



Workers of the World, Unite!

The MICHIGAN

# ***socialist***

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## Socialist Party USA: Outline of Principles

THE SOCIALIST PARTY strives to establish a radical democracy that places people's lives under their own control: where working people own and control the means of production and distribution, through democratically-controlled committees and assemblies; where full employment is realized for everyone who wants to work; where workers have the right to form unions freely, and to strike and engage in other forms of job actions; and where the production of society is used for the benefit of all humanity, not for the private profit of a few. We believe socialism and democracy are one and indivisible.

The Socialist Party fights for progressive changes compatible with a socialist future. We support union and electoral actions — independent of the capitalist-controlled two-party system — to present socialist alternatives. We strive for democratic revolutions — radical and fundamental changes in the structure and nature of economic, political and social relations — to abolish the power now exercised by the few who control the economy and the government.

The Socialist Party is a democratic, multi-tendency organization, with structure and practices visible and accessible to all members.

# party notes

## Drop all charges against Ben Burgis!

# Socialist charged for exercising rights

APRIL 26 — This morning, Ben Burgis, a supporter of the Socialist Party and candidate for Michigan State University Board of Trustees, was arraigned on charges of disorderly conduct and malicious destruction of property.

The charges stem from a protest held outside the East Lansing, Mich., recruiting station of the U.S. Marine Corps on March 1, in response to the "regime change" in Haiti, organized by the regime in Washington.

It is alleged that Burgis removed a Marine Corps poster from the wall and attempted to burn it. The poster, mass produced by the government, is valued at 10 cents.

Burgis was released on his own recognizance pending a pre-trial hearing on May 13.

Looking at the facts of the case, it is clear that the pressing of charges by the State of Michigan is politically motivated.

First of all, the Marine recruiter in charge stated in an interview to the *State News* that the protest was an "American right," implying that, in his opinion, what he saw take place was legal and well within the bounds

of the First Amendment.

(In fact, the Marine stood and watched the protest take place, and at no time raised any concern about illegal activity.)

Secondly, the first anyone heard of charges being pressed was the day before the national day of protest against the Iraq war on March 20, when a detective from the East Lansing Police Department had Burgis go down to the station and make a statement.

"The poster was just an excuse, something they could 'get someone on'," said Burgis. "The real issue was the entirely legal antiwar protest."

Burgis compared the charges to Robert Kennedy's famous line about prosecuting Mafia figures in the 1960s, that he would have them arrested for "spitting on the sidewalk" if that was all on which he could get them.

Socialist Party members will be showing up to support Burgis at his pre-trial hearing. If you are interested in helping with his defense, please contact the Michigan Socialist or the SPMI. ★

Martin Schreader

## Join the Socialist Party USA

### Annual Income Dues

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Send check or money order to 909 Walwood Ct., No. 2, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007.  
Or go online to <http://www.mi-socialists.org/join.html> and sign up.

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone (optional): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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The MICHIGAN SOCIALIST

## **lead article**

The real war of liberation has begun...

# All troops out now!

By **MARTIN SCHREADER**

Editor, the *Michigan Socialist*

A LITTLE OVER a year ago, the American capitalists and their supporters thought they had every reason to celebrate.

The invasion of Iraq and the toppling of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime were hailed in the media as an astounding success. Nearly all the political representatives of capitalism were triumphantly proclaiming "a new day" for Iraq and reveling in the belief that they brought "liberation" to the Iraqi people.

In the 12 months since, as the invasion became an occupation, ongoing resistance chipped away at both the patience and the image of the occupiers. As the numbers of wounded and killed in action reached into the hundreds, retaliation by occupation forces escalated.

By the end of 2003, the American occupiers, and their allies in the so-called "Coalition of the Willing," had begun to take their aggression and frustration out on Iraqi civilians. Reports began to surface of atroc-

ities and war crimes committed against civilians suspected of being "sympathizers" of the resistance forces.

Many of these acts of aggression were carried out against an emerging movement among the Shi'ite religious community in Baghdad and the southern region of the country. Iraqi Shi'ites, who had been a favored target of the Ba'athist regime due to their religious kinship with Iran, began to organize themselves into militia groups.

In March of this year, the American vice-roy in Iraq, Paul Bremer, ordered the closure of a small newspaper aimed at the Shi'a community in Baghdad's "Sadr City" neighborhood because, they claimed, the publication advocated violence against the occupiers (an unsubstantiated charge).

And then, all hell broke loose.

