



The *Socialist*

Magazine of the Socialist Party USA

Volume 31, Number 4

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Just a Buck!

BRING THEM HOME NOW!



**DAVID McREYNOLDS ON UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ
PLUS**

**BARBARA GARSON ON THE WORLD BANK • EXXONMOBIL ♥ BUSH
FORTY YEARS LATER: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S UPRISING • IMPEACHING DUBYA**

the Socialist

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This issue was laid out while listening to Bad Religion, eels, Old 97's, Spoon, Waco Brothers and X Ray Spex.

Editorial

We call for the impeachment of George W. Bush. public have cost thousands of lives. His manipulations of the backdrop for his invasion.

We in the Socialist Party believe it is healthy for the greedy interests of only a few. His ambitions are not ideals of liberty, democracy and justice, as he claims, but rather that of economic control over the resources of Iraq (whether they be oil, land, or human labor). Let there be no mistake about it. The war in Iraq is not about fighting terrorism. It is about building Empire, which the U.S. government is perpetuating all around the world. And we see Bush's spin and manipulation continue to manifest in the case that he is building against Iran and Venezuela, both nations with rich oil reserves. Look for another Bush scenario against both nations.

Our call for impeachment echoes our call for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. It is time to admit that our country was wrong. While millions of us took to the streets to try to prevent this war, others were lulled into complacency and support by lies and deceit. How can we allow one more young American, or innocent Iraqi civilian, to die for Bush's arrogance? It is time to withdraw, apologize, pay reparations and move on. And it is high time to try our President for high crimes.

Bush's lies to the American of terrorist links and weapons

As tempting as it may be to view the rancorous AFL-CIO convention as a precursor to a 1930's-style upsurge in the labor movement, the Change to Win coalition is no Congress of Industrial Organizations. When the CIO unions split from the AFL in 1938, they were ideological in their criticism of capitalism and belief in organizing workers across craft, race and gender lines into mass industrial unions, and their speedy organizing gains were made by socialists in the rank and file who were ready to unite and fight, and even seize the boss' property in order to win. The first real test may be when Change to Win meets in Cincinnati on September 27 to formally establish a rival labor federation. If the new organization creates a national organizing fund and staff and coordinates campaigns, then we might finally have the strategy and resources to take on corporate giants like FedEx, Wal-Mart, Cintas and Marriott on a nation-wide scale and to organize millions of workers.

So, these unions pulled their money out of the AFL-CIO in order to fund their own strategies, and left the rest of the federation to sink or swim. Such selfish motives hardly portend a great social movement. Still, there is hope that the conflict might spur new tactics and new solidarity, provided that both sides don't get distracted by fighting each other over the Here may soon follow) did few American workers who are already union members.

A few decades after the end of the war that he managed, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara told us that the Vietnam War had been a mistake and he apologized.

Great. But when, I'd like to know, is he going to apologize for the World Bank?

In the late 1960's, you may remember, McNamara left the Defense Department and — with what looked like relief — went to run the World Bank. After masterminding the most ill-conceived U.S. war (till recent times), he may have seen an opportunity to redeem himself. In the years that followed, he apparently became so involved in the bank's poverty-fighting mission that he actually cried on a couple of occasions when he delivered the annual report.

But good intentions aren't everything, and, unfortunately, McNamara brought his penchant for ideologically driven strategies with him.

Before his presidency, the World Bank typically made loans to Third World governments to support transportation, irrigation, education and other basics that were meant to promote economic development. But there was a lot of corruption. For that and other reasons, the loans didn't always accomplish all that was hoped for.

“THE TRUE BELIEVERS...KNEW THAT PRIVATE INVESTMENT MUST EVENTUALLY LEAD TO POVERTY REDUCTION, SO THEY SOLDIERED ON.”

In the McNamara era, the bank began to make loans on the condition that nations privatize public services and allow foreign money to move in and out of the country with little regulation. The idea was to create a climate in which private investment would lift people out of poverty. For the next 30 years, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund followed this market-oriented strategy, which came to be known as “the Washington Consensus.”

Before the McNamara years, the poorest people didn't get much richer. But during the Washington Consensus years, they got poorer and poorer.

I saw how that could be possible when I became a shareholder in the French water company Suez,

TRUE BELIEVERS AT THE WORLD BANK RIGID IDEOLOGY IS A THREAT, NOT AN ASSET BY BARBARA GARSON

which took over the water system of Johannesburg, South Africa.

To get ready for privatization, South African communities followed the World Bank/IMF suggestion that water rates be raised so consumers would get used to paying the full cost. The water of many people was cut off when they couldn't pay their bills. In some places they started taking water from rivers. The result was a cholera epidemic.

Cholera is an extreme result for a development scheme. But then, privatizing water in Africa is an extreme application of the World Bank's private investment theory. After all, a private company has to have some way of making money.

How is a private water company supposed to recoup the expense of extending pipelines to people who are simply too poor to pay the real cost? If you buy a Third World water company, it's far easier, you'll quickly discover, to recoup the investment by siphoning the water out to be bottled and consumed elsewhere.

Even in the First World, it's often more profitable to siphon off than to “develop.” For a few years, the Suez Co. also owned the water system

in Bergen County, N.J. During its stewardship, it sold off land around the reservoir to private builders. Then it turned around and sold the whole water system to another company. We shareholders took the money and ran. Technically that's called “asset stripping.” And it's perfectly legal.

A quarter of a century of day-in, day-out asset stripping sponsored by the IMF and the World Bank left millions of poor people poorer. Meanwhile, the unregulated capital flows — another tenet of the Washington Consensus — led to speculative booms and currency crashes that pushed hundreds of millions of people down into dollar-a-day poverty.

But the true believers were unswayed. They knew that private

investment must eventually lead to poverty reduction, so they soldiered on.

Finally, a few pragmatists, such as the World Bank's chief economist, Joseph Stiglitz, had the courage to say, “Hey guys, this should be working, but it's not.” After Stiglitz spoke out publicly, his resignation was requested and quickly accepted.

But the ideological walls were weakening. Painful as it was, many development economists began to lose faith in a theory that was so often contradicted by the facts. Then, just as the doyens of development were becoming less dogmatic, George W. Bush got the chance to choose a new president for the World Bank. Now, his choice, Paul Wolfowitz, makes the move McNamara did — from the Pentagon to the World Bank.

I saw Wolfowitz asked on television about his qualifications for the job. He answered by expressing a commitment to poverty reduction that sounded sincere. He went on, unasked, to say that the most important way to fight poverty — more important, he stressed, than assistance or even access to trade — is “creating an atmosphere in which private investment ...is encouraged.” In that, alas, he sounded even more sincere.

Unlike McNamara, Wolfowitz hasn't apologized for his war yet, and maybe he'll never have to. OK, so they didn't welcome us with flowers. OK, we couldn't pay for it with Iraqi oil. Yes, it cost a little more in lives, money and honor than he expected. Still, the Middle East may yet change in directions that he favors. So Wolfowitz may never feel a need to question his military doctrine. But if, as president of the World Bank, he sticks as rigidly to his economic dogma, he'll owe the whole world an apology for even more suffering and death.

