



# the yankee radical

Institute for  
Democratic  
Socialism

(617) 354-5078

March 2005

## Democrat Socialists of America Forum

# After Capitalism: Socialist Alternatives

A discussion with  
David Schweickart

*Respondents:* Ellen Frank,  
Noemi Gizpenc,  
Pasqualino Columbaro

**Thursday, March 3, 7pm**

Tellus Institute

11 Arlington Street, Boston

Reception with light refreshments  
to follow

*By David Knuttunen*

The victory of global capital and its primary theology—classical economics—often seems complete. We've all heard Margaret Thatcher's maxim: There Is No Alternative. But is that right? Is this unjust, plutocratic system, with wealth and power for the few, and hunger, incessant labor and insecurity for the many, really the best we can do? Now, more than ever, we need study and discussion of other conceptions.

In this event, David Schweickart will develop his ideas for a democratic alternative to global capitalism. Under what he calls "Economic Democracy," production of goods and services will be primarily by worker cooperatives; distribution will be by a market system; capital will be socially owned, with investment controlled by democratically accountable banks.

Is this plausible? To stimulate debate on these ideas we have invited Ellen Frank, Noemi Gizpenc and

Pasqualino Columbaro to assess David Schweickart's presentation, followed by an open discussion moderated by former Boston DSA Chair Harris Gruman. Copies of Prof. Schweickart's book *After Capitalism* will be available for purchase.

### About the speakers

**David Schweickart** is a Professor of Philosophy at Loyola University, Chicago, with Ph.Ds in Mathematics and Philosophy. His book *Against Capitalism* has been translated into Spanish and Chinese. Dr. Schweickart has served as faculty advisor of Loyola's Amnesty International chapter and is active with the Radical Philosophy Association.

**Ellen Frank** writes the regular "Doctor Dollar" column for *Dollars and Sense* magazine, and is Senior Economic Analyst at the Poverty Institute at Rhode Island College. She is the author of *The Raw Deal: How Myths and Misinformation about the Deficit, Inflation and Wealth Impoverish America*, and a member of Democratic Socialists of America.

**Noemi Gizpenc**, MIT '98, has worked as a research assistant at the World Bank and currently at Ownership Associates Inc., a consulting firm addressing the needs of companies with employee ownership. Noemi is a coordinating member of the Sustainable Future Forum, an action and discussion group on issues of sustainability.

### DSA Members Meetings

**Dates:** Wednesday 7 pm,  
March 9 & April 13

**Place:** Harvest Food Co-op  
(Community Room), 581 Mass.  
Ave., Central Sq., Cambridge

DSA members meetings take place the second Wednesday of the month at the location listed above. Any unforeseen changes will be noted on the DSA answering machine (617-354-5078) in between YRs.

Our March 9 meeting will assess the March 3 Schweickart talk, mobilize for Commonwealth Coalition endorsed candidates in the March 15 special election, discuss our participation in Neighbor to Neighbor's latest phone banking campaign, and continue the debate begun at our February meeting on Boston DSA's approach to the anti-war movement. As always, non-members may attend but only members can vote.

**Pasqualino Columbaro** has been active in the trade union movement in the U.S. and Italy for many years. Chair of the New Priorities Committee of Jobs with Justice, he helped organize last year's Boston Social Forum.

## 2 Short Takes

### YDS Conference

Young Democratic Socialists, DSA's youth affiliate, is hosting a national conference in NYC, March 11-13, to organize against right wing and corporate power. "Join activists from across the country for workshops, great speakers, partying and discussions on how best to challenge the Bush agenda and build a long term movement for social justice." For further information email [yds@dsausa.org](mailto:yds@dsausa.org).

### Labor Debate

On Sunday, March 20, 12:15-4:30 pm, the North Shore Labor Council is sponsoring a conference on the future of the AFL-CIO at the Salem State College Campus Center.

The prospect of four more years of a hostile White House along with continuing decline in union organization of the workforce has led to a sharp struggle over various internal reform proposals. The Service Employees International Union would reduce the number of unions through consolidations, pour more money into organizing and strengthen the central authority of the AFL-CIO. The Machinists have threatened to leave the Federation if the SEIU reforms are implemented, and the Communication Workers and others have put forward their own proposals.

Among the issues at stake: How effective will these rival strategies be in reversing labor's decline? What would it mean for the AFL-CIO to be split into one or more federations? How do union democracy and local union autonomy fit in? What does this debate mean for labor's allies?

Conference speakers include Elaine Bernard, head of the Harvard Trade Union Program; Kathy Casavant, Secretary-Treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO; and Jeff Crosby, President of IUE-CWA 201 and the North Shore Labor Council. Registration \$15. For more information call Corey Leaffer 781-595-2538, or [nsclc112@hotmail.com](mailto:nsclc112@hotmail.com).

### Breast Cancer Meeting

On March 24 the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition is sponsoring a conference to "critically examine current approaches to ending this epidemic" which, according to MBCC, downplays growing evidence linking the disease to toxins in personal care products, plastics and pesticides. Speakers include Janet Dominetz of MASSPIRG and Dr. Eric Winer, Director of Breast Cancer Oncology, Dana Farber Institute.

It takes place 4-9 pm, Conference Center at Harvard Medical, 77 Avenue Louis Pasteur, Boston. Registration \$25. For more information call 617-928-3300 or [hurricanevoices.org/truth](http://hurricanevoices.org/truth).

### Jobs with Justice Dinner

On March 31, the birthday of United Farmworkers leader Caesar Chavez, Jobs with Justice is holding its annual fundraising dinner. Among the honorees are SEIU Local 220, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, CWA Local 1365 and City Life /Vida Urbana. \$35 and up. 6 pm Reception, 7pm Dinner and program. Suffolk Downs 111 Waldemar Ave., East Boston. 617-524-8778.

### State of the Dream

After steady economic gains in the 1990s African Americans, Latinos and other people of color have actually lost ground since 2000, according to United for a Fair Economy's new report, *The State of the Dream 2005: Disowned in the Ownership Society*. Martin Luther King put forward a vision of economic justice which President Bush in his first term quoted in words but betrayed in deeds. The report makes the case that to rebuild the ladder of opportunity we need progressive taxes and a national wealth-building initiative on the scale of the post-WW11 GI Bill, but wider in its reach to all races.

The report is on the website at <http://www.faireconomy.org/press/2005/StateoftheDream2005pr.html>.