Within days of this act, Shi'ite militias throughout Baghdad and southern Iraq had mobilized for combat.

By the anniversary of the Americans' entrance into the Iraqi capital, these militias, now joined by hundreds of thousands of ordinary Iraqis of all religions and ethnicities,



**The lucky ones:** Young children made refugees by the presence of U.S. Marines around the Iraqi city of Fallujah. These children are forced to endure the weather and military guard dogs in order to wait for a time when they might be let back into their homes.

## Antiwar activist targeted by Grand Rapids police

By **BRIAN McAFEE**

The *Michigan Socialist*

IN THE MONTHS preceding and during Bush's war in Iraq last year the global and national protests included generally conservative and birthplace of Amway, western Michigan.

The cities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon and Holland, Mich., had regular weakly protests typically ranging in size from 30 to 200. Grand Rapids, the largest of the three, with about 200,000 in population, was spotlighted in the *Muskegon Chronicle* last week, in an article titled, "Police infiltrate peace rallies."

The article, written by Ted Roelof, exposes how the Grand Rapids Police Department "sent undercover police officers to an-

tiwar meetings and rallies, collecting intelligence about the aims of activists."

Throughout the protests, demonstrators have cited the lack of an evident link between the attacks of Sept. 11 and Iraq, and the silence and tacit approval of the U.S. when Saddam Hussein used poison gas in the Iran-Iraq war and against the Kurds in 1988.

Many demonstrators believe Bush's primary motives to be a move toward Middle East hegemony and control of the oil fields.

Demonstrator Abby Puls, 24, a Spanish interpreter at the Kent County Courthouse was singled out by undercover police officers and told she could be fired for "choosing sides."

She was also threatened with arrest for "hindering and opposing" police if she iden-

tified any of them.

Grand Rapids Police Chief Harry Dolan confirmed Puls' statement, saying he feared for his officers' safety at peace demonstrations.

Police conduct at anti-war rallies first surfaced in February in *Salon*, an online magazine, according to Roelof's article.

Grand Rapids City Commissioner Rick Tormala said of police conduct: "To monitor citizens and their activities when they are dissenting against the government is wrong."

"People have a right to assemble and say what they want."

From Vietnam to the present, there has never been any instance of violence perpetrated by protestors in western Michigan.

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had seized control of most major cities south and west of Baghdad, including Falluja, Najaf and Karbala.

In northern cities like Tikrit, Kut and Kirkuk, Sunni militias exchanged gunfire with U.S. Marines. In Baghdad itself, armed strikes and demonstrations by workers are coupled with skirmishes between militias and American occupation forces.

The isolated pockets of resistance have given way to a generalized mobilization of the people against the occupation. Even the newly minted Iraqi Army has collapsed, with significant sections of it joining with the militias or formally declaring neutrality.

The situation in Iraq today is nothing short of a war of national liberation against colonial occupation.

THE SPARK THAT lit this prairie fire was the series of moves against Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. The son of a revered Shi'a religious figure (for whom Sadr City is named), and a self-proclaimed direct descendant of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, al-Sadr has been one of the most out-

spoken opponents of the occupation.

The first act was the closure of al-Sadr's Baghdad newspaper, which, though small, was considered vital to the Shi'ite residents of Sadr City. The issuing of an arrest warrant for al-Sadr by the Coalition Provisional Authority, allegedly for the killing of a pro-American cleric shortly after the 2003 invasion, quickly followed.

When Shi'ite residents of Sadr City protested the arrest warrant and the closure of al-Sadr's newspaper, the occupiers responded with rocket attacks from Apache helicopters. Close to 40 people were killed, and over 100 were wounded.

The result was open rebellion; militias supportive of al-Sadr, organized as the Army of the Hidden Imam (the al-Mahdi), rapidly took power in several cities, including Najaf and Karbala. In many of the areas where the al-Mahdi took power, the local



Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, head of the al-Mahdi.

councils appointed by the occupiers simply handed over control without a struggle.

Iraqis of all ages, both men and women, have joined in the new struggle. Sunni and Shi'ite militias have formed working agreements to common strikes against the occupiers, and have found support in both the religious (Chaldean) and ethnic (Kurdish) minority communities.

For his part, al-Sadr sought to appeal to the people of the United States for support and assistance: "I call upon the American people to stand beside your brothers and sisters, the Iraqi people, who are suffering an injustice by your rulers and the occupying army, and to help them in the transfer of power to honest Iraqis."

