other's rose, release your
head drowning in a tearful bay
For future ears we must dedicate an-
other answer, instead of a way.

When a horse's leg breaks - until the greedy
owner dissipates
The goddamn pimp shoots it!



Fighting Fascists

continued from Back page

William Bennett has accused Buchanan of "flirting with fascism."

But both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party are supporting measures to shore up capitalist profits and political power through an unprecedented attack on the living standards and social rights of the working class, people of color, and women. An honest historical reckoning should make clear that the two major political parties, both of which are dominated by the capitalist class and opposed to the interests of the working class majority, are part of the problem—not part of the solution. As unemployment, economic insecurity, and political disillusionment with the status quo grow, the threat of fascism is likely to increase. The forces of fascism and genocide can be defeated, but not if we rely on the bourgeois politicians, their backers on Wall Street, or their apologists in the universities and colleges. The eradication of the fascist threat can only be accomplished by ordinary working and poor people of all races, nationalities, and religions who unite to defend the limited democratic rights we now have and to fight for the revolutionary and democratic socialist transformation of society.

An honest historical reckoning should make clear that the two major political parties, both of which are dominated by the capitalist class and opposed to the interests of the working class majority, are part of the problem — not part of the solution.

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APRIL 12TH

COVER STORY

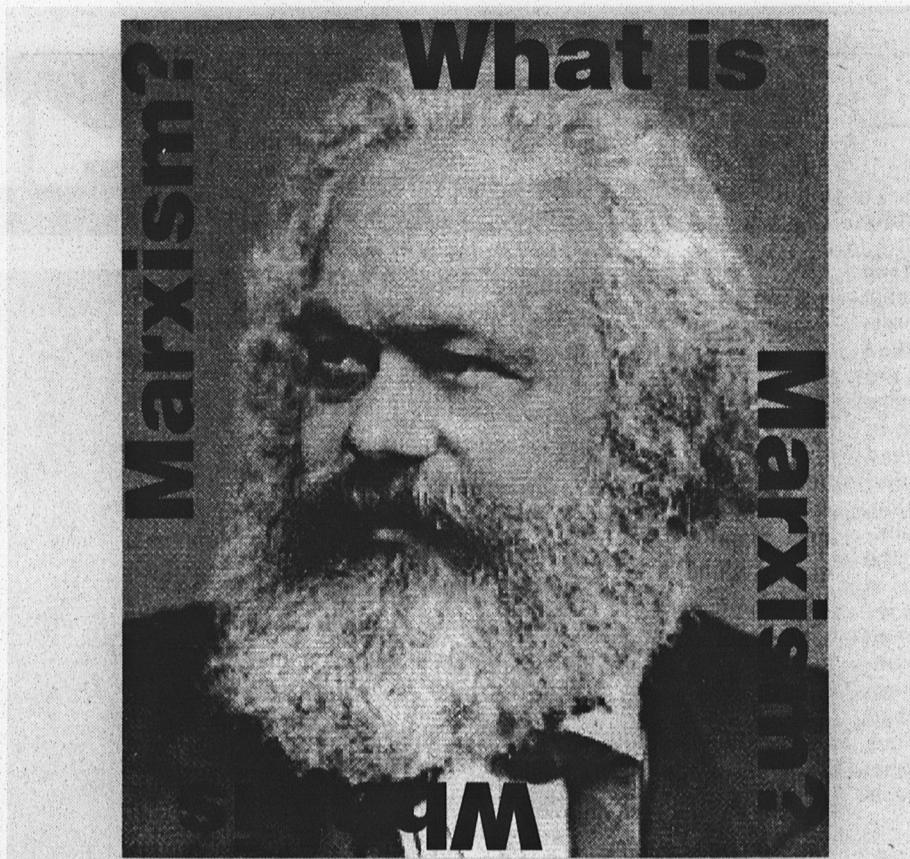
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Where as Hegel examined ideas apart from the people who held them, Marx's materialism puts ideas back into the heads of living people and treats both as parts of a world that is forever being remade through human activities, particularly in production. In this interaction, social conditions and behavior are found to have a greater affect on the character and development of people's ideas than these ideas do on social conditions and behavior.

ALIENATION

Marx's specific theories are best understood as answers to his pointed questions about the nature and development of capitalism. How do the ways in which people earn their living affect their bodies, minds and daily lives? In the theory of alienation, Marx gives us his answer to this question. Workers in capitalist society do not own the means—machines, raw materials, factories—which they use in their work. These are owned by the capitalists to whom the workers must sell their "labor power", or ability to do work, in return for a wage.

