

the yankee radical

Institute for
Democratic
Socialism

(617) 354-5078 <http://dsaboston.org/> June 2001

Debs-Thomas-Bernstein Award 2001

Leaders for Social Democracy at Home and Abroad: Ed Clark, Dessima Williams, John Maher

Tuesday, June 12

Reception 6 – 8 PM

56 Perkins Street, Jamaica Plain

Directions: 617-354-5078

“We should not allow (labor and environmental) codicils to destroy the spirit of free trade.”

That was George W. Bush’s reply last April in Quebec City to a direct question about including labor and environmental protections in the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas. In plain English, he declared that freedom of movement for capital must trump the rights of workers to form unions or of citizens to protect their communities from environmental ravaging.

Indeed, from some “dispute resolution” hearing before a secret WTO tribunal to the recent Congressional tax giveaway to the rich, money, particularly big, corporate money, frames the public policy debate and too often the outcome. In an increasingly global economy, governments at all levels put priority on serving the needs of capital over meeting the needs of their own people.

Clearly, how much democracy we have is a function of how much we fight for it.

In that spirit, on June 12, Boston Democratic Socialists of America will present its annual award to leaders who fight for democracy, here at home and around the world. Ed Clark and Dessima Williams will receive the Debs-Thomas-Bernstein Award; John Maher

will receive the Michael Harrington Lifetime Achievement Award. The reception will take place at the home of Marcia Peters and David Karas in Jamaica Plain.

Ed Clark currently serves as the Executive Vice President of the Union of Needletrade Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE!). A former president of the Student Peace Union, a staffer for Europe’s largest white collar union, an Irish American with an Oxford degree, a unionist with a passionate and informed commitment to democratic development, Ed exemplifies the best of the socialist tradition in the American labor movement. Under his leadership, UNITE! has consistently organized low-wage workers, many of them immigrants. Ed was an early leader in student protests against the war in Vietnam and was a national trade union leader in the struggle against US intervention in Central America in the 1980s.

Dessima Williams was a leader in Grenada’s leftist New Jewel Movement and served as her nation’s ambassador to UNESCO and to the Organization of American States. In 1983 a hardline quasi-stalinist internal coup overthrew her government and murdered its leadership, thus providing the Reagan Administration the excuse it was looking for to invade and “take back” the island. She is currently a professor of Sociology and Caribbean Studies at Brandeis University, and has long been active for women’s rights and a more just world order. She is founder of the Grenada

Education and Development Program, a co-founder of HAITIwomen, and a vice president of OXFAM America. She was a delegate to the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 and is co-chair of Massachusetts Action for Women, which was launched to implement the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

John Maher is receiving this year’s Michael Harrington Lifetime Socialist

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More Frank Talk on World Economy

Ellen Frank

Center for Popular Economics

Tuesday, June 26

6³⁰ – 9³⁰ PM

Cambridge Library,
45 Pearl St.

T: Red Line to Central Sq.

Ellen Frank returns for one of her popular Q&A sessions, “Everything You’ve Wanted to Know About the Global Economy, Part Three,” in another of a DSA co-sponsored series of monthly talks. Ellen teaches economics at Emmanuel College and is on the editorial collective of *Dollars and Sense*. She has also been active in efforts to halt the threat of global climate change.

2 Short Takes

By Mike Pattberg

Chip Berlet Talk

You have to go through many news accounts of Timothy McVeigh before finding any mention, usually briefly and only in the longer pieces, of his worshipful fascination with *The Turner Diaries*, the novel by neo-Nazi William Pierce urging race war, or the resemblance in some respects of the Oklahoma City bombing to the scenario laid out in the book. Even less publicized is his membership in the Ku Klux Klan, while in the army, for about a year. When his political (as opposed to psychological) motivation is addressed at all, he is usually portrayed as some sort of “anti-government” type (high taxes? gun control?), perhaps an eccentric libertarian pushed over the edge by Waco.

But his M.O. appears to be evolving before our eyes, beginning with the Ed Bradley 60 Minutes interview (actually less an interview than an hour-long platform for McVeigh to express his views unchallenged). It seems this sensitive young Nazi and gun show aficionado was shocked, Shocked! when the army he volunteered for sent him to shoot Iraqi soldiers in the Gulf War. While unrepentant of his mass murder and recent fascist past (which he was never asked about), McVeigh came across as somewhere between a pacifist and an “anti-imperialist,” though lacking a bit in the logic department. This is apparently enough to garner support from a few leftists like Alexander Cockburn (in the *NY Press*) and others from the Any Enemy of Amerika is a Friend of Mine school.

So, was this a sincere (though unacknowledged) change of heart? Or a cynical spinning of public opinion? Since no one is asking, who knows?

Someone who might is Chip Berlet, founder and senior analyst at Public Research Associates in Somerville. Nationally recognized authorities on the ultra-right, PRA seems to view extremist groups not as post-modern metaphors for whatever, but as worthy of serious study in their own right. Berlet will be speaking about his new book (with Matt Lyons), *Right Wing Populism in America — Too Close for Comfort*, on Tuesday, June 5, 630 PM at Old

South Meeting House, 310 Washington St., Boston. Apologies to those whose YR reaches them after this date.