Barbara Garson is the author of “Money Makes the World Go Around: One Investor Tracks Her Cash Through the Global Economy” (Penguin, 2002). This article originally appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Oil Men

Bush's Relationship with ExxonMobil

by B. Guise

Despite George Bush's promise to curb carbon dioxide emissions as a presidential candidate back in 2000 and despite the fact that over 100 nations have already ratified the Kyoto treaty, President George Bush refused to sign the treaty for the second time this past June. The reason is as dirty as our air and stinks of money and corruption. With the United States being responsible for 25% of the world's greenhouse pollution, the question of 'why' is a valid one. Why would Bush choose to shirk his global responsibility, be the odd man out, and refuse to sign a treaty that other industrialized nations find to be a step in the right direction?

The beginning of this story can be traced back to May 1990 and the corporate giant Exxon. After merging with Mobil in 1999, ExxonMobil became the world's third largest corporation, pulling in about 17 billion dollars annually. It spends more money on oil and gas exploration - around 8 billion dollars a year - than any other company, and refuses to spend a cent in clean, renewable energy. Relying on such a narrow energy base of fossil fuel production, the company has a lot to lose if Kyoto standards are to be implemented. Their corporate bottom-line instigated a fifteen year battle of public and political deception and dubious money handling.

In 1990, Exxon started its campaign of misinformation and distortion of scientific facts when it attempted to water down the conclusions of the first assessment report of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This would not be the last time.

The IPCC consists of 2,500 of the world's top scientists. It was set up in 1988 by the United Nations to produce assessment reports on the science of global warming and the projected impacts on potential policy responses. The economic threat of the first IPCC report on Exxon spurred a media campaign designed to cast doubt on

the IPCC's findings. They started by funding some of the most visible and notorious "climate skeptics," giving them global platforms on which to debate the scientific validity of the IPCC's findings and the supposed negative economic impact of the Kyoto treaty. These PR scientists were often not even credentialed in the fields of ecology and global warming.

In addition to the "climate skeptics," Exxon was hard at work in the White House making good use of industry lobby organizations. Since 1990, Exxon has been involved in instituting a network of fossil fuel industry umbrella groups. The purpose of these groups was to undermine the scientific evidence and economic advice given to governments, and to stall the climate negotiations. As well as its own lobbying efforts, ExxonMobil has played a central part in the planning and funding of the propaganda campaigns in a number of

massive and ongoing.

It was in 1996 that then-Governor George Bush began to partner up with Exxon. He was under tremendous pressure from the public and environmental groups to close up a loophole in the 1971 Texas Clean Air Act, which exempted "grandfathered" power plants - built before 1971 - which were responsible for 30% of the state's industrial air pollution. Not wanting to displease old colleagues in the oil and energy industry, but at the same time seeing an opportunity to gain favor with environmentalists in order to help pave the way for his up coming presidential campaign, Bush called in the big guns. After secret meetings for the first six months of 1997, a program was drafted with the help of corporate heads V.G. Baghini of Marathon Oil Company and Ansel Condray of Exxon USA, along with Bush's environmental director. The program, designed not to disadvantage

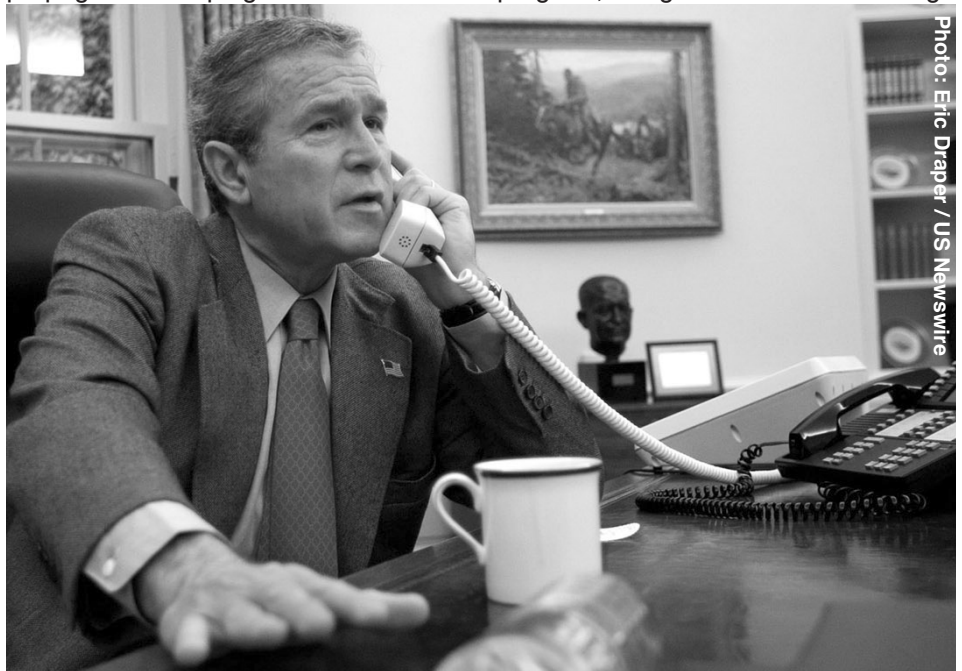


Photo: Eric Draper / US Newswire

"Within days of Bush entering the White House...ExxonMobil faxed the administration a hit list."

other lobbying groups, including the Global Climate Information Project, the International Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Council on International Business.

These organizations are committed to the job of downplaying or undermining climate science and embellishing the economic impacts of climate protection both in the U.S. and abroad, at climate talks and in the media. The damage that these organizations have done to American public opinion via misuse of the media and scientific studies is

anyone involved, was a completely voluntary scheme that became law in 1999. Sharing a platform with Ansel Condray at a press conference, Bush lauded his success in having achieved a major environmental policy without resorting to a "command and control" approach. He claimed that 26 industry volunteers had already signed up for his program. However, by the end of the year, only three companies had actually reduced emissions.

In 1997, Senators Chuck Hagel (R) and Robert Byrd (D) put forth a

resolution recommending that the U.S. should not commit to any international agreement on climate unless it contained specific new commitments for developing countries. This resolution was an effort on the part of the senators - and, hence, the lobbying groups - to slow down any and all commitments on fossil fuel emissions. Although developing countries are responsible for some emissions, they are not economically in the same league as the U.S.. It would take them longer to make the changes required in climate agreements, and the economic impact of these agreements would affect their economy far more than it would the U.S.. The vote for the 1997 Senate Resolution was 95-0 in favor of the resolution - the result of fierce lobbying and media advertising by Exxon, its spider web of lobbying groups, and thousands of dollars in political contributions to Chuck Hagel and other senators.

The 2000 Presidential elections were rich in oil money for the Republicans. 75 percent of all political donations from the oil industry went to the party. ExxonMobil itself gave 89 percent of its \$1,378,400 in donations to the Republicans. The Republicans had been receiving about twice as much oil money as the Democrats as far back as 1990, but, in the year 2000, oil contributions reached an all time high with the Republicans receiving almost four times that of the Democrats. Therefore, it was no surprise that when Bush named his cabinet in January of 2001, over half of the members were drawn from the oil and gas industry, including Vice President Cheney and Kathleen Cooper (former Chief Economist for Exxon) as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs in the Commerce Department.

Within days of Bush entering the White House, Arthur G. Randol III, senior environmental advisor for ExxonMobil, faxed the new administration a hit list of scientists it wanted removed from international climate negotiations. At the top of this list was former NASA climate scientist Dr. Robert Watson. A well respected scientist, Dr. Watson was the chair of the IPCC. Unfortunately Dr. Watson's scientific findings did not mesh with the Bush Administration or ExxonMobil.