### Neighbor to Neighbor

Boston DSA is joining a Neighbor to Neighbor phone banking initiative to pressure the State House on key progressive issues, like support for a higher state minimum wage, closing corporate tax loopholes, more affordable housing and expanded healthcare coverage. We'll be calling Massachusetts families and urging them to push their state legislators to do the right thing. And, building on the "blue state nationalism" left over from the recent campaign, we'll also be calling "swing" congressional districts to help defend Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and federal housing programs from Bush attacks. Phone banking will take place at 8 Beacon St., near the State House.

To sign up call DSA at 617-354-5078 and leave your phone number and what evenings you can work. Or e-mail [carl@n2nma.org](mailto:carl@n2nma.org).

### Boston DSA Restructures

Boston DSA's December meeting concluded a long discussion on reorienting the Local in a period of declining revenues and member activism. It was decided to change our monthly board meetings into monthly member's meetings, since in terms of turnout they have become virtually the same. At these meetings, DSA members will have the same voting rights as Boston DSA exec board members; the board will coordinate the Local between meetings.

Board members at large elected to help steer Boston DSA through 2005 include Dave Knuttunen, Barry Hart and Vic Bloomberg. In addition, Jim Goldberg was drafted (in absentia!) for another year as our indispensable Treasurer. Mike Pattberg was elected Chair of the Local and editor (along with Andrea Costello) of the *Yankee Radical*.

Since the YR is our major financial expense, pending the results of our December 2004 fundraising appeal we agreed to consider either cut backs in the number of issues this year, or mailing only to members and those non-members who have given a donation.

# Special Election March 15

The Commonwealth Coalition has endorsed two candidates for the March 15 Democratic primary special election called to fill vacant State House seats: Linda Dorcena Forry and Tim Schofield. The Coalition, an alliance of unions and other progressive groups (including Boston DSA), only endorses in state legislative races.

Linda Dorcena Forry ([lindadorcenaforry.com](http://lindadorcenaforry.com)) is running in the 12th Suffolk District for the Dorchester-Mattapan-Milton-Hyde-Park seat vacated by former House Speaker Tom Finneran. Daughter of Haitian immi-

grants, Linda headed up the NAACP chapter at Boston College, was a "peer leader" at the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, and currently works at Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development. She advocates MBTA improvements, community policing, more equal school funding and affordable housing.

Tim Schofield ([www.timforrep.org](http://www.timforrep.org)) is among those in the 18th Suffolk District seeking to fill the Allston-Brighton-Brookline seat of pro-Bush "Democrat" Brian Golden, who has moved on to a job with the

Romney administration. Tim was part of a previous progressive campaign which failed to unseat Golden; this time he hopes to win against Golden's former legislative assistant, running with Golden's full support-Greg Glennon.

Both Tim Schofield and Linda Dorcena Forry were endorsed only after exhaustive interviews and questionnaires from all candidates ([www.81-21pac.com](http://www.81-21pac.com)). And they both need your help! Call Rebekah Gewirtz at the Commonwealth Coalition 617-451-5999, or DSA at 617-354-5078.

## DSA Challenges Wal-Mart to Debate

*In response to numerous critics, Wal-Mart has recently launched a charm offensive, including full page ads in a number of leading newspapers. On January 17th, Democratic Socialists of America responded with the adjacent press release. So far there has been no reply, but on February 10th Wal-Mart announced plans to close down their Quebec store which had just voted in a union—the first Wal-Mart store in North America to have done so. DSA is circulating an AFL-CIO internet petition asking Wal-Mart not to close this store but instead negotiate in good faith with their workers. To sign on visit [http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/walmart\\_accountable?rk=W7qKzpM1qcvXW](http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/walmart_accountable?rk=W7qKzpM1qcvXW)*

### Harry Fleischman, 1914-2004

National Secretary of the old Socialist Party, 1942-1950. Norman Thomas's campaign manager in the 1940s. Among the founding leadership of DSA. Long time leader of the Workers Defense League. Tireless supporter of labor and civil rights. Rest in peace.

DSA has challenged Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott to defend the content of its multi-million dollar PR blitz in a public debate. In a January 13th letter to CEO Scott, DSA National Director Frank Llewellyn writes, "Your assertion that 'Wal-Mart is working for all Americans' is not born out by the facts. The truth is that your business practices are bad for America and most Americans.... We challenge you to defend and debate your message—Wal-Mart is working for all Americans—your facts against our facts in front of any impartial audience, or for any impartial institution willing to host such a debate."

Wal-Mart announced a new national advertising campaign responding to its critics on January 13th. DSA has been a leading critic of Wal-Mart, charging that the retail giant uses its economic power to drive down wages in the communities and industries in which it operates. DSA maintains a special section on its web site, [www.dsausa.org](http://www.dsausa.org), devoted to Wal-Mart. Many of its members have published material critical of Wal-Mart and worked in local campaigns in opposition to the opening of new Wal-Mart stores. "It is simply amazing that CEO Scott describes a

Wal-Mart job as a good job. Americans know that a good job provides real benefits and a middle class living standard. If Wal-Mart continues to expand without changing its culture and business practices there is a real danger that there won't be any good jobs left in the retail sector," said DSA National Director Llewellyn in announcing the challenge. "Wal-Mart should welcome this opportunity to debate its critics."

### **Yankee Radical**

P. O. Box 51356  
Boston, MA 02205

Phone: 617-354-5078

Email:  
[yankeeradical@dsaboston.org](mailto:yankeeradical@dsaboston.org)

Speakers' Bureau:  
[speakers@dsaboston.org](mailto:speakers@dsaboston.org)

Web: <http://dsaboston.org>

Editor: M. Pattberg

Asst. Editor: A. Costello

Assistance for this issue:  
D. Keil, V. Bloomberg

# Boston DSA Annual Fund Appeal

*Boston DSA thanks all those who so generously responded to our annual fundraising appeal. (If this includes you please read no further.) But since many DSAers have said they dislike being bothered by the follow-up phone calls we use to pester you with, consider the reprinted appeal below (slightly revised) as a gentle reminder to those who may have forgotten, or misplaced their letter. If you didn't receive this letter a couple of months ago, it could mean you are not in our database—which can be corrected by sending us your mailing address.*

December 2004

## “Don't mourn, organize”

In the wake of the November election the Republican coalition of preachers and plutocrats are preparing a frontal assault on Social Security and what's left of the progressive income tax. Their foreign policy gurus, the aptly named “neo-cons”, who were so disastrously wrong on Iraq and whose imperious unilateralism antagonized most of the world, have been rewarded with four more years. Happy New Year!