Sweatshop Update

So far, so good for the Workplace Disclosure Bill, which survived an April 23 Statehouse hearing unscathed. The bill would compel state vendors and subcontractors to disclose the working conditions of their employees, which would then be publicized and “inform the state procurement process” (see April YR). The idea is that publicizing unjust working conditions might eventually lead to doing something about them. Testifying in favor of the bill were Kathy Casavant of the State AFL-CIO, Tony Romano of the Greater Boston Central Labor Council, Rev. Ed Boyle of the Labor Guild, and Jonathan Fine of the Mass. Interfaith Committee, among others; no one testified against. It now goes to the Committee on State Administration, co-chaired by Sen. Diane Wilkerson (617-722-1673), a co-sponsor of the legislation, and Rep. Geoffrey Hall (617-722-2320). Assuming it’s favorably reported out of this committee, the bill is slated for still others as it wends its way through the legislative process.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes negotiations are going on with the Boston City Council to smooth the way for an ordinance requiring all apparel purchased by the City to be certified as sweatshop-free, according to AFL-CIO sources. Supporters hope to go public with legislation by late Summer.

Frankenfood

About two-thirds of the American diet is now comprised of genetically modified or engineered (GE) foods. This has happened in recent years without public discussion or, for the most part, even knowledge. Which is just fine with the agribusiness and biotech industries, who will not be supporting a bill by State Rep. Karyn Polito (R – Shrewsbury) to require mandatory labeling of GE foods (H. 3252). In her testimony before the Joint Commerce and Labor Committee, Rep. Polito noted scientific uncertainty over the long-term effects of GE foods on the food

supply, on health (such as people with allergies), and the right to know what’s in our food. Congressman Denis Kucinich (D – OH), currently Chair of the Progressive Caucus, is sponsoring a similar federal bill (202-225-5871). For more on the Polito bill, call (617) 722-2800, ext 6962.

Housing Discrimination

A five-month study by the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston finds that African Americans, families with children, and those with Section 8 subsidies experienced at least some form of discrimination in over half of their attempts to find rental housing. Using trained testers, the Center found that Blacks were treated unequally with Whites 55 percent of the time; families with kids or on rental subsidies fared slightly worse, despite federal and state anti-discrimination laws. The Fair Housing Center was “founded in 1998 by local housing and civil rights professionals to promote equal housing opportunities.” Call 617-988-0620 for the 30-page report.

Barbara Ehrenreich

National DSA Honorary Chair Barbara Ehrenreich is coming to town to plug her new book, *Nickel and Dimed: On Not Getting By in America*, which has moved the *NY Times* reviewer to compare her to Michael Harrington as “our premier reporter of the underside of capitalism.” She’ll be speaking on Monday, June 25, 6 PM at the Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway, near Harvard Square. (617) 349-4040.

Loose Ends...

Last issue we carried a request from longtime member Geraldine Whitmyer of Danvers for a ride to DSA events, as she is now slightly disabled and finds it difficult to get around. Unfortunately, we printed her old area code. Her real phone number is 978-774-0992 ... The May 14 *In These Times* has a three-page interview with Bogdan Denitch, another of those DSA Honorary Chairs (there are seven), and the organization’s representative to the Socialist International. Bogdan covers the breakup of Yugoslavia, his qualified support for the

NATO intervention, and his outlook on the future there (bleak). He is finishing his autobiography, *Changing Identities: A Story of Democratic Leftism in Two Countries*.

Labour Start

In 1848 in the Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels noted that capital was creating a global economy. Their revolutionary appeal was to “the workers of the world.” A century and a half later, capitalism has become genuinely global, but workers’ organizations have not been able to keep pace. International trade union federations exist, some cross-border solidarity actions have been very effective, but there is very little capacity to match the blinding speed with which capital can move across the world. Technology allows capital its tremendous mobility. Billions in funds can move from Boston or New York to New Delhi or Djakarta in the time it takes me to type this sentence.

Technology used shrewdly by labor can help build the capacity of workers to shape a new world. One very promising attempt to use the world wide web for a world wide workers movement has been launched by Eric Lee, who used to serve on the staff of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, one of DSA’s predecessor organizations. Eric moved to Israel in the early 1980s, joined a left wing kibbutz and became active in labor and peace movement politics there. He also developed some real expertise as a webmaster. He lives in London now and has received funding from a few European unions to launch a website called Labour Start. Boston DSA webmaster David Knutunen has added a link to Labour Start to our web page. Labour Start can also be accessed directly by using its web address: <http://www.labourstart.org/>

The site is well worth visiting. You’ll find an international labor news summary; I have found that even on US union coverage Labour Start has stories that the NY Times and Globe miss. And you’ll get perspectives you won’t get anywhere else. South African unions form a key part of their nation’s

government. What is their perspective on the African AIDS crisis? How did Canadian and Latin American unionists view the events around the FTAA meetings in Quebec? Do you know about the international union campaign to end child labor? All this and more is available at Labour Start.

There are web discussion groups, and Labour Start has launched a few successful international solidarity campaigns that have benefited third world unionists. Pay a visit to the site.

Congratulations to Comrade Eric for his exemplary work.