After successful lobbying, the U.S. did not re-nominate Watson and he was removed from the IPCC at a meeting in April of 2002.

When Vice President Dick Cheney put together his task force to develop a new energy plan for the U.S., at the head of this energy task force was the American Petroleum Institute. The most prominent board member of the API at the time was Lee Raymond, who was also CEO of ExxonMobil. Released in May 2001, the energy plan gave renewed support to the coal and nuclear industries, recommended oil companies get new powers to explore in protected nature reserves and advised building new oil and gas power stations. ExxonMobil admits that it was involved in the drafting of the plans and that there was at least one direct consultation between Lee Raymond and Dick Cheney.

In February 2002, Bush unveiled the U.S. government's alternative to Kyoto. It mirrored every ExxonMobil policy on climate change. The program is entirely voluntary and would result in a 29% increase on carbon emissions as compared to 1990 levels.

In June 2005, embarrassing documents emerged right as Tony Blair was visiting the White House for discussions on climate change for July's G8 Summit meeting. The documents were briefing papers given before meetings to the U.S. Under Secretary of State, Paula Dobriansky. Dating between 2001 and 2004, the administration is found thanking ExxonMobil for its help in determining climate policy. One briefing note includes a "thank you" to the Global Climate Coalition (yet another ExxonMobil lobbying group) for their help in the U.S. rejection of Kyoto.

At about this same time, the *New York Times* reported that a Bush administration science policy official allegedly altered government reports on climate change. It should be no surprise that the official, Philip A. Clooney, was once a lobbyist for the American Petroleum Institute and has no scientific training. As a token nod to ethics, Clooney resigned in June as the chief of staff to President Bush's Council on Environmental Quality. Unfortunately, ExxonMobil announced on June 15th that Clooney will go to

work for them this fall.

With the cat finally out of the bag, one would like to think that President Bush would redeem himself at the G8 Summit. However, critics claim that the strength of U.S. influence has "watered down" the language in G8 climate change documents and that there is little in terms of substantial actions. Some fear that "the industrialized nations may even be going backwards from any kind of international consensus" as one journalist reported. According to the U.S. fact sheet on climate change, the G8 agreed to a Plan of Action on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development. The agreement includes such vagaries as "transform the way we use energy by improving efficiencies" and "power a cleaner future by promoting the use of nuclear power, clean coal technologies, clean diesel and methane, renewable energy, bioenergy, and more efficient power grids."

While some of the language sounds good, there are no specific 'hows' to the plan, no set definitions of what words like 'improving' and 'cleaner' actually mean, and no real time table to commit to. And after all is said and done, who can even venture to believe that Bush has any interest in any of these statements. After all, on the very same page as these commitments is the statement:

"The Bush Administration's approach draws upon the best scientific research, harnesses the power of markets, fosters the creativity of entrepreneurs, and works with the developing world to meet shared aspirations for our people, our economy, and our environment"

Sure, it sounds good, until you dig a little deeper. Then you find an account of 15 years of cheap words and expensive policy - policy so expensive that we as a people will be paying for it for decades to come. It seems as if the romance between Bush and ExxonMobil has turned a full circle and like all circles there's no end in sight.

B. Guise currently lives in Texas, where she works for a local radio station.

Another April Is Possible

Santo Domingo: Forty Years Later

by Eric Chester

In April 1965, a military revolt in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, turned into a popular uprising, as disaffected units began distributing arms to neighborhood militias. Soon afterward, this rag-tag force of ill-equipped soldiers and civilians, led by Colonel Francisco Alberto Caamaño, defeated the elite troops of the Dominican military, a force supplied with tanks and supported by air force bombers. The battle of Duarte Bridge, fought in one of the poorest barrios in Santo Domingo, has become a vital part of the popular folklore, a heroic moment in Dominican history. The victory of the popular uprising stunned Washington, as it reverberated throughout Latin America.

I recently returned from a trip to the Dominican Republic, where I participated in events celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the April 1965 revolution. The revolt was crushed when President Lyndon Johnson dispatched a flotilla to Santo Domingo. Johnson's decision to intervene sent shock waves through Latin America, and it remains a turning point for United States' relations with the Americas. The fortieth anniversary provides us with an excellent opportunity to reassess the events of April 1965, and to understand their impact on both the Dominican Republic and the United States. In the Dominican Republic, the revolt has become an important part of the national heritage, a rare circumstance in which the Dominican people stood up to the local oligarchy and to the Yanqui marauders.

Twentieth century Dominican history is dominated by the grotesque figure of Rafael Trujillo. One of the most vicious and greedy dictators to grasp power in Latin America, his rule lasted more than three decades. Trujillo retained the support of the United States for most of these years. Only in the end, after Fidel Castro came to power in Cuba in 1959, did Washington decide that Trujillo had become an intolerable embarrassment. In May 1961, Trujillo was assassinated

with the help of the CIA.

Throughout the later years of the Trujillo era, a fragmented opposition sought to overthrow him. Forced into exile, Juan Bosch came to represent the democratic opposition. A charismatic figure, Bosch still looms over Dominican politics, nearly a decade after his death. A nationalist and a social democrat in his political perspective, he was also a pragmatic politician who sought to mollify the United States and to win its backing. In the spring of 1961, Bosch taught at a school in Costa Rica that trained high level officials of his party, the PRD (Dominican Revolutionary Party). The CIA secretly funded the school, with Bosch's knowledge.

After Trujillo's assassination, Bosch returned to the Dominican Republic to win the first democratic election in that country's history. As president from February to September of 1963, he made a series of ineffectual efforts to implement a program of social reform. In particular, Bosch proposed to expropriate the large haciendas, and then backed off his proposal after it drew the enmity of the United States. Although little was accomplished, Washington soon came to the conclusion that Bosch was unreliable, a loose cannon in a volatile situation. The Kennedy administration gave the green light to a military coup, and Bosch was once again forced into exile. For the next thirty years, Bosch would repeatedly try to convince the United States of his reliability, but his efforts always failed. Only those politicians who could be counted on to be totally subservient would be permitted to hold office in the Caribbean, a zone the United States has consistently viewed as within its direct sphere of influence.

While president, Bosch had won the allegiance of a group of younger army officers. It was these officers who initiated the military coup that led to the revolt of April 1965. For Lyndon Johnson, the April revolution was a disaster. If a popular uprising could return Bosch to power, similar revolts might spread throughout the region.

With the revolution consolidating power in Santo Domingo, the president opted to send more than 40,000 paratroopers and Marines to the Dominican Republic. In April 1965, there were more U.S. troops stationed in Santo Domingo than there were in South Vietnam. U.S. forces quickly created a quarantine cordon around the center of the city, isolating the rebel leadership from the rest of the country. As Washington slowly tightened the screws, the uprising lost momentum, and its leaders were finally forced to concede defeat.

A provisional government created by the United States then organized an election of doubtful validity. In June 1966, Joaquín Balaguer, a Trujillo henchman, defeated Bosch under suspicious circumstances. In the end, the popular uprising of 1965 was overwhelmed, yet the memories of those heady days remain alive in the popular barrios. Colonel Caamaño continues to be the most popular personality in the Dominican Republic. (Forced into exile in 1966, he returned to the Dominican Republic in 1973 as a member of a small guerrilla unit that had embarked from Cuba. He was quickly captured and killed by Balaguer's forces.)