So it's hard to resist reaching for Joe Hill's timeworn advice to begin Boston Democratic Socialists of America's annual fund raising appeal. Of course you're entitled to know what we've done with your past contributions, and what we hope to do in the future. To briefly summarize our activity this year:

- We sponsored several forums, including one on women and globalization with Ellen Rosen, Elaine Bernard and Maria Aguiar, and another in July at the Boston Social Forum on sweatshops and the rise of Wal-Mart with Ellen Rosen and Bob Ross. In October, Ellen Frank analyzed some of the myths of mainstream economics, and how they serve the corporate elite; in November we organized a post-election forum and reception with Holly Sklar, Harris Gruman and Michael Hirsch.

- On May 1, Boston DSA threw a farewell party for longtime member and former UNITE Vice President Ed Clark. We also helped publicize the April 25 March for Women's Rights in Washington DC, and participated in the Jobs with Justice-led coalition which sponsored Health Care for All mobilizations in June and October.

- As members of the Commonwealth Coalition, a statewide

alliance of unions, civil rights, environmental and community groups, Boston DSA helped publicize the campaigns of many winning progressive candidates for the state legislature, largely through our newsletter the Yankee Radical . We also supported the election victory of Andrea Cabral for Suffolk County Sherrif, and joined with Neighbor to Neighbor in swing state phone banking for the Kerry campaign. And we've tried to make the argument to our friends in the Green Party that, given current election law, third parties of the left mainly help Republicans, while Democratic Party primaries present better avenues for progressive insurgency.

So even with a general decline in member participation, Boston DSA has managed to maintain a certain level of activity. With your help, we would like to carry on into 2005. We have no paid staff and now operate out of a post office box, not an office. DSA dues go to support the national organization so once a year we send out a general plea asking for support to keep the Boston local going.

On the broad left, opportunities for DSA-type politics have actually increased in recent years. Paradoxically, although “socialism” as a word has never been more discredited (thanks to the legacy of stalinism) , many democratic socialist ideas seem more relevant than ever. The global justice movement has evolved from the trade issue to become, in effect, an international struggle against the “rights” of capital. On the radical left, ideas of grassroots democracy and human rights now have greater influence than infallible Maximum Leaders or one party dictatorships. Several promising progressive political groups have spun out of the recent campaigns of Reich, Kucinich, and Dean. And the labor movement is once again acknowledged by many liberals as central to any movement for social change.

These welcome trends will be helpful in building a movement to resist the coming onslaught of the Right, and Boston DSA would like to be part of it.

Please respond as generously as you can. Make checks payable to Boston DSA. Thank you in advance for your solidarity.

Yes, I want to help Boston DSA work to keep democratic socialist values alive. Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$1000      \$500      \$250      \$100      \$50      \$25      Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*return to:*

Democratic Socialists of America

P.O. Box 51356

Boston, Massachusetts 02205

And, I'd like to be more active in DSA. Call me!

My biggest issue is: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chinatown Next?

# Gaiety Theatre Crushed by City

By Shirley Kressel

The historic Gaiety Theatre, one of Boston's most splendid playhouses, will be gone when you read this. The story of its demise is a cautionary tale we should all heed.

The Gaiety opened in 1908, to lavish press acclaim for its elegant beauty, concert-hall acoustics, and innovative design by its architect, the renowned Clarence Blackall, in engineering (balconies supported by huge cross-girders, leaving no post-obstructed views) and fire safety. It was one of only two Boston theatres (the other, the Casino, is buried under

Government Center) featuring racially integrated performances and audiences in the 1920s and 30s; an important landmark of Black history, its destruction during Black History Month is a particularly bitter irony.

The Gaiety was designated by the City's Midtown Cultural District Plan for preservation as a multi-cultural performing arts center. The Zoning Code implementing the Plan expressly forbids demolition of theatres. Despite these protections, written to stop the tear-down of theatres after their lights were dimmed by suburban flight and the decline of the downtown, Mayor Thomas Menino,

through the arcane workings of the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the building commissioner (Inspectional Services Department, ISD), approved the demolition, as well as the construction on the site of a 30-story luxury housing tower. No City Plans (even this one, which he had helped to write as a City Councilor), no zoning laws, and no community outcry from a Chinatown seeing itself gentrified out of existence could sway Menino from his mission.

He recites the mantra of "eliminating the Combat Zone," a battle cry that had in the past – before they realized that they

*continued on page 6*

## Janitors Struggle for Justice at R&C Cleaning

By Charlie Noss

Genzyme is a global biotechnology company. Last year it raked in revenues of over \$1.7 billion. Its new \$140 million state of the art headquarters in Cambridge was brought online in April 2004. R&C Cleaning is a janitorial firm based in Stoneham; Genzyme is its only client.

R&C Cleaning workers began their struggle for justice the end of last summer. Frustrated with seeing incredible abuses and unfair conditions, workers came together with organizers from SEIU Local 615 to discuss improving their working conditions.

Cambridge Vice-Mayor Marjorie Decker's Committee on Health and Environment began investigating the situation. Her Committee heard testimony in December from workers in a hearing that Genzyme declined to attend and R&C Cleaning ignored. Councilors heard about R&C Cleaning's abuses including unfair terminations, unpaid overtime, sexual harassment, and unsafe working conditions.

Blanca Vasquez testified that she had worked for R&C Cleaning for almost two years. "I worked 55 hours a week without receiving a dime of my overtime. I start-

ed making \$8.75 an hour, and got a 25 cent raise after a year. When I got fired, I was still making over \$2.00 an hour less than all the other janitors in Cambridge." She said that many co-workers believe that R&C Cleaning has fired workers unfairly or harassed them into quitting.

Councilors in attendance condemned both Genzyme and R&C Cleaning for their actions.

"Cambridge has high standards for working conditions and workers rights. Genzyme has allowed their cleaning contractor to violate these standards for twenty years and abuse workers in their buildings. This cannot continue," stated Vice-Mayor Decker. She called for a "responsible employer" order, in addition to a "strongly worded letter to Genzyme."

But in retaliation against union organizing, R&C Cleaning illegally fired two workers — Blanca Vasquez and her boyfriend. Cambridge Mayor Michael A. Sullivan called on Genzyme to rectify the situation, stating that Cambridge "... has a long standing history of support for workers' rights – in particular those rights to organize and form a union." Boston City Councilor Felix Arroyo and Cambridge Councilor Brian Murphy

spoke at an October rally with over 60 community members, politicians, and union workers in support of R&C Cleaning janitors. Councilor Murphy remarked, "Instead of Genzyme being a model for other biotechnology companies here in Cambridge for working conditions and worker treatment, they have not held their cleaning contractor accountable."