This system of labor displays four relations that lie at the core of Marx's theory of alienation: 1) The worker is alienated (or cut off) from his or her productive activity, playing no part in deciding what to do or how to do it. Someone else, the capitalist, also sets the conditions and speed of work and even decides if the worker is to be allowed to work or not, i.e. hires and fires him. 2) The worker is alienated from the product of that activity, having no control



in more alienated labor. Though Marx's main examples of alienation are drawn from the life of workers, other classes are also alienated to the degree that they share or are directly effected by these relations, and that includes the capitalists.

in the fact that they all have a price—is what these products do and what can be done with them. Rather than a particular price, value stands for the whole set of conditions which are necessary for a commodity to have any price at all. It is in this sense that Marx calls value a product of capitalism. The ideal price ("exchange value") of a commodity and the ways in which it is meant to be used ("use value") likewise exhibit in their different ways the distinctive relationships Marx uncovered between workers and their activities, products and other people in capitalist society.

"Exchange value" reflects a situation where the distinct human quality and variety of work has ceased to count. Through alienation, the relations between workers has been reduced to the quantity of labor that goes into their respective products. Only then can these products exchange for each other at a ratio which reflects these quantities. It is this which explains Smith's and Ricardo's finding that the value of a commodity is equal to the amount of labor time which has gone into its production. While in use value, the physical characteristics of commodities—planned obsolescence, the attention given to style over durability, the manufacture of individual and family as opposed to larger group units, etc. - give unmistakable evidence of the isolating and degraded quality of human relations found throughout capitalist society.

Surplus-value, the third aspect of value, is the difference between the amount of exchange and use value created by workers and the amount returned to them as wages. The capitalist buys the worker's labor power, as any other commodity, and puts it to work for eight or more hours a day. However, workers can make in, say, five hours products which are the equivalent of their wages. In the remaining three or more hours an amount of wealth is produced which remains in the hands of the capitalist. The capitalists' control over this surplus is the basis of their power over the workers and the rest of society. Marx's labor theory of value also provides a detailed account of the struggle between capitalists and workers over the size of the surplus value, with the capitalists trying to extend the length of the working day, speed up the pace of work, etc., while the workers organize to protect themselves. Because of the competition among capitalists, workers are constantly being replaced by machinery, enabling and requiring capitalists to extract ever greater amounts of surplus value from the workers who remain.

Paradoxically, the amount of surplus value is also the source of capitalism's greatest weakness. Because only part of their product is returned to them as wages, the workers cannot buy a large portion of

This leads to crises of "overproduction", capitalism's classic contradiction, in which people are forced to live on too little because they produce too much.

the consumables that they produce. Under pressure from the constant growth of the total product, the capitalists periodically fail to find new markets to take up the slack. This leads to crises of "overproduction", capitalism's classic contradiction, in which people are forced to live on too little because they produce too much.

HISTORICAL TENDENCIES

How did capitalism originate, and where is it leading? Marx's materialist conception of history answers the first part of this question with an account of the transformation of feudalism into capitalism. He stresses the contradictions that arose through the growth of towns, population, technology and trade, which at a certain point burst asunder the feudal social and political forms in which production had been organized. Relations of lord to serf based on feudal rights and obligations had become a hindrance to the further development of these productive forces; over an extended period and after a series of political battles, they were replaced by the contractual relation of capitalists to workers. With capitalists free to pursue profits wherever they might take them and workers equally "free" to sell their labor power to the capitalists however they might use it, the productive potential inherent in the new forces of production, especially in technology and science, grew to unmeasured proportions.

However, if maximizing profits leads to rapid growth when rapid growth results in large profits, then growth is restricted as soon as it becomes unprofitable. The periodic crises which have plagued capitalism from about 1830 on are clear evidence of this. Since that time, the new forces of production which have come into being in capitalism, their growth and potential for producing wealth, have come increasingly into contradiction with the capitalist social relations in which production is organized. The capitalists put the factories, machines, raw materials, and labor power—all of which they own—into motion to produce goods only if they feel they can make a profit, no matter what the availability of these "factors of production", and no matter what the need of consumers for their products. The cost to society in wealth that is never produced (and in wealth which is produced but in forms that are anti-social in their character) continues to grow and with it the need for another, more efficient, more humane way of organizing production.