Balaguer held onto power through most of the three decades following the 1966 election. Although he cultivated the support of the United States, he too had become an embarrassment by 1996, just as Trujillo had thirty-five years before. Under pressure from the Clinton administration, Balaguer moved into the background in 1996, and since then the Dominican Republic has observed the outward forms of a democratic country.

Presidential elections are held every four years, with two major parties contesting for power. Both mainstream parties trace their origins to Juan Bosch. (In 1973, Bosch left the party he had formed in exile, the PRD, to form a new party, the PLD, the Dominican Liberation Party.) The current president, Leonel Fernández, was elected by the PLD, the slightly more progressive of the two parties.

Thus, in a superficial sense, the April revolution was ultimately victorious. Certainly, the current regime frequently advances this argument.

I was invited to Santo Domingo by a non-profit foundation linked to President Fernández to deliver a lecture in a series commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the uprising. As one looks beneath the surface, it becomes clear that the goals of the April revolution have not been reached. Genuine democratic rights remain elusive, while the Dominican economy remains subservient to the United States and the International Monetary Fund. Dominican society is rigidly class stratified. Those in the elite seek to emulate their counterparts in western Europe and the United States, while the great majority of people struggle to survive. Beggars are everywhere, and small children ask for a few coins to stave off hunger. Unemployment is pervasive, with the poor shoved

There are now a million Dominican immigrants residing in the United States, half of them in New York City. Since roughly nine million people live in the Dominican Republic itself, this means that a substantial minority of those in the prime of their working years has emigrated.

Remittances from the United States keep the Dominican economy from collapsing. This further reinforces the dependence of the Dominican Republic on the U.S. economy. In addition, tourism has developed into the biggest industry, with half the tourists coming from the United States. Building an economic infrastructure that can sustain an expanding tourist industry has been adopted as the primary objective of the current regime. While I was in Santo Domingo, the

sets guidelines for Dominican economic policy, and behind the IMF stands the United States. This represents Third World economic development at its worst. Santo Domingo demonstrates the cruel reality behind the glib phrases we here so often extolling 'free trade' and a globally integrated market economy.

Needless to say, the enormous disparity in income and wealth has provided fertile ground for radical politics. Although President Fernandez likes to present himself as a progressive social democrat, the reality remains that only a narrow range of political opinion is tolerated. There are no radical newspapers available on the streets of Santo Domingo. The only signs of an organized politics sharply to the left of the government were scrawled messages on scattered walls in the barrios.

Traveling to Santo Domingo during the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the April uprising sharpened the discrepancy between rhetoric and reality. The ruling party, the PLD, sees itself as the culmination of the 1965 revolt, and of Bosch's tradition of social reformism. In this context, the government organized a screening of a documentary on the revolution in a main square in the heart of the city. Four thousand people attended, some of them hanging from an adjacent building that had been destroyed during the fighting in 1965. Throughout the showing, the audience hooted when Lyndon Johnson and U.S. officials appeared, and cheered when rebel leaders, particularly Colonel Caamaño, were on the screen. Interestingly, Bosch drew only polite applause. As the movie ended, several people shouted "Viva Caamaño." Quickly, dozens of police officers and soldiers moved through the crowd, making sure that everyone in the square left without further incident. Some of the gendarmes were carrying rifles and machine guns.

The spirit of the Dominican people remains unbroken. They remember April 1965, and they know that an organized, militant mass movement can defeat the repressive forces of the oligarchy. In 1997, the celebration of the events of 1965 sparked strikes and

(continued on page 15)



"The only signs of an organized politics sharply to the left of the government were scrawled messages on scattered walls in the barrios."

together in barrios composed of decaying shacks. An average income in Santo Domingo comes to 5000 Dominican pesos a month, about \$160 at the current exchange rate.

The brief period of hope following the assassination of Trujillo in 1961 came to an end with the U.S. occupation in 1965 and the fraudulent election of 1966. Yet Balaguer, ruthless and authoritarian as he was, could not reproduce the totalitarian control of the Trujillo era. As a result, Dominicans began flocking to the United States, using Puerto Rico as a way station.

government announced that it would be spending the equivalent of twenty million U.S. dollars on an expansion of the international airport on the outskirts of the city. This is a considerable commitment of resources in a poor country in desperate need of schools, hospitals and low-cost housing.

Dominican economic dependence is reinforced by the acute impact of the high price of oil. Totally dependent on the production of foreign crude oil, the Dominicans find themselves owing large sums to foreign creditors. The International Monetary Fund therefore

Iraq: A Very Dead End

by David McReynolds

On the eve of the Iraq War, I assumed someone would stop Bush. Not because the invasion was wrong or in violation of international laws - though it was both - but because it was madness. A "Christian" nation invading the heart of Muslim territory? It seemed a guarantee of disaster, as it has proven to be.

My first point would be to see the war as a reminder of how "the best and brightest," so often do not know what they are doing. My second point is that while various reasons for the invasion have been given, the only one which counts is the U.S. interest in control of the oil in the region.

The other reasons are worth looking at, briefly. We were told Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. None were ever found. We were told Saddam was building nuclear weapons. A lie out of whole cloth - not a shred of evidence has been produced. We were told Iraq was home to the Al Qaeda network - a charge made on the assumption Americans would not understand that the Islamic fundamentalism of Osama Bin Laden was diametrically opposed to the secular state of Iraq. When no weapons of mass destruction were found, no evidence of nuclear weapons and no links to Bin Laden, we were told that our mission was really to bring democracy to Iraq.

No one can predict the future of Iraq if the US leaves - but we can see from the past two years what the US occupation has meant.

This "mission creep," which occurred months after the war began, deserves comment. First, the lack of genuine democracy in the U.S. is shown by the ability of the President to lie to the Congress and send our troops into battle in the face of overwhelming opposition to the war. Democracy rests on the "informed consent of the governed." But when the public, and the Congress, were lied to by the President and his advisors, it is impossible to argue that a democratic decision was even possible.

Now the war has come home to haunt the Bush administration. As I write this more than 1,800 Americans

have been killed, at least 25,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed, and the wounded will haunt us for years to come - men and women coming home without arms, or legs, with nightmares no therapy can dissolve. This has been a war fought by working class Americans who enlisted in the military because it offered work, or a chance at an education, and found themselves ten thousand miles from home.

At first the opposition to the occupation was written off as only a handful of terrorists. The media has long since given the opposition the correct name - "insurgents." The insurgents are a mixed group; some supporters of Saddam, some from the Sunnis, some simply Iraqis fed up with the humiliation of being occupied, and a relatively few young men who have come into Iraq because this is their chance to fight what they see as the enemies of Islam.

Dreadful as Saddam's regime was - in terms of political repression - it provided medical care, education, housing (and the electricity worked!). It was a regime that was secular and guaranteed the rights of women (so long as they did not take part in political opposition to the regime). Now Iraq is a hotbed of terror where the Americans are holed up in the "Green Zone" in Baghdad, where the few miles from the

Green Zone to the Baghdad Airport are traveled at great risk. History students can examine the records of Occupied Europe under Hitler and will find that never did the Nazis travel at such risk as our troops in Iraq today.

The issue of a possible Western military victory has been answered by events. As I write this, the insurgent forces control more of Iraq than the U.S. and Britain. The Iraqi recruits are violent, badly disciplined, and, from reliable reports, more feared by the population than the U.S. troops.