— Jack Clark

WTO and Massachusetts

Don’t expect the globalization movement to kick back this summer. Activists will be building a grassroots base with:

The Globalization Impact Bill. NAFTA gave corporations the right to sue governments, and now they are attacking environmental laws and collecting millions of dollars in “anticipated lost profits.” Could it happen here? Rep. Byron Rushing is asking the state legislature to set up a commission and study the effect of trade agreements on state laws and sovereignty. Global activists are setting up hearings on the Globalization Impact Bill in as many legislative districts as possible. Want to help organize a hearing in your neighborhood or town? Contact Eric Weltman at CPPAX, 617-426-3040 or Dave Lewit at the Alliance for Democracy, 617-266-8687.

Neighborhood Outreach. The Boston Global Action Network wants to organize house meetings in greater Boston neighborhoods. We’d invite friends, co-workers, and neighbors who want to hear firsthand from the globalization movement. We’d ask people to form neighborhood-based affinity groups which would meet periodically and socially, ally with local community-based organizations, and turn out for citywide or national educational actions. If you’d like to come to a house meeting in your neighborhood or help host one, contact Nicole Davis at 617-522-9764 or nicolekdavis@alumni.tufts.edu.

— Mike Prokosch

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Award. After many years as an anti-war organizer, Boston Teachers Union steward and Director of Education and Outreach for Oxfam, in the 1990s John joined Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N). He started as an organizer of the Salvadoran coffee boycott and then helped lead the redirection of N2N from Central American work to domestic reforms. He led the Jobs with Justice/N2N campaign for single payer health care through successful local referenda in 1994. As Director of Massachusetts N2N, John focused on grassroots organizing and leadership development in the state’s low-income communities, and involvement in the Working Family Agenda, a coalition John helped found in 1997. N2N is now working to build a progressive majority in state politics.

Boston DSA presents awards annually in memory of Eugene V. Debs, Norman Thomas, Julius Bernstein and Michael Harrington. Debs and Thomas were national leaders of the Socialist Party; Julie was a local and regional leader in labor, civil rights and socialist movements. Mike, of course, founded Democratic Socialists of America and was America’s leading socialist until his untimely death in 1989.

This year’s event is a reception, not a full dinner, so we are able to drop the price of admission to \$25 per person. For \$50, we’ll list you as a supporter; for \$100 you earn the title of patron; for \$250, you’re a benefactor. Ad prices range from \$100 to \$500 for a full page. Since we’ll be publishing the awards event journal in the next YR, the ad deadline isn’t until July 12. Call (617) 354-5078 for details on the ads or to let us know you’re coming.

Yankee Radical

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Neighborhoods Against Loan Sharks

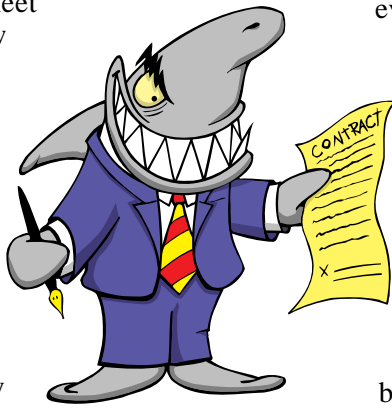
By Alliea Groupp

As banks fail to meet the lending needs of low or moderate income and minority communities, predatory lenders have targeted these neighborhoods for high-cost loans. Rather than providing fair access to credit, these lenders have furthered community deterioration by stripping homeowners of

their equity, and charging exorbitant interest rates and fees leading to foreclosure. Too often predatory lenders come in promising a better life but leave behind a barren wasteland of vacant lots, abandoned homes and broken dreams.

So who are these lenders and how do they operate?

In the housing work that Mass ACORN has done in Dorchester, Mattapan, Roxbury and Roslindale, we've found at least a dozen national corporations in the predatory lending business. Among the worst are Household Finance, CitiFinancial, and Beneficial Mortgage. Common practices include arrangements such as prepayment penalties, which prevent borrowers of subprime loans from refinancing at lower rates with alternative lenders. Some loans have interest rates so high that the



monthly payments do not even pay off the accumulating interest; others are extended even when the lenders know they can't be repaid, ultimately leading to refinancing and more fees or foreclosure. Huge "balloon" payments due at the end of a loan, which the borrower can't afford, often have similar results.

Other practices targeted at low-income communities include home improvement scams, where lenders and home improvement contractors work together to defraud borrowers, and "loan flipping," where lenders convince homeowners to refinance loans at terms that result in unnecessary higher costs.

Many companies charge exorbitant interest rates and high fees at least 15% of subprime loans (compared to the mere 3% that "A" loans are generally charged). Subprime lenders claim the extra costs are due to the higher risks of their borrowers, but HUD statistics show that 50% of subprime borrowers would qualify for lower-cost "A" loans. These same subprime borrowers are then charged fees and interest rates substantially above what's appropriate for their credit risk.

Over the past year ACORN has engaged in direct action against both large and small predatory lenders, using a wide range of tactics to expose their abuses, pressure them to change their ways, and mobilize support for regulatory intervention and consumer protection. We have targeted some lenders nationally because of their outrageous practices and the large volume of complaints we have received from their customers. Our campaign has had some success, including: HUD investigations of the industry; national, state and local legislation; regulatory reforms; refinancing of many loans; and money back for hundreds of customers. Massachusetts also became the first state to pass strong anti-predatory lending laws prohibiting many of the worst practices. And ACORN has won an agreement with AmeriQuest, the third largest subprime lender in the U.S. (and previously one of the worst), to abide by a lending Code of Conduct and to work with us to provide loans to low and moderate-income families.