With this political pressure and public scrutiny, R&C Cleaning president Roberto Castillo has been making efforts to clean up his act. Recent pay raises have put R&C Cleaning in compliance with area wage standards. For the first time in twenty years of cleaning Genzyme's building, R&C Cleaning employees were paid for the recent holidays.

Workers remain concerned, however. Indeed, despite signing an agreement settling multiple charges of unfair labor practices in December, the company has just recently been charged with new violations of federal labor law.

For more information, please contact Justice for Janitors, SEIU Local 615 at 617/523-6150 ext. 413 or [cnoss@seiu615.org](mailto:cnoss@seiu615.org).

*Charlie Noss is an organizer with SEIU Local 615.*

# Social Security Talking Points

by Mark Schaeffer

The Bush privatization scheme, beneath the rhetoric, is essentially a Wall Street raid on Social Security. The only guarantee is that brokers will get *hundreds of billions* of dollars in fees.

The diversion of funds from Social Security to private accounts would cost taxpayers and retirees an estimated 2 Trillion dollars, at a time when the Bush administration has already run up record deficits. That comes to about \$20,000 per household. Republicans are floating proposals to make this up by massive benefit cuts, by something like 40%.

There is no crisis: Social Security benefits have been paid for a lifetime, through wars and recessions, with no missed payments, and very low administrative costs.

The actuaries say Social Security will be able to pay full benefits until 2042 under pessimistic projections, 2052 under conservative assumptions, forever if the economy grows at past rates.

Even under the pessimistic low growth assumptions, Social Security would pay 70-80% of benefits for decades after 2042. When Bush says “bankrupt” and “flat broke,” he is misleading again.

The projected shortfall in several decades under the pessimistic assump-

tions, if it materializes, can be easily corrected by lifting the cap on FICA contributions by wealthier individuals, so that they would pay the same percentage FICA deduction as moderate income workers.

Privatization is neither social nor secure. The Standard & Poor index, which averages the broad stock market, is down 20% from 5 years ago. Some individual investors would do much worse than the market average, if they happen to invest in corporations like Enron.

Prof. Krugman of Princeton has shown that the claim that private accounts would outperform Social Security uses different, rosier assumptions for economic growth in projecting returns from private accounts than in projecting Social Security returns. That isn't fuzzy math, it is phony math.

In the private sector, companies that get caught keeping two sets of books are charged with fraud.

The US policy has been to rest retirement on a “3 legged stool” — Social Security, individual pensions, and personal savings and/or investments. Social Security was created as a safety net because the other two are unreliable. Individuals who want private accounts

can invest their own money now without raiding the public Social Security fund.

Social Security benefits are guaranteed with the full faith and credit of the federal government — they will be paid unless the entire US government defaults. Bush's tax cuts, the corporate welfare in the prescription drug bill, and the Iraq war all do more to undermine the government's credit than the eventual hypothetical shortfalls in Social Security.

As the population ages, the percentage of retirees increases but that of dependent children decreases even more. The total percentage of workers in the population actually increases, as Congressman Nadler has pointed out, so the economy will remain able to maintain retirees in dignity. Again, there is no crisis.

The political clout of retirees will also increase, so there is NO chance — zero, nada, fuggedaboutit — that politicians a generation from now will take away Social Security benefits from Generation X. Republican fearmongering, trying to stir up a generational war to promote their ideological crusade against successful public programs, is dishonest as well as despicable.

*Mark Schaeffer is a longtime member of Albany, NY DSA.*

## Gaiety

*continued from page 5*

would be eliminated as well -- rallied support from Chinatown residents long suffering from the Adult Entertainment Zone the City had placed in their midst. But Menino's goal is in fact to replace a low-income neighborhood with a “higher and better use” for higher-income and better people, at the same time consolidating his relationship with the developers and construction unions that effectively run the city. He has set his sights on the historic heart of the City, and aims to extend the “urban renewal” vision of Boston from the West End and City Hall Plaza, down the first Boston avenue, Washington Street. Downtown Crossing, Chinatown,

and the South End are to be “upgraded.”

Menino unveiled a Theatre District Improvement Plan last summer: a set of banners notifying tourists that they are in the Theatre District. Since only a handful of theatres remain of the fifty Boston had in its heyday, signage is an ironically appropriate addition: without signs, we couldn't know we're in the Theatre District! Indeed, the main “gateway” to the Theatre District, in the Mayor's Improvement Plan signage layout diagram, is exactly at the site of the Gaiety, the corner of Washington and Boylston Streets, envisioned by the Plan as the very hub of the city's cultural district. But there is not a working theatre left near that “gateway.” And the Mayor's much-touted rescue of “three theatres” up the street, the

Opera House, the Modern and the Paramount, really yielded one theatre, the Opera House, bought by Clear Channel. The other two are just cinemas, movie barns with screens but without the wing, stage, orchestra or fly space needed for live performance use.

How did the City manage to permit this unlawful demolition? The Mayor “persuaded” an initially skeptical Zoning Commission to approve a zoning amendment (Planned Development Area, or PDA) for the developer. The PDA, invented by the BRA, is a blank check; it erases all zoning, and protects developers from lawsuit no matter what they do. This developer got one for his half-acre of land despite the code requirement that PDA's

*continued on page 7*

# SpongeBob SquarePants: The Dark Side

By Susan Linn

Spurred by the right wing's "outing" of SpongeBob SquarePants, progressives around the country are ardently defending the ubiquitous yellow sponge, just as they passionately stood up for Tinky Winky, from the PBS children's series Teletubbies, who was accused of being gay by none less than the Reverend Jerry Falwell. The right wing's homophobia is both frightening and abhorrent. But I think that the left's characterization of children's media icons as innocent is naive. Characters from Elmo to the Incredible Hulk are powerful tools for selling children everything from junk food to junk values.

Brand licensing is a big money maker for companies. SpongeBob SquarePants macaroni and cheese was Kraft's best selling pasta meal in 2002. He (it?) can also be found on boxes of Kellogg's SpongeBob SquarePants Movie Cereal, SquarePants Movie Rice Krispie Treats and SpongeBob SquarePants Pop Tarts, not to mention Breyer's ice cream, Nabisco Cheese Nips, Farley Fruit Snacks and scores of other high calorie snacks. Nor is junk food all that's being pushed in what the advertising industry calls "the kid demographic." So are toys, clothing, accessories and products that used to be marketed only to adults such as vacations and mini-vans.