What can be done now? U.S. forces in Iraq are contained, for the most part, in camps outside the major cities. The

U.S. can launch brutal attacks, as it has done three times in Falluja - considered by many to be the Guernica of our time - but it cannot hold onto the areas.

Bush would like to find a way out. There have been informal discussions between the U.S. military and some of the insurgents. But it is doubtful if the U.S. will be able to accept the fact of its military defeat (which is why, every two or three weeks, Vice President Cheney or other U.S. officials announce the "resistance is in its last phase"). It is equally doubtful there is an easy political way out. The government in Baghdad, put in place by elections that were boycotted by the Sunnis, has little popular support. Unless the three main forces - the Shiites, the Sunni, and the Kurds - are "at the table", there is no way a political settlement can be achieved.

U.S. policy has had the ironic result of bringing Iraq and Iran closer together. In a sharp rebuke to Bush's pressure on Iran, a reactionary but widely popular leader emerged as the winner in the recent elections there.

What position should socialists take toward the insurgents? This is a difficult question. First, some elements of the Iraqi left - the Iraqi Communist Party and some Iraqi trade unionists - work with the provisional government, so while they might support negotiations with the insurgents, they are not part of them. Second, the insurgents in Iraq are very different from the situation thirty years ago in Vietnam, when the Vietnamese Communist Party, through the National Liberation Front, represented the vast majority of Vietnamese. (The Vietnamese resistance, too, was much different from the horror of Iraq - there were no suicide bombers or beheadings). In Iraq the insurgents are divided among themselves, and for the most part, have politics with which none of us would agree. They do not want democracy, or women's rights. They want an Islamic state.

While we need to respect the right of the insurgents to resist the U.S. and Britain, it is impossible to say that their cause is our cause. The most important thing for Americans to understand is that this is not the issue that is important - the views I might have on the insurgents will have no impact on

them. The insurgents didn't ask for the permission of the U.S. left, it doesn't feel itself part of the international left, and it will fight the U.S. and Britain regardless of what we say or do. Our job is not to divide the U.S. movement over whether or not we "support the insurgents" but to unite on the demand the U.S. and Britain leave Iraq.

liberal Democrats, led by Hillary Clinton, have called for more U.S. troops to be sent to Iraq, while at least one Republican member of Congress from the Deep South has called for the U.S. to withdraw. There are liberals who opposed the war itself but who now feel the U.S. can't "just pack up and go," that "there is a moral responsibility to help

Nations? The only time that UN forces have been really effective is when two warring sides have agreed to a peace keeping force. But with Iraq on the verge of civil war (or already in one), there is no realistic role for UN forces. And who would send them? Can one see the French or German governments taking on a peacekeeping role? People say "the United Nations" because no one wants to face the depth of the mess of Iraq, and they search desperately for any way out.

The truly criminal part of this situation (aside from the criminal fact of the invasion itself) is that the U.S., which had already done enormous damage to Iraq through nearly ten years of economic sanctions that caused the death of over a half million Iraqis, has, through the war, deepened the damage. Places such as Falluja have been almost totally destroyed. I think the immediate U.S. withdrawal will be a disaster - the problem is that I don't see any alternative to that disaster which would not be worse.

No one can predict the future of Iraq if the U.S. leaves - but we can see from the past two years what the U.S. occupation has meant. One group of moderates in the peace movement have started a campaign to set October of 2006 as the date to *begin* a withdrawal of U.S. and British forces. We must refuse to be drawn into setting any dates - we have to demand that the U.S. and Britain begin withdrawing, immediately, as swiftly as transport can be arranged to get the troops out. If that takes a week, a month, or three months, OK. But to suggest October of next year as the date to *begin* withdrawal is to accept that the Bush administration can be trusted. For the sake of our men and women in Iraq, for the sake of the people of Iraq, we must demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces, military and civilian, from Iraq, and the closing of all U.S. military bases in the country.

David McReynolds was in Iraq in 1991 as part of a delegation from the Fellowship of Reconciliation, seeking possible ways of avoiding the first Gulf War. The delegation secured the release of several U.S. citizens being held hostage.



There are other points that should be made by us. Blair and Bush should both be brought before an international tribunal and charged with launching a war of aggression, which is a violation of the UN Charter. Bush should be impeached. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld should not only be fired because of the well-documented human rights violation at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, but he should be on trial for criminal abuse of his office. Unhappily, none of those things are going to happen. No U.S. official was jailed for the crimes of the Vietnam War, even though over three million Vietnamese died. But at least let us say that, in our view, the heads of the U.S. and British government are guilty of crimes against humanity. And let us be clear that our movement wants the kind of society where such gross violations of international law would be treated as criminal acts.

As to what to do? Ironically the **Socialist** Volume 31, Number 4

fix the mess." One of the most painful lessons of history is that in a case such as Iraq the last people who can "fix the mess" are those who created it.

There have been suggestions that perhaps the United Nations could send in troops, or that the Arab states could take on peace keeping. People say we have a moral responsibility to fix what has been broken, to understand the U.S. invasion tore apart Iraqi society more deeply than anything Saddam had done. "You can't just walk out," they say.

The problem is that nothing can fix Iraq except, eventually, the Iraqis. The Arab states can't send in peace keepers because they are themselves divided over what they want in Iraq. Some want a Shiite Iraq, some a Sunni Iraq, and all are afraid of the Kurds. In short, the Arab states aren't in agreement to start with, and their intervention in Iraq would be seen - correctly - by the Iraqis as more foreign meddling. The United

Requiem for a Communist

Remembering Si Gerson

by Shaun Richman

SiGerson, the last vital link to the Communist Party's glory days in NYC politics in the 1930's and 40's, died last December at the age of 95. Si was a founding member of the Coalition for Free and Open Elections, a coalition of third parties and other pro-democracy groups through which Si had been a valued colleague and partner to many of us in the Socialist Party. The lesson of Si's life and achievements underscores the point that socialists don't have to be marginalized, that we can play an active role in civic life. We just have to be prepared to fight.

Si Gerson was the focus of two huge controversies during the Popular Front era in New York. The Communist Party, like many leftist organizations, was a part of the fabric of New York's culture and street life, but not the government - not until corruption investigations in the early 1930's sent Mayor Jimmy Walker fleeing to Europe to avoid prosecution and temporarily wrested city hall from the grip of Tammany Hall - providing the first real opening for the left during this era.

The old Board of Alderman was replaced by a more representative City Council that would be elected by proportional representation. The Council elections were actually held on a borough-wide basis, with the number of seats apportioned to the boroughs based on population (say, 12 seats for Manhattan, 9 for Brooklyn, 7 for Queens and so on). So, in Brooklyn, for example, over 150 candidates would be on the same ballot for those nine city council seats, and the voter would rank as many of the candidates as he wished, in the order in which he preferred them. So you could vote for a Communist as your first choice, an American Labor Party representative as your second, a black Democrat as your third, a liberal Republican as your fourth, and on down the line until you couldn't really stand the candidates that remained. Candidates had to receive proportional support in order to represent one-ninth of the borough.