Despite these victories, redlining and other forms of discrimination continue to have a devastating impact on inner-city communities. There's plenty left to do.

*For more information call Alliea Groupp at Mass ACORN (Associations of Community Organizations for Reform Now), 617-436-7100 *2.*

Harvard Students Win Living Wage

By Ari Weisbard

On May 8, two dozen Harvard student and alumni members of the Living Wage Campaign emerged from a sit-in at Massachusetts Hall with a remarkable victory. After 21 days of action by students, workers, unions, faculty, alumni, clergy, parents, community groups, and political figures, the Harvard administration agreed to several immediate concessions and a process that is likely to ensure a Living Wage for all Harvard workers within the year.

The protesters began the sit-in because Harvard pays more than 1,500 of its workers (400 directly-employed and more than 1,000 casual and sub-contracted employees) less than a Living Wage. The Cambridge City Council has determined that a Living Wage, the minimum required to live outside of poverty in the Cambridge area, is \$10.25 per hour plus benefits. Harvard, with an endowment of more than \$19 billion, could raise the pay of all its workers to this level with less than half of one percent of the interest on that

endowment.

Before the protesters' departure, Harvard reversed its stance that its pay scales were a "closed issue" and announced an unprecedented committee comprised of faculty, administrators, workers and students to reevaluate its wage policy. The committee's mandate also includes a comprehensive review of outsourcing. Harvard President Neil Rudenstine has promised that "Harvard will hold in abeyance any proposal to further outsource" until the committee *continued on page 5*

Battling Boxes in Somerville

By David Dahlbacka

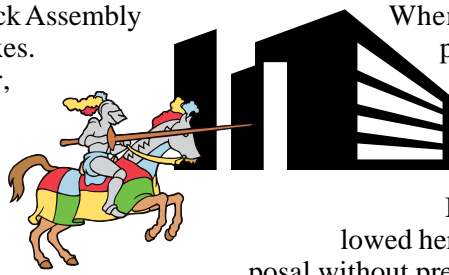
The issue is Assembly Square in Somerville. This 145-acre plot on the Mystic River is the last tract of underdeveloped land in New England's most densely populated city. Assembly Square Limited Partnership (ASLP) owns the defunct Assembly Square Mall and plans to develop big-box retail stores there, starting with a new Home Depot. IKEA has bought the adjoining riverside site for its own big-box furniture store. These developments would produce massive traffic congestion, pour toxic runoff from vast parking lots into the watershed, and produce little tax revenue for Somerville's looming fiscal crisis, while providing only a few low-wage jobs with limited opportunities.

Better, in all respects, is urban-scale mixed use, with office and residential development above ground-floor retail, supported by parking garages and mass transit. Led by the grass-roots Mystic View Task Force, Somerville citizens have overwhelmingly opposed big-box retail and favored mixed-use urban development. Despite this, Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay has exerted all her po-

litical strength to lock Assembly Square into big boxes.

Last summer, ASLP sought a permit to build an enlarged Home Depot on the Mall site. Alderman Denise Provost offered a zoning ordinance that would effectively block that development. The Mayor's appointed Planning Board held a well-attended public hearing on the matter. Only developers and city officials spoke against the proposal. At the hearing's conclusion, the Planning Board scheduled its vote for another night. Without public notice, they subsequently rescheduled the item an hour earlier and voted against the proposed ordinance before the public arrived.

The Legislative Matters Committee Chairman, Alderman Thomas Taylor, tried to hold the ordinance in committee until the City could develop its own zoning proposal. Alderman Joseph Curtatone, formerly considered a leading "progressive" who now appears to have close ties with ASLP, sought to kill it by forcing it out of committee in an unprecedented procedural maneuver.



When Alderman Provost pointed out that the original public hearing had been illegally scheduled on an election night, the Board of Aldermen al-

lowed her to withdraw the proposal without prejudice.

Last Fall, both MVTF and Alderman Provost submitted new zoning proposals governing Assembly Square. The Mayor then submitted a competing ordinance through her Planning Board. Before a public hearing could be held, the Mayor signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with ASLP, committing herself to expediting the Home Depot development. After negotiating this agreement without input from residents or the Board of Aldermen, she announced it at a press conference, detailing police to exclude ordinary citizens who happened to be MVTF members.

Over 150 people attended the public hearing on the three zoning proposals. Over fifty spoke in favor of the MVTF/Provost proposals. Only one citizen not representing a developer or *continued on page 6*

Harvard Living Wage – Cont'd from page 4

has made its report.

The victory also contained significant gains for unions. SEIU Local 254 was granted a contract wage reopener within four weeks of the committee's report for which any wage increases will be retroactive to May 1 of this year. Members of HERE Local 26 recently ratified their new contract which ensures that no member of Local 26 who works at Harvard for more than a year will make less than a Living Wage.

The students who were inside the building credit widespread outside support for the success of the sit-in. Organized labor also played an important role in public solidarity and behind the scenes. National AFL-CIO President (and DSA member) John Sweeney, along with other national union leaders, broke away from a Boston conference to take part in a Harvard Yard rally.