To understand the problem of commercial culture for children, it's important to realize how much it has changed in the past

twenty years. These days, children are bombarded with marketing from the moment they wake up in the morning to the moment they go to bed. They see almost 40,000 ads a year on television alone. They engage almost 40 hours a week with media, most of which is commercially driven. In addition to the brand licensing that brings us the panoply of Sponge Bob junk food described above, products turn up as props and plot points in movies, TV programs, video games and even in books for babies and rap songs. The phenomenon of cross branding leads to such toys as Pizza Hut Barbie, Coca Cola Checkers and Play Doh's Deluxe McDonald's Happy Meal Set. Stealth marketing is also on the rise; for example, when a company called the Girls Intelligence Agency infiltrates young girls' pajama parties for market research. So is advergaming — when companies create games on the Web specifically to sell products. Visit [candystand.com](http://candystand.com) and join 12 million advergammers to go bowling with Life Savers.

Meanwhile, R-rated movies, such as the governor of California's Terminator franchise, are marketed to seven year olds through toys. In 2003, the best selling video game among pre teens was Grand Theft Auto Vice City, in which you can have sex with a prostitute and then kill her. And institutions and professional organizations that should be protecting children are being

bought by corporations who target them. The American Academy of Pediatrics accepted a \$1 million grant from Coca Cola who, until recently, had a seat on the board of the PTA. The United States Youth Soccer Association sold their mailing list of young soccer players to the chemical company Chemlawn in exchange for corporate sponsorship. McDonald's, with the blessing of the American Academy of Pediatrics, is sending Ronald McDonald into schools as an ambassador for healthy life styles.

Progressives have been slow to take up the cause of children and commercialism, yet it ought to be a rallying cry. After all, it's not just products that are being marketed to children — so are behaviors and values. Concerned about consumerism? The central message of a commercialized childhood is that things will make us happy. McDonald's doesn't bother talking about the taste of their food much in commercials aimed at kids — rather, they feature Ronald McDonald rescuing children from their boring lives and whisking them to McDonald's where, presumably, they'll live happily ever after if Type II diabetes doesn't get them first.

The messages being marketed to children are antithetical not just to their health and well-being, but to the health of democracy as well. Being a good citizen is not the same thing as being a good customer.

*continued on page 8*

## Gaiety

*continued from page 6*

must have a minimum project site of one acre. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission dissented, calling it a farce. "PDAs make everything that was illegal, legal," says ISD, our zoning enforcement agency.

More astounding, legal challenges failed to save the theatre. In recent years, legal "standing," the right to file suits, has been interpreted ever more narrowly in zoning matters, defining as "aggrieved persons" only those with individual property damages. Even abutters cannot assume the right to call for zoning

enforcement without demonstrating actual property damage. (Indeed, even the abutter who has standing to sue against the PDA was denied standing to sue against a demolition permit issued under the PDA — even if it deprived him of part of his case against the PDA!) So the laws protecting a publicly valuable building, in this case a theatre expressly sheltered by the code, cannot be enforced simply because they were written for the benefit of the community. The demolition must cause harm to an abutter's property; general harm to the community doesn't qualify. Ironically, the broader the public good protected by a zoning provision, the fewer people can sue to defend it!

And so, with the State courts fending off challengers, the Theatre is being destroyed by the City government legally obligated to protect it.

And the "neighborhood mayor," the "preservation mayor," the "arts mayor," Menino's monikers, are revealed as pretty propaganda. In a recent rally at the Gaiety, community people marched with signs lamenting "Tommy Towers." We will have a post-card skyline, but what will be happening here on earth?

*Landscape architect Shirley Kressel is co-founder of the Alliance of Boston Neighborhoods. She can be reached at [shirley.kressel@verizon.net](mailto:shirley.kressel@verizon.net)*

# Guantanamo

By Adar Cohen

Since the 9-11 attacks, US military forces have captured hundreds of suspected terrorists from 42 countries. At present, approximately 660 detainees are being subjected to what multiple sources confirm to be torture. Reports by released detainees, human rights groups, and international lawyers describe horrendous abuse and disgusting treatment.

And since the horrifying scenes of Abu Ghraib were exposed, worldwide outrage has led to more calls for investigation, especially at Guantánamo Bay, where Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has approved “stress positions, sensory deprivation, hooding, stripping, and the use of dogs” (public statement, Amnesty International). Death threats, extreme temperatures, and inducing the perception of suffocation have been determined “legally available” by the Pentagon, while allegations of sexual assault and sexualized torture continue to mount. In response to the global outcry over these human rights abuses, the Pentagon has begun yet another internal

investigation, maintaining their position that prisoners at Guantánamo Bay are treated “humanely” (official website, United States Department of Defense).

The Bush administration continues to deny Guantánamo detainees access to legal counsel, a blatant violation of international law. These radical tactics are a disgrace to our nation’s historic commitment to human rights, but worse still, they do not make us safer. Under extreme physical and psychological duress, innocent detainees will provide false information to satisfy their interrogators, confusing our anti-terror intelligence operations.

But not everyone at Guantánamo is a terrorist. During the chaos following 9-11 — in the US and Afghanistan and around the world — our military cast a very wide net and imprisoned many innocent civilians, illustrated by the occasional but consistent release of wrongly imprisoned detainees from Guantánamo. While the Bush administration persistently refers to captives as “hard core” and “the worst of the worst,” our leaders will not disclose how many children are detained.

Far from making us safer, these policies pose a new danger to our troops abroad.

How do images from Abu Ghraib and allegations from Guantánamo affect an ordinary Iraqi’s willingness to join the ever-growing insurgency or a young Muslim’s decision to join the ranks of al-Qaeda?

It is a widely held sentiment that whether or not we support the “war on terror,” we must support our troops as they are sent into harm’s way. But our support must include a commitment to international law that prohibits the use of torture, or we will send the dangerous message that torture anytime, anywhere — regardless of conventions and treaties — is acceptable.

If the US is to win the so-called war against terror, we cannot adopt the heartless and dehumanizing methods of our enemies. That will guarantee our failure. And if we allow our administration’s lawless agenda to continue, we risk sending our young men and women into situations where they will be at risk of the very practices our government has designed and we have tolerated.