If no candidate reached the magic

number (which was typically 75,000 in Brooklyn) on the first ballot, then counters would start at the bottom and redistribute the lowest vote-getter's ballots (the guy who got two write-in votes) to their second choice candidates. As a candidate reached the magic number, his ballots would be taken off the table, and any subsequent votes for him would instead go to the next candidate ranked on the ballot. And so it would go, with ballots being redistributed from the top - from candidates who had already reached the threshold and were awarded a council seat - or from the bottom, from candidates who had the least support, until all the seats were filled.

This was New York City's system for electing its City Council from 1937 until 1947. It's important that advocates of true democracy be able to describe this system of proportional representation that worked. Si's book, "Pete," is strongly recommended to scholars of NYC and leftist history for its evocative day-to-day detailing of the campaigns and strategies, the vote counts and the convoluted workings of borough-based single transferable voting.

Young Si Gerson demonstrated a knack for campaign strategy and legalities, and managed the repeated campaigns of Peter V. Cacchione, a popular community activist and unemployment organizer in Brooklyn. In his first campaign, Pete Cacchione missed being elected to the city council by just 250 votes. But Si's talent and hard work and the CP's Popular Front alliances brought Si to the attention of Manhattan's reformist Borough President, Stanley Isaacs, who hired him to be his Executive Assistant on January 1, 1938.

This was the first big "Gerson Controversy." The city's papers howled in protest. A Communist in government!?! The *New York World-Telegram* was particularly nasty. One political cartoon portrayed Isaacs handing Si his appointment in front of a mass of forlorn-looking unemployed men. The cartoon Si, naturally, is

waving a red flag that reads "Hurray for Stalin."

Isaacs, for his part, shrugged off the controversy. In a typical letter to the *World-Telegram*, Isaacs objected to the paper's editorial focus and defended his young assistant, saying:

Anyone studying the rise of Fascism in Europe must have recognized the tactics employed. The very first effort was made to divide those who had faith in democracy into factions to destroy their unity...So far as I am concerned, whether I agree or disagree with the economic and social views of those who belong to the extreme left or the extreme right, will make no difference in my willingness to recognize their right, as citizens, and I shall continue to fill such posts as come within my jurisdiction where I may exercise the power of appointments with men best fitted for the job, without any discrimination because of race, creed, color or political affiliation.

The controversy did not let up, however. Catholic organizations, in particular, targeted Stanley Isaacs' "parlor Communist." The Holy Name Society filed suit against the City, claiming that Si was ineligible for civil service because, as a member of the international Communist conspiracy, he could not honestly swear to uphold the constitution of the United States.

Si served in Isaacs' office for three years, but eventually resigned because of the looming lawsuit and the city's corporation counsel's refusal to defend Si on the grounds that the Communist Party was not a subversive organization dedicated to the violent overthrow of the United States.

This allowed Si to focus back on Pete Cacchione's campaigns. His rerun in 1939 (when Si was still embroiled in controversy on Isaacs' staff) was derailed when his petitions were invalidated by Tammany hacks and his name was not allowed to appear on the ballot. Pete still received 24,000 write-in votes, but that was not enough.

Pete and Si knew that 1941 would
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be their year and focused on getting more than three times the amount of petitions needed to secure ballot status. Sure enough, Pete Cacchione secured the ninth and final city council seat in Brooklyn and became the first Communist City Councilman.

AM, TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 1938.

In the council, Cacchione and Davis advocated price controls on rent, bread and milk, ratification of subway fare increases by referendum, lowering city council salaries and introduced a host of anti-race discrimination bills. So popular was Cacchione that he won re-

Controversy." Under the laws at the time, a vacancy in office was to be filled by the City Council with a nominee of the party of the deceased legislator. Pete Cacchione was elected and twice re-elected to the City Council as a Communist - Row H. He, in fact, received more votes than any other candidate in Brooklyn. That same Communist Party nominated Si Gerson to serve the remainder of the term, but now the City Council's Democratic majority was refusing to seat him because he was...a Communist.

Their paper-thin excuse was that the Communist Party did not have a ballot line in New York State and, therefore, was not a "party" under the law. Never mind the fact that the Communists had to collect about five times as many signatures as any major party candidate to get on the ballot and then received more votes than any of those major parties. The voters' clear expression of their support for a Communist representative would be thwarted by a loophole.

A Citizen's Committee to Defend Representative Government was formed to advocate Si Gerson's placement on the City Council. Among those who signed on to the committee were Ben Davis, Mike Quill, Vito Marcantonio, WEB DuBois, some kid named Howard Zinn, representatives of 19 labor unions, five religious institutions and a number of good government organizations.

The Democrats succeeded in wearing down the clock and left Pete Cacchione's seat vacant for two years. When Si Gerson ran for the seat in his own right in 1949, he received support from many of those same individuals and collected over 150,000 votes, but, without proportional representation, it was not enough.

Of course, Si had a very long and distinguished career after these early controversies, as an author and journalist and as a campaign manager. Si was an underutilized resource as a campaign advisor, and that's all of our fault. Not just the Communist Party, but, to a large degree, the Socialist Party, too, and the rest of the left, have largely abandoned independent electoral politics. And now we've lost an incredible resource.

(continued on page 15)

And He Picked a Communist!



NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM -- March 1, 1938

Pete was joined two years later by Ben Davis, the leader of the party's Harlem organization. The early returns for Pete looked good on that 1943 election night - the highest first-vote count of all the candidates - 53,000 - and a shoo-in for re-election, but in Manhattan, there were reports of the votes from entire districts - Communist strongholds and minority districts - going missing. Please suspend your disbelief that not every vote in an election would be counted. Remember, this was a long time ago.

Pete, Si and their entire campaign team rushed to the location of the Manhattan count. Si, described in Davis' memoirs as "the party's ablest election worker," demanded that the vote count stop and the missing ballots be found and counted. A thorough search turned up nearly a thousand additional ballots - the margin of difference that sent Ben Davis to City Hall and created a Communist legislative team for the next four years.

election to a four-year term in 1945 with the highest vote count in the borough: 75,000 votes.

When the war ended, Stanley Isaacs' warning about dividing those who have faith in democracy into factions gained a new immediacy as Truman Doctrine Democrats set their sights on removing these two Communists from office.

They placed a referendum on the ballot to end New York City's proportional representation. Big money went into the campaign to convince New York's voters that there can be such a thing as "too much democracy." Pete Cacchione gave his all in the campaign to defeat the ballot proposal, but he lost. Proportional representation was repealed and Pete's heart literally gave out. He died in office, with two years remaining in his term.

The Communist Party, nominated Si Gerson to serve the remainder of Peter Cacchione's term and thus began the other major "Gerson

Socialist Party News

New Jersey

The Socialist Party of New Jersey joined about 200 immigrant workers and supporters at Casa Freehold's March for Immigrant Workers' Rights on the 4th of July, as part of the Party's "Socialist Summer" Immigrants' Rights campaign, and also took part in the August 13th state-wide conference on counter-military recruitment.

SPNJ is fielding a significant slate in November's statewide elections. In addition to Tino Rozzo's campaign for Governor, the party is running Sharin Chiorazzo, Willie Norwood and Scott Baier for Assembly.

Illinois

Comparisons between the anti-Vietnam war movement and anti-war strategies today were the subject of lively debate at a Chicago Socialist Party forum held July 5. A presentation by Barry Sheppard, 1960's anti-war activist and author of the controversial book "The Party: Socialist Workers Party 1960-1988," evoked wide ranging praise and criticisms of the role of the SWP in the movement, its successes and failures, and how young activists and movement 'elders' can work together on Iraq war and anti-recruitment efforts. More than 30 folks participated, with representatives from co-sponsoring organizations DSA, Solidarity and the Open University of the Left. The Chicago author forum series continues in September with a presentation by Franklin Rosemont, author of the acclaimed biography of Joe Hill.

Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition will be holding a kickoff rally to introduce their Voters Choice Act on Saturday, September 24th, at 4 PM in the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg, with a reception to be held immediately afterwards at the Harrisburg Hilton, Second and Market Streets in Harrisburg, beginning at 6 PM. Both events are open to the public. The Voters Choice Act is a bill being proposed to increase voter participation by easing ballot access for independent and minor party candidates.

International Commission

"The International Commission of the Socialist Party USA recognizes the efforts of the people of Bolivia to resist the collusive policy of the Bolivian government, transnational corporations oil companies, the U.S. government and the IMF to pursue an energy policy that robs the Bolivian people of their natural resources and that betrays the environment as well as the way of life of the indigenous people. We support their resistance and laud their courage and determination to defend and define their own future. We furthermore condemn attempts to place the responsibility for the Bolivian uprising on the Venezuelan government."

Texas

The Socialist Party of Texas held its state convention in Corpus Christi on August 6, 2005 to plan for future activities and choose

representatives for the upcoming National convention. The new chairperson of SPTX is Emma Gonzalez, Raul Cano was elected vice chair, Erik Toren, secretary and Bill Fulcher, treasurer.

The convention passed resolutions calling for Bush's impeachment, condemning the actions of the Minutemen and came out against the proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage in Texas.

The Partido Socialista del Valle, a local of the SPTX, will work with other community organizations in assisting the United Farm Workers of Texas in organizing and carrying out the Labor Day Pilgrimage celebration. The march's main focus is to continue to spotlight the efforts of Catholic Church staff workers in the region to organize their union within the church. About 500

marchers are expected to take part.

PSV and The Socialist Forum will organize a forum on the Health Industry and Union Organizing of Medical Worker in the Valley. For more information on our local, please contact Raul Cano or Erik Toren at raucan@msn.com or sprgv@sp-usa.org or (956) 342-8689.

Delaware

A local ordinance in the town of Elmsmere, authorizing the detention of illegal immigrants and fining those who employ or house them has spurred comrades to organize a party chapter in the state. Organizer Wayne Romanowski will be coordinating a convention in September. The local-information has a new website, www.delsoc.org.

Socialist Party Mourns Victims of 7/9/05 London Bombings

"The Socialist Party USA believes we must work toward a new society; a new society free of aggression and the violence of hunger, homelessness, and disease, and from the exploitation of labor; a new society where war is written in history books, not reported in the daily news media; a new society based on radical democracy from below; a socialist rebirth of humankind.

The recent tragedy in London that resulted in murdering and maiming hundreds of working people, is a deplorable and de-humanizing act. The unintended consequences of the global "war on terror" has made its way into to the streets of London and in other unspoken streets, not against the imperialist State engaged in the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, but working people traveling to work, to school, to visit family and friends and to home.

It is our responsibility as brothers and sisters of humanity to condemn these acts of aggression and the imperialism of our governments in waging a war that results in untold victims without regard for age, class, race, religion, politics, sex, sexuality or nationality. The murder of civilian non combatants, whether it be by individuals, groups or States, cannot be supported nor defended in the face of such brutal reality.

It is our duty as brothers and sisters of humanity to continue the working class struggle against imperialism, against capitalism and against war."

- Statement by SPUSA National Action Committee

Massachusetts

The Tom Mooney local (Western MA) hosts two meetings a month. The local had an especially good time around the forth of July protesting a militaristic parade in Amherst and hosting an anti-jingoist picnic. Comrades from Vermont to Connecticut participated. On August 6th, the local commemorated the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki. SP members were involved with commemorative events in Springfield and Greenfield.

The SPMA will continue to coordinate a statewide "Tax the Rich" campaign, with buttons and flyers that have been popular everywhere they go. The SPMA also plans to work on next year's ballot questions which will include statewide votes to ban greyhound racing, expand access to health care, and remove Massachusetts National Guard troops from Iraq, as well as opposing a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

YPSL

In July, Yipsels from coast to coast converged in Yellow Springs, Ohio for the YPSL national convention. The weekend was full of workshops concerning topics such as health care, direct action, and labor organizing, as well as League business, during which many important decisions were made for the coming year.

YPSL decided to reorganize itself with an emphasis on regional coordination. The new National Executive Committee is full of new energy and ideas for revamping the organization and is looking forward to working with others in the process of building the socialist move-

ment. Students are now preparing for the new school year, and the NEC is working to provide them with the resources that are necessary to start YPSL locals.

New York

The reconstituted Socialist Party of New York State held its convention on August 14. Jason Becker is the new State Secretary, and the party has a new website, www.newyorksocialists.org/state.

On September 13, the New York City local will sponsor "Left Field Day at Shea," a special outing to the Mets vs. Nationals baseball game. The party will be welcomed by the Mets in a scoreboard announcement, and comrades will bring signs protesting the war in Iraq and corporate sponsorship of stadium names.

North Carolina

Socialist Party of North Carolina member Brendan Davidson has declared his candidacy for Salisbury City Council. Brendan's campaign – the SPNC's first – has an educational focus. You can find more information about Brendan's campaign at www.sp-rowan.org.

Comrades Patrick Sallee and Jason Prescott have recently returned from Mexico where they have been helping to paint and clean schools in the Zapatista controlled area of Chiapas. *The Socialist* hopes to have more to report on their experiences and observations in the next issue.

The SPNC recently donated \$250.00 to the New River Foundation, an environmental organization dedicated to preserving and

protecting the New River in Onslow County, North Carolina. The donation is being used to conduct mercury testing on fish in the New River. Specimens have recently been sent to the lab and we are presently awaiting the results.

The SEC has also voted to financially support the annual Charlotte Peace and Justice Conference to be held in October. The event is planned and organized in large part by comrades Wally and Malinda Kleucker.

Members and friends of the Art Young Local continue to work with the Farm Labor

Organizing Committee in carpooling migrant farm workers to their monthly union meetings.

National Convention

The Socialist Party will hold its National Convention in beautiful Newark, NJ during the weekend of Oct. 21-23. Affiliates should have already submitted their delegations. If you wish to attend as an observer, please register online. There is a website with complete details at www.sp-usa.org/2005convention/

Ten Years Ago...in *The Socialist*

Bernie Sanders' recent announcement that he would seek the Senate seat in Vermont being vacated by Jim Jeffords has been greeted with surprise by many because the independent socialist congressman appears poised to win election easily. We're a bit surprised because, when we interviewed him ten years ago, in the Sept-Oct 1995 issue of *The Socialist*, he had this to say about his prospects for higher office:

There was a poll taken in Vermont which had me running just six points behind Senator Jeffords, and that prompted a lot of discussion about a possible run for the Senate. I chose not to run for a couple of reasons: obviously we don't have the kind of money and interests behind us that the Democrats and Republicans do...Second of all, which to some may seem to be a selfish reason, it is already very hard for someone with my politics to function in the House of Representatives, where you have a lot of niches that you can focus on. In my mind, to function in the Senate is an enormously difficult task psychologically; having to move in the middle and compromise every day with a Jesse Helms or a Strom Thurmond, is literally like being in a horrible marriage that you can't get out of. In the House the rules are such that you don't really have to deal with guys like that on a daily basis; in the Senate, you really do have to deal with that because one person can stop discussion on this thing or that, and I don't know mentally how well I would have survived six years of having to go to bed with Jesse Helms every night. It's not something that I would really look forward to.