This statement alone explodes the myth created by Washington — that all those opposing the occupation of Iraq are, at once, "anti-American" and akin to former CIA agent-turned-terrorist leader, Osama bin Laden.

Al-Sadr's call quite clearly (and quite correctly) makes a distinction between the people of the U.S. and the regime of George

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## 'The people of Iraq are not the enemy'

*The following is excerpted from a statement by Ben Burgis, Chairperson of the Military Outreach Commission of the Socialist Party of Michigan.*

*The full text is available at the SPMI's website — [www.mi-socialists.org](http://www.mi-socialists.org).*

IN THE LAST few days, the long-term trend of armed resistance by individuals and small groups of Iraqis against their foreign conquerors has exploded into an outright, mass-based popular uprising....

A full transfer of power to a provisional government formed by the rebels and empowered to organize direct elections to a constitutional convention could be secured within days, and there is no logistical reason why the full, orderly withdrawal of American and "coalition" soldiers from Iraq (protected by the surrender agreement) would have to take longer than the three weeks it took them to drive to Baghdad (through heavy fighting) in the first place....

The movement's message to those troops stationed in Iraq should be terribly simple: Unlike Bush and his accomplices, we truly support you; we believe that your blood is worth more than Iraq's oil. Lay down your arms!

Camp out in your bases and refuse to go on patrol. Refuse to fire on crowds of Iraqis who want what we in America ourselves gained by force of arms in the 18th century — independence from foreign rule. The people of Iraq are not your enemy.

The people who sent you off to die for the sake of oil profits, regional control and 'reconstruction contracts' are the enemy, in Iraq no less than in shop floor struggles for better wages and working conditions back home.

Being a soldier does not make you less a citizen entitled to equal protection under the law.

According to the U.S. Constitution and foreign treaties signed by the United States government, thereby becoming supreme law according to that Constitution, you have no legal obligation to follow immoral, illegal orders to fight in Bush's dirty war of counterinsurgency.

Your efforts in Iraq and ours in the United States, combined with the ongoing uprising of the Iraqis to emancipate themselves, can result in an American withdrawal, so that the Iraqi people can have national independence and free elections.

When that happens, you can come home and help us settle accounts with the unelected administration that sent you to Iraq in the first place and is openly planning to steal the next election through the privatization of vote-counting into the hands of GOP-friendly corporations — with an "opposition" party that acts as a knowing accomplice to that administration's crimes — with the unelected media barons who monopolize our public airwaves to spread that administration's lies and with the unelected aristocracy of corporate executives and stockholders on whose behalf the war is being fought.

You need to come home and join us in fighting for the same things for this country that the Iraqis want for Iraq, in a movement for civil rights and free elections in the United States of America. ★

# The dialectics of neoconservatism

## From the Old Left to the New Right

By **MATT ERARD**

*The Michigan Socialist*

SINCE THE BUILD-UP to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the term, "necon" has become somewhat of a household word.

Generally it is attributed to those who advocate the principle positions of the Bush regime: unilaterally engaging in wars of conquest, skyrocketing increases in corporate welfare and the military budget, and gutting essential social services that benefit the poor and working-class while spending without any regard to the deficit.

To fully understand the Bush doctrine, however, it is essential to understand that the philosophy of neoconservatism is far deeper than the whims of a foolish president to keep his corporate donors happy and ensure his re-election.

Despite their frequent tactical errors and political setbacks, the neocons represent the most calculated and determined political current we have seen on the American Right since the time of Kissinger, albeit far more dangerous.

What is most surprising, although not most shocking, about the philosophy of neoconservatism is its origins. The first generation of neocons has their roots not in the older waves of American conservatism, but in the opposite movement to the one the name of their philosophy would suggest.

Those who now lead the American New Right began on the American Old Left.

Many of the most powerful and prominent neocons today began their political careers in the Socialist Party, Socialist Party youth branch: the Young Peoples Socialist League, and Socialist Party splinter group, Social Democrats USA.

Such figures include Special Assistant to the President Elliot Abrams, State Department appointee Pen Kemble, National Endowment for Democracy Chairman Carl Gershman, leading necon author, Joshua Muravchik, former foreign policy adviser under Reagan, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, and Bush's original appointee for Secretary of Labor, Linda Chavez.

Non-members such as Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, member and former chairman of the Defense Policy Board Richard Perle, and Defense Policy Board member William Kristol were also well connected to the same political current within these organizations.