*This June, Adar Cohen will begin working at the Center for International Human Rights Law at Northwestern University.*

# SpongeBob

*continued from page 7*

Citizenship in a democracy requires absorbing and adhering to a set of attributes and behaviors that can be learned beginning in early childhood: cooperation, activism, critical thinking and peaceful resolution of conflict are just a few. Children may learn these at home, at school, or on the playground. They do not learn them in the marketplace. Instead they are exhorted to embrace lifetime brand loyalty, which has been described as the “Holy Grail” for marketers.

Brand loyalty means that a person might keep buying a brand even if their original reasons for purchasing it—such as cost—may no longer be valid, and even if it is actually in their best interest to buy the same kind of product from a different company. The habit of impulse buying, or making purchases based on the emotional appeal of a commercial without thinking through a decision, is another customer behavior that benefits companies and not consumers.

The slogan “Just Do it” which has served Nike well for many years, implies that it’s better not to think too much. Don’t think about buying these sneakers. Just do it.

Commercials that show kids relying on a product or a magical being to solve their problems promote passivity, which is adaptive in a dictatorship but terrible for democracy. When passivity is combined with the kind of “me first” messages found especially in commercials aimed at teenagers, the overlying message is that there’s no point in doing anything unless it’s for personal gain. Doesn’t democracy rely on activism, cooperation, at least a modicum of altruism and citizens who understand the need for a balance between individual and majority rights? I do know young people who are passionate about activism, but is it a coincidence that eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds who grew up during the intensification of marketing are notoriously apathetic about voting? A healthy democracy relies on a population with a capacity for peaceful conflict resolution. Yet themes of violence and some kind of deceptive behavior

are often found in children’s commercials. In 1994, a study of 92 food commercials showed that 62% featured a violent theme.

I don’t entirely understand why the Left has been so slow in taking up this struggle. One reason might be a reluctance to look hard at first amendment protections of commercial speech. Another might be that because of our fond memories of our own pop culture and a belief that our children have a right to the same experience, we don’t want to face the degree to which today’s popular culture is corporate owned, or it’s negative impact on children. The Left’s silence on the commodified sexuality that big media markets to children leaves a political void that is happily filled by the religious right. After last year’s Superbowl, conservatives were decrying the exposure of Janet Jackson’s nipple. Progressives should have been outraged, too. After all, it was a white man ripping a blouse off of a black woman. The Left should have extended their outrage to include the beer commercials gun-

*continued on page 9*



# IRAQ: Time for Unilateral Withdrawal?

*The 2004 DSA convention resolution called for the “immediate withdrawal of the US-British ‘coalition’ forces from Iraq and simultaneous transfer of administration to the United Nations, including a UN-controlled peacekeeping force...”. Or, in other words, UN in, US out. But is it now time for the US to depart unconditionally?*

## YES

*By David Keil*

The U.S.-led occupation of Iraq has generated its own armed opposition and has ignited a bitter civil war. No election supervised by foreigners can resolve this internal conflict. Calling this flawed election the first democratic transfer of power in fifty years, the occupiers openly look back to another election held under foreign occupation.

The 1920 rebellion against British rule continues today. For Iraqis and Kurds, self-determination means precisely freedom from occupation, beginning with immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces. For persons in the U.S. military, staying in Iraq one more week is a deadly risk. The occupation is a fundamentally anti-democratic act of violence and a provocation for counter-violence and for conflict among Iraqis.

Boston Mobilization (617-782-2313; [www.bostonmobilization.org](http://www.bostonmobilization.org)) and United for Justice and Peace have initiated a broad-based coalition to build an antiwar march and rally at Boston Common starting at 1:00 p.m. March 20. Among other current endorsers or participants are Chelsea United for Peace, Brookline PeaceWorks, the Nader campaign, the International Action Center, the International Socialist Organization, and Socialist Alternative. Weekly meetings at the Mobe office have decided to go on an ambitious outreach campaign to secure broad endorsement and a representative list of speakers from campuses, community groups, religious groups, and unions. A flyering day is planned for February 26.

The March 20 call follows an appeal by United for Justice and Peace nationwide for local actions against the war in Iraq. The Out Now coalition had earlier called a rally for March 19 in New York City. Organizers of the Boston and New York actions are working together smoothly in Boston area. Group activities to *continued on page 10*

## NO

*By Mike Pattberg*

Summarizing the views of British imperialism in the late 19th century, Lord Cromer once remarked that “We do not rule Egypt; we rule those who rule Egypt.”

When asked to explain US goals in Iraq, the architects of the war from President Bush on down have said something very different, which usually goes something like this: “We work for a free, self-determining and democratic Iraq, without weapons of mass destruction, respecting the rights of all ethnic and religious groups, at peace with its neighbors.” And especially after the WMD thing didn’t pan out, they’ve begun calling for “democracy” and “freedom” in the entire Middle East, if not the world.

All this talk about universal freedom has upset some conservatives, who have started to compare Bush with Woodrow Wilson. But it may also tap into a strand of democratic idealism in many Americans which some anti-war activists have difficulty refuting, especially those who ignore or downplay the appalling crimes of the Saddam Hussein regime. In any case, as reflected in the bulk of mainstream media coverage and debate on Iraq, what comes through is a somewhat confusing dispute between idealistic, but perhaps reckless, pro-democracy Republicans and more cautious (realistic?) Democrats less eager for ideological crusades.

But so much for the cover story. In her piece in the September 2004 issue of *Harpers Magazine*, “Baghdad Year Zero — Pillaging Iraq in Pursuit of a Neo Con Utopia,” Naomi Klein paints quite a different picture of US policy, one Lord Cromer would surely recognize. She recounts how two months before the start of the war, USAID began drafting a work order to take over and privatize the Iraqi economy for the benefit of US corporations.

And how, despite all the talk about democracy and self-determination, US occupation head Paul Bremer imposed free market *continued on page 10*

## SpongeBob

*continued from page 8*

ning for kids by featuring a panoply of talking animals. Even as we support sex education in the schools, we should acknowledge that the precocious and irresponsible sexuality being marketed to younger and younger children is harmful to girls and women.

I’m often told that taking on the corporate takeover of childhood is a hopeless battle, but I don’t agree. The commercialization of childhood is a social-political

issue and should be addressed as such. For the past several years I have been involved in The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood ([commercialfreechildhood.org](http://commercialfreechildhood.org)), a national coalition of health care professionals, parents, educators and advocacy groups working to counter the onslaught of targeted messages aimed at children and for the rights of children to grow up, and the rights of parents to raise them, without being undermined by greed. Our membership is growing. Last year, despite a political climate that is highly anti-regulatory, at least five bills in

Congress addressed marketing to children. Communities, like Washington D.C., are taking on the video game industry by introducing bills that would make it illegal to sell or rent video games rated for people 18 and over to younger children. School boards around the country are kicking out Coke and Pepsi. The Progressive movement should be taking a lead in these struggles. The health of our children and our democracy are at stake.