Within this framework the actual course of history is determined by class struggle. According to Marx, each class is defined chiefly by its relation to the productive process and has objective interests rooted in that relation. The capitalists' interests lie in securing their power and expanding profits. Workers, on the other hand, have interests in higher wages, safe working conditions, shorter hours, job security, and—because it is required to realize other interests—a new distribution of power. The class struggle involves everything that these two major classes do to promote their incompatible interests at each other's expense. In this battle, which rages throughout society, the capitalists are aided by their wealth, their control of the state, and their domination over other institutions—schools, media, churches—that guide and distort people's thinking. On the workers' side are their sheer numbers, their experience of cooperation—however alienated—while at work, trade unions, working class political parties (where they exist), and the contradictions within capitalism that make present conditions increasingly irrational.

The cutting of these relationships in half leaves on one side a seriously diminished individual—physically weakened, mentally confused and mystified, isolated and virtually powerless. On the other side of this separation are the products and ties with other people, outside the control and lost to the understanding of the worker.

over what is made or what happens to it, often not even knowing what happens to it once it has left his hands. 3) The worker is alienated from other human beings, with competition and mutual indifference replacing most forms of cooperation. This applies not only to relations with the capitalists, who use their control over the worker's activity and product to further their own profit maximizing interests, but also to relations between individuals inside each class as everyone tries to survive as best he can. 4) Finally, the worker is alienated from the distinctive potential for creativity and community we all share just because we are human beings. Through labor which alienates them from their activity, product and other people, workers gradually lose their ability to develop the finer qualities which belong to them as members of the human species.

The cutting of these relationships in half leaves on one side a seriously diminished individual—physically weakened, mentally confused and mystified, isolated and virtually powerless. On the other side of this separation are the products and ties with other people, outside the control and lost to the understanding of the worker. Submitted to the mystification of the marketplace, the worker's products pass from one hand to another, changing form and names along the way—"value", "commodity", "capital", "interest", "rent", "wage"—depending chiefly on who has them and how they are used. Eventually, these same products—though no longer seen as such—reenter the worker's daily life as the landlord's house, the grocer's food, the banker's loan, the boss's factory, and the various laws and customs that prescribe his relations with other people.

Unknowningly, the worker has constructed the necessary conditions for reproducing his own alienation. The world that the worker has made and lost in alienated labor reappears as someone else's private property which he only has access to by selling his labor power and engaging

THEORY OF VALUE

What is the effect of the worker's alienated labor on its products, both on what they can do and what can be done with them? Smith and Ricardo used the labor theory of value to explain the cost of commodities. For them, the value of any commodity is the result of the amount of labor time that went into its production. Marx took this explanation more or less for granted. His labor theory of value, however, is primarily concerned with the more basic problem of why goods have prices of any kind. Only in capitalism does the distribution of what is produced take place through the medium of markets and prices. In slave society, the slave owner takes by force what his slaves produce, returning to them only what he wishes. While in feudalism, the lord claims as a feudal right some part of what is produced by his serfs, with the serfs consuming the rest of their output directly. In both societies, most of what is produced cannot be bought or sold, and therefore, does not have any price.

In accounting for the extraordinary fact that everything produced in capitalist society has a price, Marx emphasizes the separation of the worker from the means of production (whereas slaves and serfs are tied to their means of production) and the sale of his or her labor power that this separation makes necessary. To survive, the workers, who lack all means to produce, must sell their labor power. In selling their labor power, they give up all claims to the products of their labor. Hence, these products become available for exchange in the market, indeed are produced with this exchange in mind, while workers are able to consume only that portion of their products which they can buy back in the market with the wages they are paid for their labor power.

"Value", then, is the most general effect of the worker's alienated labor on all its products; exchange—which is embodied

In capitalism, the state is an instrument in the hands of the capitalists that is used to repress dangerous dissent and to help expand surplus value. This is done mainly by passing and enforcing anti-working class laws and by providing the capitalists with various economic subsidies ("capitalist welfare"). Marx also views the state as a set of political structures interlocked with the economic structures of capitalism whose requirements—chiefly for accumulating capital (means of production used to produce value)—it must satisfy, if the whole system is not to go into a tailspin. And, finally, the state is an arena for class struggle where class and class factions contend for political advantage in an unfair fight that finds the capitalists holding all the most powerful weapons. An adequate understanding of the role of the capitalist state as a complex social relation requires that it be approached from each of these three angles: as an instrument of the capitalist class, as a structure of political offices and processes, and as an arena of class struggle.