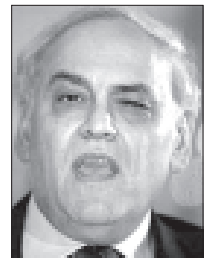
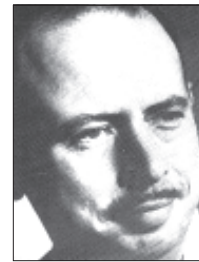
NEARLY ALL OF these figures came into Socialist Party or one of its affiliates during one of the party's most regressive and divisive periods.

In 1958, the Socialist Party merged with the Independent Socialist League, a "Trotskyist" group led by Max Shachtman.

Not long beforehand, Shachtman, a former "Trotskyist" himself, had drastically shifted his viewpoint on Communist movements around the world, acquiring a "Third Camp" ideology of equal opposition to both American capitalism and ("foreign") "Communism."

Bent on using the ISL merger to take control of the Socialist Party, Shachtman advocated what was often referred to as "realignment strategy," in which socialists should attempt to realign with and subsequently transform the Democratic Party while concealing their socialist identities.

As both support and resistance toward realignment strategy in the Socialist Party increased, Shachtman's philosophical and



**Necon Rogue's Gallery** (from top to bottom, left to right): Max Shachtman; Jeanne Kirkpatrick; Paul Wolfowitz; Richard Perle; Elliot Abrams; William Kristol; Linda Chavez; Carl Gershman.

programmatic drift to the rightwing followed.

Shachtman revised his previous “Third Camp” ideology to a new perspective that American capitalism was incomparably superior to “Communism” and should be supported accordingly.

By 1972, Shachtman and his supporters had gained a majority in the Socialist Party and consequently blocked a resolution opposing the Vietnam War. Soon after, the Shachtmanites launched Social Democrats USA as a new organization to further his strategy of realignment.

Among Shachtman’s most ardent supporters were the young Socialist Party and SDUSA members who would shape the future of the neoconservative ideology.

Bypassing the New Left movement altogether and trading their Old Left revolutionary zeal for placatory liberalism, many of the young future neocons were attracted to the arch-Zionist and Cold Warrior Democratic Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson, whose hawkish views made pivotal contributions to the neocons’ perspective.

Crediting Jackson alone, however, for bridging the gap between the neocons post-Schachtmanite liberalism and the philosophy they subscribe to today would be a grave inaccuracy without noting the crucial influence on nearly all neocons from a University of Chicago professor by the name of Leo Strauss.

STRAUSS WAS KNOWN for his philosophy based on the “politics of deception,” primarily influenced by the philosophies of Niccolo Machiavelli, Friedrich Nietzsche, existentialist and Nazi philosopher Martin Heidegger, and Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt.

The chief tenants of Straussian philosophy are aggressive nationalism, the absence of moral truth, intensive secrecy and “perpetual deception” between rulers and the ruled, appeals to religion as a means of controlling the masses, and support for an aristocratic elite.

According to Straussian analyst and University of Calgary political science professor Shadia Drury, Strauss believed that “those who are fit to rule are those who realize there is no morality and there is only one natural right — the right of the superior to rule over the inferior.”

It was the influence of Leo Strauss combined with other pre-neoconservative thinkers such as Norman Podhoretz and Ir-



**Among friends: Leo Strauss (top) and Martin Heidegger were prominent supporters of the German Nazis before going on to become the philosophical leaders of the neoconservatives. Heidegger regularly held parties where he invited prominent Nazis to socialize and meet.**

ving Kristol that led the former Shachtmanite bloc of neocons to become ideologically linked with other, now-prominent Straussian adherents: Attorney General John Ashcroft, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, Office of National Drug Control Policy Director William J. Bennett and former Vice-President Dan Quayle.

Straussian influence today has not only developed a chokehold on the White House, State Department, Justice Department and the Pentagon, but has also permeated through educational institutions with an increasing level of influence over modern-day academics.

Neocons represent the only major segment of contemporary conservatism of which the vast majority of its adherents have post-graduate degrees.

The website *Straussian.Net* lists over 200 professors in universities across the United States that it claims subscribe to the philosophy of Leo Strauss.

Straussian and neoconservative professors have had most success in political science departments, in which they are coming increasingly close to making the discipline their own, as Marxists have accomplished to some extent with sociology and right-libertarians have accomplished with economics.

Much of Straussian influence among modern day academics during the past decade can be attributed to the best-selling book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, written by Straussian disciple Allan Bloom in 1988.