*Susan Linn is the author of Consuming Kids: The Hostile Takeover of Childhood.*

## YES

*continued from page 9*

build March 19-20 have already begun at Northeastern (Northeastern Campuses Against War and Racism), University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston University, Tufts University, Harvard University, and Framingham State College.

Potential for campus action was already shown December 4, when a hastily formed coalition of campus groups built a march of several hundred in downtown Boston. A tour by Iraq Veterans Against the War in January and February has

drawn unexpectedly large audiences. An antiwar event at Faneuil Hall January 29, featuring Ralph Nader, Howard Zinn, and Patti Smith drew four hundred attendees. A sizable united action is expected March 20, the anniversary weekend of the 2003 invasion.

The Boston March 20 coalition has decided, without controversy, to advocate the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq as its central demand, based on the principle of self-determination or "Iraq for the Iraqis."

Sen. Edward Kennedy has recently spoken strongly in favor of an immediate par-

tial withdrawal of troops and a phased withdrawal of all troops by the start of 2006. Undoubtedly many participants in March 19-20 will have similar views or will advocate United Nations intervention in Iraq. While their participation will build the antiwar movement, any position short of immediate withdrawal tends to undermine the basis for antiwar activity by denying the Iraqis' democratic right of self-determination.

*David Keil is a participant in activities building March 19-20 and a former co-editor of the Yankee Radical.*

## NO

*continued from page 9*

"shock therapy" on the economy before a single Iraqi vote had been cast: massive firings from the state run sector, unrestricted imports, slashing corporate taxes and other policies which amounted to serving up Iraq to foreign investors.

Aside from violating the Geneva Conventions (1949) and Hague Regulations (1907) which attempt to limit the economic looting of occupying powers over countries they temporarily control, these edicts have helped to bankrupt local businesses, drive unemployment to astronomical levels and generally alienate the population. Klein connects the rising US military casualty rate with the onset of Bremer's policies. And she notes that, although those policies were intended for their benefit, foreign investors are now increasingly reluctant to invest: "In trying to design the best place in the world to do business, the neo cons have managed to create the worst; the most eloquent indictment yet of the grinding logic behind deregulated free markets."

So the Iraqis are faced with an attempted neo-colonial economic takeover by their erstwhile liberators, although in the trappings of a new democracy. What about the resistance?

Here it's best to be cautious. But numerous journalistic accounts describe the armed resistance as dominated by organized Baathist remnants, or other other Sunnis who fear the end of their minority domination of the Iraqi state; jihadi cells foreign and domestic, especially of the arch-reactionary Wahabi sect, and criminal gangs. Meaning,

in other words, a return to the brutal dictatorship of the 1980s and 1990s, or Taliban-like religious fanaticism, or general social disintegration. What an alternative!

With opposition to the election like this it's no wonder that, except for the Sunnis (who comprise only 20% of the Iraq population) reportedly every significant political-religious-ethnic grouping and almost every insignificant one endorsed the recent vote, however much it was disdained by much of the anti-war movement. That election, flawed as it was, had a turnout surpassing most US presidential contests despite armed attacks and Sunni abstentions.

Part of the reason for the peace movement's attitude toward the Iraq elections may be that they buy into the Bush line that election turnout equals agreement with US policy goals. This is true up to a point with the Kurds, who have been understandably "pro US" since a protective no fly zone over Iraqi Kurdistan was implemented to compensate for former President Bush's betrayal of the popular uprising following Iraq's defeat in Gulf War 1.

But opinion polls consistently show that, although most Iraqis are glad Saddam Hussein is gone, they believe the US invaded for reasons of its own self interest, not theirs. And their opinion of the occupiers has actually declined during the two years of the occupation. It seems clear that, after taking a look at "the Resistance," this same majority decided they'd rather take their chances with elections, thank you, but not necessarily to give the US permanent military bases, or give up their natural resources at fire sale prices, or support, say, a new war with Syria.

Leftists who opposed the Iraqi elections

do so in the name of anti imperialism and self determination. Some use the same arguments in support of the resistance. But as we've just seen, the majority of Iraqis reject this form of "self determination," which means it's not self determination at all.

And that brings up another issue. Opinion polls also show most Iraqis want the US to leave ASAP, but only when someone else (transitional peacekeeping forces or Iraqis themselves) can protect them from the resistance and prospects of civil war. And here there seems to be a sharp division between the left in Iraq and the peace movement outside.

The Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) is the largest grouping of the newly organized labor movement; the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) is the largest left political force, tracing its checkered history back to the 1930s. Whatever remains of the ICP's "Communism" in 2005, it did (eventually) break with Saddam Hussein, at horrendous cost; it opposed the US invasion, opposes the fundamentalists and supports rights for women.

Judging by the internet a number of leftists are quite put out by both ICTU and the ICP for their positions on the elections (seen as collaboration) and opposition to immediate unilateral withdrawal (ditto). Of course, there is one significant difference in their situations which might explain the conflicting viewpoints — in Iraq their lives are at stake.

Perhaps we might consider the views of these embattled comrades as we formulate our own.

*Mike Pattberg is Chair of Boston DSA and editor of the Yankee Radical.*

# Campaign for Peace and Democracy Condemns Attacks on Iraqi Trade Unionists

We, who opposed the U.S.-led war on Iraq and who call for an immediate end to the occupation of that country, are appalled by the torture and assassination in Baghdad on January 4, 2005, of Hadi Salih, International Officer of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU). There are also disturbing reports of intimidation, death threats and murders targeting other IFTU members, trade unionists in general, and political activists.

We utterly condemn the assassination of Hadi Salih. We call upon all sides in the conflict in Iraq to respect the rights of non-combatants as required by international law and to recognize the rights of workers to organize freely, without threat or harm, in trade unions of their own choosing in accordance with International Labor Organization (ILO) standards.

We believe that the physical targeting of trade unionists is in no way politically or morally acceptable, even though we disagree strongly with the IFTU's support of UN Resolution 1546, which supports the U.S. military presence in Iraq. This resolution has been used by the Bush Administration to justify keeping U.S. troops in the country.