And the AFL-CIO helped facilitate negotiations between the Administration and the Living Wage Campaign. They made clear that unless the students were satisfied that a proposal would benefit all low-wage employees — unionized and non-unionized, directly-hired and subcontracted, regular or casual — they would not be satisfied either.

Several participants in the sit-in cited as a high point the demonstration of Local 26 members, who arrived at Mass. Hall in full force, chanting and shaking milk jugs filled with ball-bearings, and blocked Massachusetts Avenue after their strike ratification vote. "Their energy helped us to keep going," Anna Falicov said.

The students and their community allies plan to continue to coordinate organizing efforts around the committee report, union negotiations, and di-

rect action. "We learned just how much workers and students can do when we work together," Chief Shop Steward of Harvard Local 26 Edward Childs said. Campaign supporters hope that the highly publicized success of the protest at Harvard will help spark similar actions across the country.

The committee is scheduled to report its findings on December 19, but members of the Living Wage Campaign are working to make sure that report reflects the community's consensus. They encourage those who are interested in helping to contact them at (617) 495-4871, pslm@hcs.harvard.edu or check out their website www.livingwage.com.

Ari Weisbard is active with the Harvard Living Wage Campaign.

Exchange on Globalization

National DSA has made democratizing the world economy a top priority since the end of the Cold War. This has included mobilizing for demonstrations like those in Seattle around the WTO, or in Washington, DC at the IMF, and joining with trade unionists and environmentalists to oppose the alphabet soup of endless pro-corporate trade deals (NAFTA, MAI, FTAA, etc.).

At the same time we can only benefit from the most wide ranging internal debate on the complex questions around Left approaches to globalization (and on much else, for that matter!). Thanks to J. Hughes for kicking this particular argument off; we hope to present other viewpoints in coming issues.

From Anti-Globalization to Global Governance

By J. Hughes

Since the end of the Cold War, I, like many leftists, have been waiting for the next phase of history to commence. With the anti-WTO events in Seattle, and the rapidly growing network of anti-globalization activists around the world, it looks like those hopes have been fulfilled. Seen through Marxist (or in my case, post-Marxist radical democrat) eyes, the anti-globalization movement is the fulfillment of Marx's dialectic: global capital knitting together the workers of the world to create global solidarity in resistance. But the

analysis of the latter half of the Communist Manifesto is never far from my mind: that there as many reactionary ways to oppose capitalism as there are progressive. The question for a self-conscious democratic left involved in the anti-globalization upsurge is how to distinguish the progressive from the reactionary.

So let me state what is obvious to me about globalization, but which is evidently not to many involved in anti-globalization politics.

- Many of the tariffs and trade barriers that these various trade agreements are attempting to do away with do not protect workers or the environment, but only the profits of specific industries.

There is no particular reason for democratic socialists to side with the owners of capital in Third World countries simply because they are in the Third World. The model of Third World development through import substitution, without trade or foreign investment, is a dead-end, and opening up markets to trade, investment and competition can have many positive effects on economies and cultures. Even China can't develop without trade and investment liberalization. A democratic socialist development policy should not want to stop capitalism at doing what it does best, but to regulate it in the public interest.

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the city spoke in favor of the Mayor/Planning Board version. The Planning Board deliberated for fifteen minutes before voting for its own proposal, which on March 14 was then ratified by a majority of the Board of Aldermen.

Prior to this vote, the Planning Board violated Somerville's zoning ordinance by awarding ASLP a special permit to develop the Home Depot as a "nonconforming use" without site plan review. Again, public testimony overwhelmingly opposed this action. Only the Mayor,

herself, testified in favor of the special permit.

A courageous neighbor of the proposed development (an MVTF member) appealed the special permit. The Mayor and Alderman Curtatone responded by publicly chastising her for jeopardizing the MOA. Alderman John Connolly even proposed a resolution asking her to withdraw her appeal. He tabled it after Alderman William White and Alderman Provost reminded the Board that any citizen has the constitu-

tional right to seek relief in the courts.

The appeal is still pending. Meanwhile, in exchange for a little short-term tax revenue, the City of Somerville has weakened its own zoning, favored a specific developer, committed its largest area of developable land to low-revenue use for the next generation, and established legal precedents that will impede its zoning decisions for years. Declining property values in the adjoining Ten Hills and East Somerville neighborhoods will, over time, more than offset the meager new taxes generated by the development.

More than that, the Mayor, Alderman Curtatone, and their allies have sent an unmistakable message to Somerville's citizens: if you participate in the public process, you will be ignored.

David Dahlbacka is a former president of the Mystic View Task Force. The opinions expressed here are his own. For more information on the MVTF, check out their Web site <http://www.theville.com/mysticview/> or call (617)776-0945.

Israel-Palestine Resolution

The National Political Committee of Democratic Socialists of America has reaffirmed DSA's long-standing support for the "two state" solution of mutual self-determination for the Palestinian and Jewish peoples to resolve their tragic conflict. This can only come about by opposing violence and the rejectionists of both sides. The resolution states that "the disproportionate Israeli use of force in response to terrorist attacks is predominantly responsible for the horrible and outrageous escalation of violence..." DSA calls for the ending of new settlements, withdrawal from occupied territories, and allowing Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem to become part of an independent Palestinian state. A just and lasting peace is possible "if all states and peoples recognize the right of each other to exist within secure, viable, but non-expansionist national boundaries." The full resolution is on the national DSA Web site (<http://www.dsusa.org/international/mideast.html>).