The book, in which Bloom directly ref-

erences his teacher only once, was a source of regular outcry in the early nineties due to its influential role in censorship policies and restrictions on academic freedom.

ALTHOUGH ANY remnants of socialist principles among today’s leading neocons have diminished entirely, what they have retained from their “Trotskyist” backgrounds is the underlying Marxian philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism — viewing class as the predominant factor in politics and economics, and the class struggle as the predominant basis of history.

What the Straussian influence has resulted in, however, is a fundamental inverse in Marxian principle — i.e., no longer viewing class struggle from the perspective of the working class, but rather from the viewpoint of the bourgeoisie.

It is this very reason that we hear such unprecedented comments in the media from the Bush regime such as casually dismissing critical responses to Bush’s tax cuts as attempts at “class-war.”

For those familiar with the Marxian and “Trotskyist” view of capitalism’s progression, it need not be stated that such an inverse approach to Marxian philosophy by those in power would result in a refined and developed approach to imperialism based on an awareness of the near inevitability of capitalism’s eventual collapse.

Not only would such a form of imperialism be more overt than imperialistic endeavors in the past century, it would contain a more holistic understanding of the histori-

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# The anointed one

## The political significance of John Kerry

By **L. MEYERS**

*The Michigan Socialist*

BARRING SOME major catastrophe, it is obvious that the Democratic candidate for president will be Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts.

When the race for the Democratic nomination began, Kerry was seen as someone with little chance of winning.

Indeed, until the Iowa caucuses in January, it looked like the junior senator was ready to pack up and go home.

But then, something happened.

As the situation in Iraq began to worsen for the American ruling class, millions of angry citizens began flocking to the perceived "outsider" candidates in the race — specifically former Governor Howard Dean and retired General Wesley Clark.

The capitalists watched in worried fascination at the grassroots network built by Dean's populist movement.

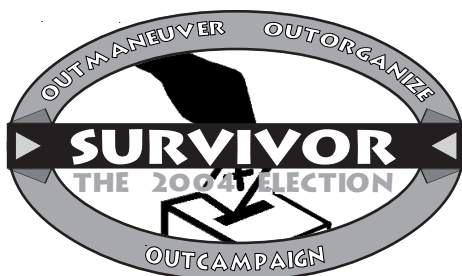
They really began sweating when Dean increasingly took an antiwar line.

Meanwhile, the more "hawkish" candidates — senators Joe Lieberman and John Edwards — were languishing in the polls. Something had to be done to offset the success of the "outsiders."

Enter John Kerry ... and the ruling faction of the Democrats, the Democratic Leadership Council.

Together with their friends in the media industry, the DLC began spinning the line that Kerry was the most "electable" candidate.

That is, he was the one who could defeat George W. Bush and his Republican regime



in the 2004 election.

That line tapped into a more generalized sentiment among many Americans, regardless of political affiliation.

Coupled with the DLC-contrived "Anybody But Bush" movement among Democratic activists, the tide began to shift.

The anger and resentment (and fear!) millions of Americans feel toward the Bush regime, combined with a media smear job on "unacceptable" Democratic candidates, tipped the scales back in favor of the DLC and its stable of candidates.

The end of Iowa caucuses saw Kerry as the "comeback kid" (a line made famous by another DLC creature, Bill Clinton).

By "Super Tuesday," it was already clear that he would go into the 2004 Democratic National Convention with the majority of delegates.

The job is done. Kerry is the Democratic nominee. But what does this mean for the election?

More importantly, what does Kerry's selection mean for working people looking for an end to the Bush regime?

THE BEST PLACE to start in answering those questions is with Kerry himself. Who is he? Why did the DLC leadership do ev-

everything it could to make sure he won the nomination?

Kerry first came to public attention in the early 1970s, when he became a leading voice for antiwar veterans of the Vietnam War.

As a founding member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Kerry was featured at rallies and demonstrations calling for the unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Southeast Asia.

But this is only one part of Kerry's history — a side he has all but repudiated recently. To know the real John Kerry, it is necessary to look at what happened before and after this period in his life.

John Kerry is, quite literally, a child of the capitalist machine.

His father, Richard Kerry, was a longtime government operative, working for the State Department in Europe during the post-WWII years under the tutelage of such icons in the capitalist foreign policy milieu as George Kennan and George Ball.

John Kerry grew up for the most part in European boarding schools, and later attended Yale University.