Well, Strom Thurmond may be dead, and Jesse Helms gratefully retired, but we don't imagine that going to bed with Rick Santorum every night will be much more pleasant. He does have that weird "man on dog" fetish, after all.

Supreme Redevelopment

by Steve Rossignol

The recent decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to allow municipalities to use the concept of eminent domain for the benefit of private enterprise most certainly flies in the face of logic. Already there is a case in Freeport, Texas, in which a hotel is pushing to have this decision applied to a piece of private property it would like to develop.

But looking at it a little closer, I see some great business opportunities available here. For instance, I think that it would be just fantastic to set up a cute little bed and breakfast at Justice Souter's home in New Hampshire. It's an attractive place, and would make a great investment. The old fart would have to move out, though; can't have him standing in the way of economic development.

In fact, I could see developing a trailer park at the home of Justice Ginsberg. She lives in a great neighborhood, and a trailer park is a great venue for affordable low-income housing as well as being a

fine investment opportunity. By having one right there in the district where she lives, it would add much color to the community and allow a source of income to the businesses, as well as provide social and racial diversification to the neighborhood. And I must say that the beauty of a rusty 1961 Buick up on blocks at the front entrance would be comparable to any Swedish sculpture. Of course, Ruthie would have to move out to make way for the demolition, but I'll bet she could get a pad site in the trailer park.

I'm also thinking it's time to put up a Wal-Mart Super Center in Justice Stephen Breyer's backyard. It's a great location. Sure, it might be a little uncomfortable at first, what with the produce aisle in his legal study, but I am sure that he could learn to live with it. Maybe he could move in with Justice Ginsberg at the trailer park. I am going to approach the Walton clan with this idea, and maybe sell them my other ideas too. Hey, a man's got to make a living here.

Not sure how to develop Justice Kennedy's place, but I've got my eye on it. He's got a nice green lawn that would make a good location for a horse track, but it's kind of small. I might just have to settle for a topless club there. It's about the right size. It would be perfect; a nice high end place that would attract local businessmen, political leaders, law clerks and sports writers. The ladies might need a place to change clothes, so probably the living room would be the best spot, but that wallpaper would have to go so that I could put a pole there. I got a really cool idea for a neon sign, too. I guess I would feel obligated to give ole Anthony a discount table dance during happy hour.

If you think that this Supreme Court decision in *Kelo vs. New London* stinks, wait till I tell you about the hog farm I have in mind for Justice Stevens' property!

Man, I am going to be a rich man! There is just nothing like economic progress and growth! Thank you, Supremes!

Steve Rossignol is the party's archivist and an Editorial Board member.

Speaking of Eminent Domain...

by Aimee Inglis



(continued from "April," page 7)

barricades throughout the country, as the people demanded a break from the rule of the IMF. The army was brought in to crush the revolt, with upward of one hundred demonstrators killed. In January 2004, a general strike shut down Santo Domingo for two days.

Throughout Latin America, left-wing popular movements are in the streets demanding fundamental change. In the streets of Santo Domingo, the slogan can be seen: "Another April is Possible." It is up to us who oppose U.S. imperialism from within its center to help make this potential a reality.

Eric Chester is the author of "Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-66" (2000) and "True Mission: The Labor Party Question in the United States" (2004).

(continued from "Communist," page 11)

We should use this time to rededicate ourselves to some of Si's biggest issues. Navigating the byzantine election requirements when working on Gus Hall's presidential campaigns (The Truman Doctrine Democrats assaulted election laws across the country, beginning in 1947 and particularly after the Wallace campaign, ballot access laws became particularly onerous - tens of thousands of signatures with stringent requirements for getting a certain number of signatures in each county) convinced Si that third parties had to unite in order to pry open the political process, and that's how the Coalition for Free and Open Elections came to be. Si always envisioned CoFOE being broader than just those third parties. In the mid-1990's, the Green and Libertarian parties, experiencing real growth and victories, created a breakaway coalition to focus narrowly on lowering signature requirements. Si was very adamant: free and open elections means not just lower petition requirements, but universal suffrage, campaign finance, proportional representation and a guarantee that all votes be counted. Mainstream politicians didn't catch up with Si on this issue until we had a presidential election stolen from us.

Shaun Richman is a labor activist and columnist from Queens, NY.

The 2005 Socialist Party National Convention Journal

is now accepting "Solidarity Ads" which help fund the convention. Please consider taking out an ad for yourself, your local or in memory of a fallen comrade.

Ad rates :

full page (7.5" x 10") \$325 half -page \$200
quarter-page \$125 eighth-page \$75

single-line greeting (name & up to five words): \$25

Deadlines : Sept. 15 (10% discount if ad placed by August 31st)

Send check to: SP USA 339 Lafayette St. #303 New York, NY 10012.

From the SPUSA Statement of Principles

The Socialist Party strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control -- a non-racist, classless, feminist, socialist society in which people cooperate at work, at home, and in the community. Socialism is a new social and economic order in which workers and consumers control production and community residents control their neighborhoods, homes, and schools. The production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not for the private profit of a few. Socialism produces a constantly renewed future by not plundering the resources of the earth.

The Socialist Party is committed to full freedom of speech, assembly, press, and religion, and to a multi-party system. We are dedicated to the abolition of male supremacy and class society, and to the elimination of all forms of oppression, including those based on race, national origin, age, sexual preferences, and disabling conditions.

The Socialist Party does not divorce electoral politics from other strategies for basic change. By participating in local government, socialists can support movements of working people and make improvements that illustrate the potential of public ownership. We support electoral action independent of the capitalist-controlled two-party system.

The Socialist Party is a "multi-tendency" organization. Solidarity within the party comes from the ability of those with divergent views on some issues to engage in a collective struggle towards social revolution.

No oppressed group has ever been liberated except by its own organized efforts to overthrow its oppressors. To be free we must create new patterns for our lives and live in new ways in the midst of a society that does not understand and is often hostile to new, better modes of life. Our aim is the creation of a new social order, a society in which the commanding value is the infinite preciousness of every woman, man and child.

Defend the Defender!



New t-shirts. Proceeds go to Lynne Stewart Defense Committee. Send \$20 to: Thomas Good, 775 Brighton Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301.

Visit www.lynnestewart.org for more ways to help.

Join the Socialist Party USA

Yearly Dues(based on annual income):

Full-time Student: \$15
Under \$20,000 \$25
\$20,000-35,000 \$60
\$35,000-50,000 \$125
Over \$50,000 \$250

Waiver in cases of poverty and for prisoners

I agree with the principles of the Socialist Party USA
I, the undersigned, desiring to bring about, by democratic means, a new society
based upon democratic socialism, hereby apply for membership in the
SOCIALIST PARTY USA, and subscribe to its principles.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ E-mail _____

Phone _____

Other Organizations to Which I Belong (Political Groups, Unions, etc.)

Special Concerns (e.g., anti-racism, feminism, labor, etc.)

Please Send Me More Information About...

- Young People's Socialist League
 Women's Commission
 Labor Commission
 Faith and Socialism Commission
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