Governance – Cont'd from page 6

- Increasing the economic integration among the peoples of the world is, in itself, a good thing. My vision of the good life includes everyone in the world being able to drink Jamaican coffee, buy consumer goods made from Japan, work for a company on the other side of the planet, or invest in an African enterprise. The goal is not to dis-intermediate the world economy, but to democratize, equalize and regulate it.

- Industrialization, and the transition away from agricultural labor, is a good thing for less industrialized countries. It is a good thing for Northern capital to be invested in the industrialization of Third World countries, freeing people from agricultural labor. The efficiencies created by market exchange between countries will free people from unnecessary labor in general. As socialists we work to ensure that this process of job loss, here and abroad, does not mean impoverishment and suffering, but rather a gradual expansion of social welfare, leisure and education. The goal is certainly not to return to a non-industrial way of life, but to find a just and sustainable way to a more industrialized, and then post-industrial, world, with material prosperity and less work.

- The erosion of the nation-state at the hands of global capital is a good thing. The goal is not to reinforce the illusory powers of the nation-state, but to create democratically-accountable transnational institutions to regulate capital, and guarantee peace and human rights. The existence of international capitalism means that all countries are subject to the rule of capital, regardless of their domestic policies, until we have international governance of capitalism.

In the current period, the nationalist reaction against globalization is far more reactionary than globalization itself. We share many enemies with the economic globalizers among the xenophobes and racial nationalists of the world. Timothy McVeigh is an anti-globalizer. Osama Bin Laden is an anti-globalizer. Serb warlords, The Shining Path, the Burmese dictatorship and Hindu fascists are anti-globalizers. McDonalds is at war with the Jihad, and like Marx congratulating Lincoln after the Civil War, in this war we're rooting

for McDonalds. People don't all have to sing the Internationale in Esperanto, but they are far more likely to pick up the beat from Hollywood than from their local mullah.

These are fairly traditional views on the Marxist left. Marx argued that capitalism, especially global capitalism, was a necessary transitional stage to socialism. It knits the world together, wiping out tribal identities and replacing them with global culture and identity. It develops the means of production to the point that eventually we will all be freed from the necessities of work itself. He argued that the scientific radical should embrace the inevitable and progressive role of capital, while simultaneously engaging with the inevitable reaction against it. By intervening in popular struggles we can point movements to progressive alternatives to the rule of capital, not just be speedbumps in its path.

But these views are shared by very few anti-globalization activists. When pressed, most aver that they are not protectionists or anti-trade, but for "fair trade." Then in their next breath they decry production for export, the loss of the family farm and the loss of "national sovereignty." Most are oppositionalists, with little interest in building a majoritarian politics or successful economic policy to win real economic benefits for real people today. They dismiss the fact that every democracy in the Western hemisphere wants in on the FTAA because they see more benefits than harms; all those leaders are just corporate sell-outs apparently, not one representing the real interests of their people. But even Fidel Castro's principal complaint with the U.S. is our thirty year-old trade embargo on his country. You don't see American trade unionists insisting that no investments be made in their industries or states until the minimum wage is raised or OSHA standards passed. You get the investments, and then work on the rest.

Anti-globalizers rarely have any vision of what kind of alternative institutions or development models they are for. The protesters rightly insist that the proposed trade agreements are being conducted in secret, do not contain substantive guarantees of worker or envi-

ronmental rights, and empower corporations at the expense of labor unions, communities and nation-states. Is the answer then simply an FTAA negotiated in the open, with (unenforceable) guarantees, and more rights of appeals for nations and NGOs? This would leave trade and investment still effectively unregulated.

Free trade agreements certainly increase the competition and accelerate the capitalist race to the bottom, rewarding countries with the cheapest wages and weakest environmental protections. But if we are successful in getting rid of these agreements and their associated institutions will the world be a better, more democratic place? No, because we will still have the pressures of international competition on wages and environmental standards with or without these agreements, just with hundreds of different national laws and policies, most driven by protectionism.

The only progressive answer to the reality of global capitalism, with or without free trade agreements, is regional and world federalism. We can't build socialism in one country today, if we ever could. We need accountable transnational bodies protecting environmental, workers' and communities' interests, ensuring that capital is invested in ways that lead slowly towards global equality. We need transnational agreements and bodies that ensure that all member countries have social welfare systems to provide flexible educations that prepare people for a rapidly changing globalized labor market, to catch people when they are displaced by economic dislocations, and to retrain them for new employment. These trade agreements are the opening to the creation of those new transnational bodies and agreements, not their negation.

For me, the European Union is the model, albeit an imperfect one. The European Union started as a free trade bloc with little democratic representation, but now includes a transnational bicameral legislature, a transnational judiciary, a transnational military, a transnational currency and open borders. Our comrade Gerhard Shroeder now proposes to kick it up a notch, making the EU Executive Commission *continued on page 8*

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a real government, and turning the EU budget over to the European Parliament. It is a vision of a truly multicultural United States, with more than a dozen languages spoken. Left, socialist, trade union, human rights, and environmental movements are staunchly pro-European. They have left behind their attachments to nation-state-centered policies for a positive vision of a free, equal, sustainable, and compassionate Europe.