During his time at Yale, Kerry was a member of both the Young Democrats (in his freshman year) and Young Republicans (in his senior year).

He was also a member of the secret, tight-knit fraternity known as "Skull and Bones." One of Kerry's more famous fraternity "brothers" is George W. Bush, his alleged opponent in the November election.

After graduating from Yale, Kerry volunteered to command a Navy Swift Boat in Vietnam and earned a number of medals and



## feature

decorations for his service, including three Purple Hearts for being wounded in combat.

When he returned home, Kerry, at the urging of his father, became an outspoken critic of the Vietnam War.

As a leader of VVAW, he addressed a Congressional hearing about the conditions of soldiers in the region.

After the end of the Vietnam antiwar movement, Kerry graduated from law school and became a district attorney.

In 1982, he was elected Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts; two years later, Kerry was elected to the U.S. Senate.

Kerry could quite rightly be described as one of the first neoliberals to be elected to Congress.

During his 16 years in the Senate, Kerry was well known for breaking with his party caucus and voting with Republicans on a number of issues.

Kerry was one of the first to embrace the DLC/"New Democrat" agenda of fiscal conservatism and "welfare reform," foreshadowing the Clinton years.

During the 1990s, Kerry voted for a number of bills aimed at destroying the social safety net, strengthening the prison industry and eroding public education.

In January 2001, when Congress had the ability to place the systematic disenfranchisement of African American voters in Florida under the microscope, potentially

affecting the outcome of the presidential election, Kerry chose to not support his colleagues from the House who were calling for a Congressional review.

After the events of September 11, 2001, Kerry — following the lead of the capitalist class — moved increasingly to the right, voting for the USA-PATRIOT Act, the Dept. of Homeland Security and the resolution authorizing the invasion of Iraq.

THE DEVELOPMENT of John Kerry closely parallels that of a key section of the middle class, which entered into the New Left and now resides in the New Right.

Like many, Kerry participated in the relatively moderate wing of the antiwar movement. After the ebb in political struggle that took place in the 1970s, he, like so many others, made peace with capitalism and entered the Democratic Party.

At this point, his class background and relative closeness to the state apparatus began moving him closer and closer politically to the views of a section of the ruling class looking for a way out of the stalemate between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union.

Even while Kerry was visiting Sandinista government officials in Nicaragua and being critical of then-President Reagan's imperialist adventure in Latin America, he was favoring measures that would accomplish the same ends that the Republicans sought — albeit with different means.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Kerry became one of the more outspoken "New Democrats," acting as a solid supporter of Clinton's DLC-approved agenda of "ending welfare as we know it," expanding the death penalty and restricting democratic rights.

This development as a neoliberal was a parallel to what many saw in the rise of the neoconservative movement, which took place at the same time (see article, page 5).

As the neoconservatives won control of the Republican Party in the late 1980s and early 1990s, so too did the neoliberals — sometimes in alliance with old conservatives who defected — take over the Democratic Party, edging the old liberal/social-democratic alliance out of leadership.

As the 21st century opened, these two central currents of capitalist political

thought began to draw ever closer. What Bush then called "a difference of opinion, not principle" is now even less than that.

Today, the differences between Bush and Kerry are mere matters of method — the means to reach shared goals.

This is a reflection of the developing consensus among the capitalist class that they can no longer go on governing in the old, formally democratic way.

ON MATTERS OF international policy, Bush and Kerry are virtually indistinguishable. The differences that one attempts to see between them are either "spin" or illusion.

For example, supporters are quick to point out that Kerry is openly calling for a "multilateral" occupation of Iraq, via the United Nations, as opposed to Bush's relatively unilateral stance.

However, this ignores the fact that the Bush regime has been negotiating a new UN Security Council resolution that would provide for precisely the kind of "multilateralism" that Kerry advocates — including the continued presence of U.S. occupation troops.

On the situation in Israel/Palestine, both Kerry and Bush have lent their support for Ariel Sharon's "disengagement" and illegal land grab in the West Bank, which will cut in half the territory of the bantustan "Palestinian Authority" and leave Israel in possession of all vital natural resources in the region.

Both Bush and Kerry have supported the ongoing attempts by Venezuelan capitalists to overthrow the democratically-elected Bolivarian government of Hugo Chavez.

As well, Kerry supported the U.S.-imposed "regime change" in Haiti last February.

It is only in regards to relations with the European Union where any divergence between Bush and Kerry can be seen. Kerry is not as bellicose toward Europe as Bush has been; but that seems to have more to do with Kerry's upbringing than anything related to policy.