In order to supplement the institutions of force, capitalism has given rise to an ideology, or way of thinking, which gets people to accept the status quo or, at least, confuses them as to the possibility of replacing it with something better. For the most part, the ideas and concepts which make up this ideology work by getting people to focus on the observable aspects of any event or institution, neglecting its history and potential for change as well as

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effort is made to analyze how they develop their preferences (history) or who determines the range of available choices (larger system). Placing an event in its real historical and social context, which is to say—studying it "dialectically," often leads (as in the case of "consumer sovereignty") to conclusions that are the direct opposite of those based on the narrow observations favored by ideological thinking. As the attempted separation of what can not be separated without distortion, capitalist ideology reflects in thought the fractured lives of alienated people, while at the same time making it increasingly difficult for them to grasp their alienation.

As the contradictions of capitalism become greater, more intense, and less amenable to disguise, neither the state nor ideology can restrain the mass of the workers, white and blue collar, from recognizing their interests (becoming "class conscious") and acting upon them. The overthrow of capitalism, when it comes, Marx believed, would proceed as quickly and democratically as the nature of capi-

stantly build, is the human one of abolishing alienation. Marx called the attainment of this goal "communism."

MARXISM TODAY

Capitalism has obviously changed a lot in the hundred years since Marx wrote. In the basic relations and structures which distinguish capitalism from feudalism and socialism, however, it has changed very little, and these are the main features of capitalism addressed in Marx's theories. Workers, for example, may earn more money now than they did in the last century, but so do the capitalists. Consequently, the wealth and income gaps between the two classes is as great or greater than ever. The workers' relations to their labor, products and capitalists (which are traced in the theory of alienation and the labor theory of value) are basically unchanged from Marx's day. Probably the greatest difference between our capitalism and Marx's has to do with the more direct involvement of the state in the capitalist economy (primarily to bolster flagging profits) and, as a consequence

ism as evidence that he ignored the role of ideas in history and in people's lives. Viewed as an "economic determinism", Marxism has also been criticized for presenting politics, culture, religion, etc. as simple effects of a one-way economic cause. (This would be undialectical.) Viewed as a claim that labor is the only factor in determining prices (equated here with "value"), the labor theory of value has been wrongly attacked for ignoring the effect of competition on prices. And viewing what are projections of capitalism's tendencies into the future as inviolable predictions, Marx has been accused of making false predictions.

Some, finally, point to the anti-democratic practices of many Communist countries and claim that authoritarianism is inherent in Marxist doctrine. In fact, Marx's theories concentrate on advanced industrial capitalism with its imperfect but still functioning democratic institutions and he never thought that socialism could achieve its final promise in relatively poor, politically underdeveloped nations.

Marxism, as defined here, has had its main influence among workers and intellectuals in capitalist countries, especially in Europe, who have used it as a major tool in defining their problems and constructing political strategies. In the Western countries, even non-Marxist intellectuals, particularly sociologists and historians, have drawn considerable insights from Marx's writings. In the Third World, Marxism—considerably modified to deal with their special mixture of primitive and advanced capitalist conditions—has clarified the nature of the enemy for many liberation movements. In the Communist countries, selected doctrines of Marx have been frozen into abstract principles to serve as the official ideology of the regimes. The influence of these three varieties of Marxism is as different as their content.

In American capitalism's latest crisis, the combination of growing unemployment and worsening inflation has confounded all the usual experts. The most powerful nation in history cannot erase poverty, provide full employment, guarantee decent housing or an adequate diet or good health care to its people. Meanwhile, the rich get richer. Only Marxism, as an account of the rational unfolding of a basically irrational capitalist system, makes sense of our current chaos. In class struggle, it also points the way out. The rest is up to us.

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In American capitalism's latest crisis, the combination of growing unemployment and worsening inflation has confounded all the usual experts. The most powerful nation in history cannot erase poverty, provide full employment, guarantee decent housing or an adequate diet or good health care to its people. Meanwhile, the rich get richer. Only Marxism, as an account of the rational unfolding of a basically irrational capitalist system, makes sense of our current chaos. In class struggle, it also points the way out. The rest is up to us.

the broader context in which it resides. The result is a collection of partial, static, distorted, one-sided notions that reveal only what the capitalists would like everyone to think. For example, in capitalist ideology, consumers are considered sovereign, as if consumers actually determine what gets produced through the choices they make in the supermarket; and no

talist opposition allowed. Out of the revolution would emerge a socialist society which would fully utilize and develop much further the productive potential inherited from capitalism. Through democratic planning, production would now be directed to serving social needs instead of maximizing private profit. The final goal, toward which socialist society would con-

of this, the expanded role of ideology to disguise the increasingly obvious ties between the agencies of the state and the capitalist class.