How should such a vision and program affect our intervention in the anti-globalization movement? Fortunately far-sighted progressive NGOs are coming together to provide precisely the vision and program we need. One example is the “Our Global Neighborhood” document written in 1995 by the UN Commission on Global Governance, and its parallel NGO Charter99

[<http://www.charter99.org/>], both of which propose strengthening the role of the UN in economic regulation and development, while making it more democratic. In the U.S. democratic leftists can collaborate with the World Federalists [<http://www.wfa.org/>], the principal organization working to democratize and strengthen the UN.

Also, NGO policy wonks associated with the 1998 (Santiago) and 2001 (Quebec City) Peoples Summits have written a program for Western hemisphere development and cooperation as a response to NAFTA and FTAA [*“Alternatives for the Americas”* <http://www.asc-hsa.org/documentos.html>]. Although they assert that trade agreements should respect national sovereignty, they also advocate a number of transnational institutions to regulate capital: “Global corporations have grown so large that they can no longer

be effectively controlled by our governments. We need new instruments to reassert public control and citizen sovereignty over these firms.”

Fifteen years ago no one imagined that the sclerotic Communist regimes would suddenly collapse. Five years ago few imagined the current global network of resistance to the rule of capital. In the next twenty years we are guaranteed apocalyptic change and utopian possibilities. Its time for we partisans of the Socialist International to get out there and begin talking about the united, prosperous world we imagine possible, and not leave the field to the Luddites and isolationists.

J. Hughes was founder/editor of the DSA Environmental Commission zine EcoSocialist Review [1989-1996]. He can be reached at his Connecticut radio show, Changesurfer Radio [www.changesurfer.com/eventhorizon/].

Response

By Mike Prokosch

The world economy looks different to the several billion people at its bottom. To them, the promise of drinking Jamaican coffee or investing in an African enterprise is a sick joke. They may indeed be working for a company on the other side of the planet, but that company has no incentive to raise their wages or invest in their countries in any way that will improve their living standards and environment.

If any invisible hand is at work in the world today, it is hiding in this global “race to the bottom,” not in the “free market” or Marx’s “inevitable and progressive role of capital.” The global economy is being shaped by historical accidents called transnational corporations and financial institutions. They are using nations’ political systems, and creating new supranational systems, to take power away from the world’s majorities and change the rules ever more in their own favor. That is why the globalization movement (which is not an anti-globalization movement) is targeting the summit meetings in Seattle, Washington, and Quebec where those rules are changed.

What is progress in this context? Is it reactionary when Latin Americans lay their hands on a weapon like the nation-state to defend themselves against U.S. capital and its local collaborators? When Jubilee South denounces the IMF, World Bank, and the European Union for continuing to bleed Africa of her natural resources and people? When farmers in the global North and South resist the agricultural corporations that are destroying the earth’s capacity to feed us? When Indian peasants burn a Monsanto GM test field — or hypothetically, a McDonald’s? Are these Luddites and isolationists, or ecologists who believe that the economy must be managed on a scale they can control? The transnational corporation is an institution that must be broken up along with the ideology of inevitable progress.

European social democrats’ pan-Europeanism is not enough. Global solidarity is needed to rein in global capital. European support for institutions like the World Bank and IMF is shortsighted. So is their failure to stand up to the US-driven model of radical libertarian capitalism, which is already eroding their social regulations and wage levels. (If you want to see inevitability, see what the global race to the bottom has done to social programs in

Canada.) So is their failure to ally with the globalization movement and change their governments’ policy toward their traditional colony, Africa, which they continue to exploit for the sake of their higher living standards. Like the AFL-CIO, the Socialist International is tempted toward a conditioned alliance with global capital, and not with a mass movement that could transform it.

Perhaps someday the World Trade Organization, or some entirely new body, will meet in Mexico City to enact a global living wage and an enforceable plan to stop global warming. Many of us globalizers are working toward that moment. The path to it lies through the building of a global grassroots movement enormous enough to compel it. That’s our project. Of course we do not have a blueprint for the future. We’re a very young movement and we’re not ready. First we must bring together union members from the North, working women from the South, and many others to ask what would solve their problems. When all those voices are in the room, we will be better able to say what tomorrow’s world should look like — and much better able to bring it into being.

Mike Prokosch is active with the Boston Global Action Network.

Women in Massachusetts Politics

Running Against the Wind — The Struggle of Women in Massachusetts Politics. By Betty Taymor. Northeastern University Press, Boston, MA. 212 pgs, \$26.95.

Reviewed by Andrea Lee and Barbara Jarowz

If you are new to Massachusetts' politics, recent developments might cause you to believe that women have a strong foothold in the state's power structure. The news is dominated by reports of Acting Governor Jane Swift, and as political races heat up for 2002, several prominent female politicians are likely candidates for statewide office. Don't be misled. Digging deeper, you will find that politics is still a male-dominated arena in our supposedly liberal state. Prior to 1998, only one woman had been elected to constitutional office (now two more have been added to the list). Only three women have represented Massachusetts in Congress. And currently, women make up only twenty-six percent of the state legislature — a percentage that ranks Massachusetts close to the bottom nationwide.