Domestically, there has also been a growing convergence between Bush and Kerry.

Both of them strongly support the use of tax cuts for the rich — billed as being for the "middle class" — and the shifting of the



**Not a representative, but a member: John Kerry with his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, heiress to the Heinz Co. fortune.**



JOHN FORBES KERRY. Born December 11, 1943, in Denver, Colorado, son of Richard John Kerry, '37, and Rosemary Forbes Kerry. Prepared at St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H. Entered Yale, September, 1962. Political Science Major; won Parker Dickson Buck-Schuyler B. Jackson Prize (oratory), 1964; Henry James Tenney Prize (oratory), 1965; and Thacher Memorial Debating Contest, 1964 and 1965. Member: Jonathan Edwards

Legislature, 1962-63, treasurer, 1963-64; Yale Young Republicans, 1965-66; Freshman hockey

president, Thacher Literary Society, 1962-63; chairman, 1963-64; Yale Debating Association, 1962-66; Yale Young Democrats, 1962-63, treasurer, 1962-63; Conn. Intercollegiate State Legislature, 1962-65, treasurer, 1963-64; Yale Young Republicans, 1965-66; Freshman hockey (numerals); J. V. hockey, 1963-66; J. V. lacrosse, 1966; Varsity soccer, 1963-65 (major "Y"; 1965). Roommates: H. H. Bundy III, D. P. Barbiero. Future study: law. Address: Indian Hill Road, Groton, Mass.

**Who is John Kerry? According to his Yale Yearbook, he's a former Young Republican. Go figure.**

tax burden on to the backs of working people.

Both of them support the extension of the USA-PATRIOT Act, which has systematically stripped American citizens of their democratic rights, and the Dept. of Homeland Security.

One area where Kerry makes Bush seem more "moderate" is on the question of mandatory service — the draft. Kerry has openly supported mandatory service, while Bush has remained relatively silent.

Two major areas where Kerry supporters like to point out that their candidate is different from Bush are on the issues of abortion rights and federal judges.

On abortion, Kerry says he is pro-choice. However, on those issues where anti-choice forces have been staging their struggle to eliminate a woman's right, he has generally sided with them — in spirit, if not in fact.

For example, when the Senate voted on the so-called "partial birth abortion" ban in 2003, Kerry skipped the vote and then later stated that his only opposition was that it did not allow for exceptions in the case of the woman's life being in danger.

Kerry has gone on record saying he will only appoint federal judges. However, unless he has a Democratic Senate, the chances of him making good on his word is slim.

One of the major issues so far this year has been the question of gay marriage.

Both Bush and Kerry oppose extending the rights guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution to same-sex couples.

Unlike Bush, but like many Republicans in Congress, Kerry does support civil unions (which hold no weight and may or may not

be honored).

SO WHERE DOES all of this leave us, the American voter?

The two major candidates are virtually identical in their political positions. While the tone and form may differ, the fact and content remains frighteningly the same.

The only real motivation the people have to vote for John Kerry is the fact that he is not George W. Bush.

However, on all the issues that are most important to people — especially working people — at this time, they are almost indistinguishable.

This brings us back to the ugly truth behind the concept of "Anybody But Bush."

The reality is that, as long as the capitalists have a tight grip on the political system, it will be their desires that are fulfilled — their interests that are represented.

The reason that U.S. soldiers are occupying Iraq today is not simply because of Bush, Cheney or even the Project for the New American Century.

Rather, they are acting in the interests of the capitalists, and cannot do otherwise.

Should Kerry be selected to be president in November, he too will maintain troops overseas, invade and occupy relatively defenseless countries, suppress democratic rights at home and wage his own "class warfare" against working people.

"Anybody But Bush" may be a good slogan to use for rallying the Democratic faith-

ful, and those scared or angry at the Bush regime, but it does nothing to affect the underlying cause — capitalism.

To put it another way: this country's present belligerence toward the rest of the world does not reflect the views of some "evil" occupants of the White House and Congress; it reflects the nature of capitalism and its desire to exploit the world.

THIS IS WHY THE Socialist Party chooses to run its own candidates, on its own anti-capitalist platform, in elections.

We seek to offer a voice for those who are locked out of the two-party system, and wish to see a better world emerge from the wreckage we call our modern society.

After all, why should working people, who make up nearly two-thirds of the U.S. population, be coerced into continuously electing members of the capitalist class (which is less than 5 percent of the population) and its agents?