From its beginnings, Marxism has been under attack from all sides, but the major criticisms have been directed against claims that Marx never made. For example, some have mistakenly viewed Marx's material-

Join the Voice!

The College Community



Fighting Fascists on Staten Island

By David Smith

A large, militant anti-fascist demonstration will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 13, at Clove Lakes Park. Hundreds of working and poor people from every racial, national, and religious background will stand together to demand an end to the growing presence of the neo-Nazi National Alliance on Staten Island.

This demonstration has been organized by the New Yorker Workers Against Fascism and the Communist Workers Organizing Committee. Endorsing organizations include the Revolutionary Socialist Group (CSI), Stand Against the Klan, the Staten Island Million Man March Coalition, the Staten Island Council for Peace and Justice, the Staten Island Coalition for Survival, the Italo-American Fraternal Society of Richmond County, the Staten Island Independence Party, the Christian Peace Conference, the Immigrant Workers Association, Radical Women, the Freedom Socialist Party, Love and Rage, Labor Militant, the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence, Refuse and Resist, ACT UP (NY), the Gabriela Network (NY Chapter), Socialist Action, and the Bolshevik Tendency. Other endorsements are forthcoming.

The April 13 demonstration has been called to send a strong public message of opposition to the racist and anti-Semitic activities of local neo-Nazis. Four years ago, a few extreme racists in the county tried to establish a chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. Their efforts were thwarted through the determined opposition of Stand Against the Klan and other anti-racist forces in the community. However, during the last several months, the National Alliance has been trying to pick up where the Klan left off. The national leader of this organization, William Pierce, is the author of *The Turner Diaries*, a book which openly advocates the creation of a fascist dictatorship and the global extermination of Jews and people of color. The bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building last year is widely believed to follow a scenario outlined in this book.

Last fall, National Alliance members distributed viciously racist, anti-Semitic, and homophobic literature in a few neighborhoods on Staten Island. Most residents were angered and disgusted by this filth, but local elected officials and politicians generally ignored the problem and the need to organize residents against neo-Nazi activity. On December 10, Stand Against the Klan and the Communist Workers Organizing Committee sponsored

a rally at Clove Lakes Park to protest the presence of these fascists in our city. About eighty people braved bitterly cold weather to take a stand against the neo-Nazis. Six white racist skinheads wearing black jackets with Ku Klux Klan patches, giving Nazi salutes, and shouting "Sieg Heil!" and "White Power!" tried unsuccessfully to disrupt the demonstration. These fascists were eventually detailed by the police, the rally proceeded as planned, and the event was a successful first step in building community resistance to the activities of the National Alliance.

In recent months, however, the neo-Nazis have escalated their campaign of racial hatred, white supremacy, and Right-wing extremism. During the Hanukkah season, swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans were painted on the property of Congregation B'Nai Israel. A menorah in the yard of Rabbi Moshe Katzman of Chabad Lubavitch was also vandalized. The same week, the slur, "Death to all n— and Jane" was written on an official vehicle at the Sea View Hospital Rehabilitation Center. Ms. Jane Lyons, an African American woman, is the Executive Director at the hospital. In late January, after an elderly white man was killed by three young men of color in a botched robbery, the National Alliance began distributing literature claiming that this was part of a "race war" by Blacks against whites. In early February, the neo-Nazis unfurled a banner on a Richmond Parkway overpass. The banner read, "White Revolution—Only Solution," and featured swastikas and SS symbols.

The participants at the April 13 demonstration will be uniting to demand: Fascists Out of Staten Island! No Platform for Fascists! Build United Multi-Racial Working Class Actions Against Fascism! These demands express the shared political understanding that the growth of neo-Nazi activity on Staten Island poses a grave threat, that the disciples of Hitler must be stopped from building a political base in this borough, and that only the organized power of the united, multi-racial working class can

decisively defeat fascism. Although the primary focus of the April 13 demonstration is the need for united working class actions against fascists here on Staten Island, rally organizers and most of the endorsing organizations understand that the only way to eliminate the threat of fascism altogether is to bring about the abolition of



capitalism and the construction of a socialist society.