We also oppose the victory of those elements of the resistance whose agenda is to impose a repressive, authoritarian regime on the Iraqi people, whether that regime is Baathist or theocratic-fundamentalist. We do not know whether such authoritarian elements have gained decisive control over the resistance to the U.S. forces and their Iraqi and international allies. We do know, however, that the continuing occupation of Iraq, which grows more brutal

with every passing day, only strengthens these elements, increases their influence over the resistance and makes their ultimate victory more likely.

We further oppose the occupation because it is part and parcel of an imperial U.S. foreign policy that shores up undemocratic regimes like those of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, gives one-sided support to Israel against the Palestinians, and promotes unjust, inequitable economic policies throughout the world. Not only in Iraq but throughout the Middle East and globally U.S. foreign and military policy either directly or indirectly subverts freedom and democracy.

*To sign on to this statement, or for further information about the issue, contact CPD at [cpd@igc.org](mailto:cpd@igc.org).*

---

## DSA NPC Resolution on Israel's Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza (excerpts)

Democratic socialists are appalled by the escalating violence in the Middle East, as two competing nationalist movements ratchet up the use of military power as the prime tool for resolving differences. The damage to civilians in life and property is incalculable, and the deepening hostilities are rapidly becoming a permanent source of war and brutality in the Holy Land. The fratricide must stop and differences resolved if there are to be just and egalitarian societies in Israel and Palestine. Whatever one's view of the origins of the conflict, the first steps toward peace can only come today when the Israeli and Palestinian communities renounce armed struggle and commit to live within two economically and strategically viable states. We do not say this as pacifists deploring wars in general, but as socialists understanding that the rights and security of both Israelis and Palestinians cannot be won through armed struggle, but through arbitrating legitimate grievances.

Since its founding in 1983, Democratic

Socialists of America has consistently held that peace would only come to the Middle East in a settlement that recognized both the Palestinian and Jewish people's right to self-determination. Thus we have consistently supported the Palestinian right to a sovereign state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as Israel's right to retain its character as a majority Jewish state, with full political and civil rights accorded to Palestinians and Jews, whether secular or religious, as well as to other national and religious minorities, without qualification. We reaffirm that commitment today.

DSA believes that the greatest barrier to peace is the Sharon government's efforts to de facto annex most of the occupied territories. The "wall" being built by the Israeli government is said to be a defense against terror attacks and protection for isolated, illegal and—in DSA's view—undesirable Israeli settlements, but its creation—whether purposeful or not—will divide Palestinian communities in a manner that precludes the creation of an independent

Palestinian state. The occupation also contributes to a profound sense of humiliation and resentment as Palestinians continue to live under the most dire conditions. The Israeli government's policy of administering collective punishment, including road blocks, military incursions, the demolition of homes and the wholesale closure of the territories, is self-defeating. By contributing to mass unemployment, economic destitution and homelessness, the policy only increases the pool of extremist recruits and threatens the viability of Palestinian communities.

DSA has forthrightly condemned suicide bombings and calls on the Palestinian Authority to do all within its power to stop them. But as long as Palestinian desires for self-determination are violently denied by the Israeli occupation, terrorist acts of desperation will continue. This analysis is in no way a justification for attacks on Israeli civilians or a vindication of the wisdom of Palestinian leadership, including its often-

*continued on page 12*

# DSA

*continued from page 11*

invoked rejectionism. That leadership has been negligent — if not criminally implicated — in the failure to bring peace and justice to the region. It is to say that the Israeli government, an American ally that talks in the name of the Enlightenment and of democratic values, has pursued for 37 years a ruinous policy of occupation, and one that must end.

Peace will also not be possible until the United States government stops framing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as part of the “war on terrorism,” as its roots lie not in some nihilistic global conspiracy but in denying self-determination to the Palestinians. Nor should the legitimate cause of Palestinian self-rule be left in the hands of Islamist religious extremists who use the cause to whip up anti-Jewish hatred or allowed to be exploited by authoritarian Arab regimes to deflect their own people’s attention away from their undemocratic homeland practices.

The Sharon government can pursue its

destructive policies only because the Bush administration (and both parties in the U.S. Congress) grants the Israeli administration a “blank check.” Despite the horrific Israeli occupation, no mainstream politicians have the courage or foresight to call for the end of U.S. military aid to Israel, a cessation that should last until Israel ends all illegal settlement activity and demonstrates a renewed willingness to trade land for peace...

The outline of a just peace settlement has been visible since the nearly successful secret talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 1995. In return for a just peace, there must be an abandonment of all Israeli settlements on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, except those that a peace treaty might exempt through a mutual exchange of territory. In addition, the capital of the Palestinian state must be sited in the Palestinian parts of Jerusalem, as the Palestine National Council argues. Finally, Israel must recognize its responsibility in the creation of the 1948 Palestinian refugees, as well as acknowledge that its majority Jewish character is predicated on the permanent displacement of hundreds of

thousands of Palestinians and their descendants. That clear-eyed understanding should be balanced by Arab acknowledgment that nearly an equal number of Jews were forced out of Arab lands—states in which they had lived peacefully for thousands of years—during and after the creation of the state of Israel. A just settlement to the Palestinian refugee question will involve limited resettlement of refugees within pre-1967 Israel, but mostly massive economic compensation paid for by Israel and the Western Nations that refused to absorb the Jewish refugees from the Holocaust.

Whatever the precise nature of a just two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, peace will remain elusive absent a balanced U.S. regional foreign policy. As a U.S.-based organization that supports a just two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, DSA is committed to alter the ruinous bipartisan policy of successive Washington administrations that facilitates Israel’s disastrous and self-defeating occupation of the Palestinian people.

Adopted Oct. 3, 2004

<i>Israel/Palestine</i>	<i>page 11</i>
<i>Iraq</i>	<i>pages 9-11</i>
<i>Guantanamo</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>SpongeBob SquarePants</i>	<i>page 7</i>
<i>Social Security</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Janitors' Struggle</i>	<i>page 5</i>
<i>Good-bye Gaiety</i>	<i>page 5</i>
<i>DSA Fund Appeal</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Wal-Mart Debate</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Special Election</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Short Takes</i>	<i>page 2</i>
<i>DSA Members Meeting</i>	<i>page 1</i>
<i>Schweickart Talk</i>	<i>page 1</i>

## INSIDE

*the yankee radical*  
 Institute for Democratic Socialism  
 P.O. Box 51356  
 Boston, MA 02205

Pre-Sorted  
 First Class Mail  
 US Postage PAID  
 Boston, MA  
 Permit #55482