An entertaining and informative way of learning about the struggles and progress of women in Massachusetts politics is Betty Taymor's *Running Against the Wind*. For the past fifty years, Taymor has carefully observed and actively participated in state politics. By sharing her own political evolution from a Democratic Party activist, to a candidate, to one of the state's foremost advocates for women's political leadership, Taymor outlines the challenges women who enter the political arena face, the advances they have made in breaking some political glass ceilings, and the barriers of sexism that still reign in our state's political system.

When Taymor's political awakening began in the 1950s, the notion that women belonged in the "home" was rampant (though of course this held true only for white middle and upper class women). Women were disallowed from civic involvement through laws that prohibited them from serving on juries. Though women had garnered the right

to vote thirty years prior, their political participation was often contingent on their husband's approval. Taymor conducted trailblazing research comparing urban and suburban women activists and elected officials' attitudes toward politics in 1959. The results of her work demonstrated that the majority of suburban, college-educated women believed that women should stay at home even though they were avid volunteers in community affairs. Only one-half of suburban women believed that women were good decision makers. Taymor fails to detail her earlier research in this book and does not explore adequately how economic and educational background dictates the roles women play or even the latitude they have to define their own roles.

Nonetheless, what is most remarkable about Taymor's findings in the late 1950s is how little things have changed. Taymor found the women at that time lacked political ambition, preferring to play a behind the scenes role helping a candidate or passing legislation. Those women who were in elected office were more interested in serving locally, viewing higher office as being too pressured and requiring compromised values or unethical "deal-making." Women did not see themselves as having strong negotiating skills even when they clearly did. The few women who served in state legislatures found themselves with no role models, little personal lives, and strapped to balance familial and work responsibilities. Much the same could be said today.

After detailing her own run-ins and personal relationships with key power-brokers in what reads like a political who's who in Massachusetts, Taymor offers a clear assessment of the barriers women candidates face. She attributes much of women's lack of progress to the domination of Massachusetts' politics by the Irish and the strict adherence to rigid gender roles within that community. She asserts that Irish Catholic women felt a strong sense of power in their own families and had little interest in entering the male realm of politics. Furthermore, Irish men were

not interested or supportive of women entering politics. In contrast to male political leaders in neighboring states, Massachusetts' politicians did little to mentor women.

Other factors that have adversely impacted women's electoral leadership include political party structure, incumbency, the media, and fundraising. Interestingly, Taymor identifies the current lack of a strong Republican Party as a barrier to women's advancement because in the past that party in this state had been seen as more amenable to women's leadership. The weakening of the Democratic Party structure has also mandated that individual candidates have their own strong political machines. Women, often lacking these networks of relationships, are therefore at a disadvantage. With men filling the majority of political seats, the rise of uncontested races and the power of incumbency also deter women's progress. While Taymor does not explain why so many races are uncontested (even Democratic primaries), those familiar with local politics know that the rising cost of campaigns makes running for office simply inaccessible. She also describes situations in which donors were unwilling to give large contributions to strong female candidates. And she notes that female candidates who run and lose often do not have private sector jobs or political appointments waiting for them while male candidates do.

Despite warranted frustration, Taymor does describe progress in both attitudes about women and politics and resources available for women interested in running. By 1995, 99% of women felt that men and women were equally good decision makers. Further, there are countless organizations that exist now to boost women's involvement. Taymor was pivotal in creating the Women in Political and Governmental Careers Program that began at Boston College and moved to UMASS Boston, which prepares women to run for office and exposes them to women mentors. Other programs like the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus and the

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Girl Scouts' Girls' Pipeline to Power focus on encouraging more women and girls to run or think about running for office and provides support to those who do. Another organization focused specifically on progressive women is the WomenIn Project. Formed in 1996, the WomenIn Project was created out of the Commonwealth Coalition to bring together key statewide women's organizations and activists interested in increasing the participation and leadership of progressive pro-choice women at all levels of the political process. In the past five years, WomenIn has successfully elected 16 women to the state legislature, initiated a electoral skills training program for candidates, developed an internship program for high school and college-aged women, and

created a network of women of color focused on the particular challenges they face when running for office.

In 2002, Massachusetts will experience an unprecedented turnover in our state legislature as candidates vacate their seats to vie for higher offices. Much work remains to be done if we are to see a marked increase in the number of women who run for these openings. It is also unclear as to whether Massachusetts' voters are ready to vote for women running for higher offices. Recent media coverage of Acting Governor Jane Swift's ability to govern while pregnant clearly demonstrates the prevalence of sexist attitudes as well as the very real challenges women face trying to balance work and family. *Running Against the Wind* provides a useful backdrop to understanding where these attitudes come from, how wom-

en have challenged them in the past, and what obstacles remain. Taymor's colorful political history is just one more step in her lifelong work of encouraging women to step into the political fray. Individuals who would like to follow in her footsteps and focus specifically on recruiting and electing more progressive female candidates are encouraged to contact WomenIn at 617-482-1567 or by email at comcoal@aol.com.

Andrea Lee is the Director of the WomenIn Project and the Coordinator of the Commonwealth Coalition's Electoral Training Program. She is also the President of the Greater Boston chapter of the National Organization for Women and the Chair of its Political Action Committee. Barbara Jarowz is a junior at Boston University who has just finished a semester's internship with WomenIn.



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