During the last decade it has become clear that the Far Right is on the rise across the country. Openly fascist forces such as the National Alliance, the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Nation, and so-called Christian Identity groups have been killing and assaulting people, committing various hate crimes, robbing banks, and trying to gain support for a proposed "race war" which would culminate in fascism and genocidal violence against Jews, people of color, gays and lesbians, immigrants, labor activists, and leftists.

The bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building, the growth of white supremacist militias, and the resurgence of virulent racism across the country attest to the scope and seriousness of the dangers posed by the Far Right. Not surprisingly, right-wing Republicans such as Pat Buchanan have sought to give an electoral voice to these extremists. Even the conservative Republican hack

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What is Marx-



ism?

Bertell Ollman is a professor in the Department of Politics at NYU. Besides *Alienation* (listed below), he has written *Social and Sexual Revolution: Essays on Marx and Reich* (1979), as well as other works. He is one of the few professors capable of putting forward a Marxist analysis of contemporary capitalism.

We placed this in the pages of the Voice, with his approval, with the intent that the misinformation about Marxism, left over from the Cold-War years and McCarthyism, can be wiped away. As long as capitalist relations exist so shall the class struggle, and Marxism is still the best tool for understanding the apparent absurdities of our present society. More importantly from this analysis a solution can be put forward to solve the worlds ills, socialism. We hope you find the piece confrontational to the ideas you have in your head and a starting point for further investigation into the Marxist analysis.

By Bertell Ollman

A young reporter asked a leading capitalist how he made his fortune. "It was really quite simple" the capitalist answered. I bought an apple for 5¢, spent the evening polishing it, and sold it the next day for 10¢. With this I bought two apples, spent the evening polishing them, and sold them for 20¢. And so it went until I amassed 80¢. It was at this point that my wife's father died and left us a million dollars." Is this true? Is it fair? What does it all mean? There are no more hotly contested questions in our society than why some are rich and others poor—and whether things have to be this way.

Karl Marx sought the answers to these questions by trying to understand how our capitalist society works

(for whom it works better, for whom worse), how it arose out of feudalism and where it is likely to lead. Concentrating on the social and economic relations in which people earn their livings, Marx saw behind capitalism's law and order appearance a struggle of two main classes: the capitalists,

who own the productive resources, and the workers or proletariat, who must work in order to survive. "Marxism" is essentially Marx's analysis of the complex and developing relations between these two classes.

ORIGINS

The main theories that make up this analysis—the theory of alienation, the labor theory of value, and the materialist conception of history—must all be understood with this focus in mind. Even Marx's vision of socialism emerges from his study of capitalism, for socialism is the unrealized potential inherent in capitalism itself (something our great material wealth and advanced forms of organization makes possible) for a more just and democratic society in which everyone can develop his/her distinctively human qualities.

Some socialist ideas can be traced as far back as the

Bible, but Marxism has its main intellectual origins in German philosophy, English political economy, and French utopian socialism. It is from the German philosopher, Hegel, that Marx learned a way of thinking about the world, in all its fluid complexity, that is called "dialectics." The British political economists, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, provided Marx with a first approximation of his labor theory of value. From the French utopians, especially Charles Fourier and the comte de Saint-Simon, Marx caught a glimpse of a happier future that lay beyond capitalism. Along with the paradox of an Industrial Revolution which produced as much poverty as it did wealth, these are the main ingredients that went into the formation of Marxism.

MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

Marx's study of capitalism was grounded in a philosophy that is both dialectical and materialist. With dialectics, changes and interaction are brought into focus and emphasized by being viewed as essential parts of whatever institutions and processes are undergoing change and interaction. In this way, the system of capitalism, the wider context, is never lost sight of when studying any event within it, an election or an economic crisis for example; nor are its real past and future possibilities, the historical context, ever neglected when dealing with how something appears in the present. Whatever Marx's subject of the moment, his dialectical approach to it insures that his fuller subject is always capitalist society as it developed and is still developing. The actual changes that occur in history are seen here as the outcome of opposing tendencies, or "contradictions", which evolve in the ordinary functioning of society.

Unlike Hegel's dialectic, which operates solely on ideas, Marx's dialectic is materialist. Marx was primarily concerned with capitalism as lived rather than as thought about, but people's lives also involve consciousness.

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