This November, we are being offered the chance to vote for either a billionaire capitalist or a billionaire capitalist — a pro-war, pro-occupation hawk or a pro-war, pro-occupation hawk — a sneering opponent of democratic rights or a smirking opponent of democratic rights.

Because of this, many people will "vote with their feet" and stay home, feeling that no real choice is being offered.

But, there is another way. There is another option. ★

**Birds of a feather...:  
John Kerry and Sen.  
Joe Lieberman  
campaign together in  
Florida. Kerry's open  
embrace of the  
capitalists' agenda of  
endless war and  
repression, which  
Lieberman cam-  
paigned on during  
the primaries, has  
strengthened the  
bond between them.**



# Neocons

*continued from page 6*

cal climate surrounding the exploitation of the world's population and resources in pursuit of profit, as well as the revolutionary and international potential of the working-class to resist.

The internationalist perspective from the neocons' Marxian and "Trotskyist" influence coupled with the nationalist perspective from their Straussian influence provides a rather interesting and paradoxical combination within their viewpoint.

Understanding the potential revolutionary response to unprecedented levels of imperialism by an internationally unified working class and the setbacks in potential gains that a paralleled international unification of the ruling class would cause, the neocons have determined that the most appropriate response is to move rapidly forward in controlling the markets of other wealthy capitalist countries in addition to those in poorer countries.

Through this strategy, their gains are no longer solely economic, but also political, serving as a centralized shield against polit-

ical insurrection.

Such a strategy was exemplified by the compelling need to go to war with Iraq.

Not only does Iraq sit in the heart of the only region of the world that the United States has not been relatively successful in controlling through economic institutions such as the WTO, IMF, and World Bank, it will also likely grant the United States the ability to control the oil markets of its capitalist former allies in Europe who are substantially more dependent than the U.S. on Middle Eastern oil.

BUILDING UPON THE models set by former presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, the neocons aim to fully establish a unipolar world in which the U.S. has military superiority over, not only every other country, but all other countries combined.

The 1991 and 2003 invasions of Iraq have been used as cases in point for a world in which other countries have no choice but to either give the green light to the U.S. for all of its military pursuits while pretending that a semblance of international law still exists or to challenge the U.S. politically and later pay the consequences as U.S. mil-

itary strength is flexed and unleashed without regard.

Cheney's frequent proclamations that the "War on Terror" will continue indefinitely across generations is an inversion of Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution into a well-derived theory of permanent imperialism and inexhaustible nationalism. In organizational form, the neocons of today are best represented by the right-wing think tank, Project for the New American Century.

PNAC, currently chaired by the son of former Young People's Socialist League member Irving Kristol, was founded in 1997 by such prominent neocons as Abrams, Bennett, Podhoretz, Quayle and Wolfowitz, as well as Vice President Dick Cheney, former presidential candidate Steve Forbes, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and George W. Bush's brother, Jeb Bush.

The stated mission of PNAC is "American global leadership [read: domination]."

The front of their webpage, which displays a map of the world allowing the viewer to click on any region to see PNAC's plan for it, also links to PNAC's statement of principles, a document calling for massive increases in defense spending and a foreign policy based on American leadership and interests abroad.

The organization receives much of its funding from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, a foundation established under the principle of absolute employers' control, after the business of its founders was forced to recognize unions, hire African Americans, and pay its female employees as much as it paid to males. With over half a billion in assets, it is arguably the most powerful rightwing foundation in the country.

PNAC received some media attention after the Iraq War when it was discovered that the organization sent an openly published letter to Bill Clinton in 1997 calling for the invasion of Iraq and citing Saddam Hussein being a significant threat to the world's supply of oil as a justification.

PNAC's most telling documents can be found on its "Publications and Reports" page, in particular its document titled "Rebuilding America's Defenses," which has often been perceived to be a blueprint for the foreign policy of the Bush regime.

The document, published in September 2000, calls for fighting and decisively winning simultaneous theater wars around the world, states that increasing U.S. forces in

## March for Women's Lives



On April 25, 2004, well over 1 million supporters of a woman's right to choose assembled on the Mall (left) in Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Women's Lives. Many came to Washington to tell the Bush regime that a woman's right to have an abortion will be defended and protected. Members of the Socialist Party USA (above, inset) participated in the March, under the banner slogan "Pro-Choice and Anti-Capitalist."

the Gulf transcends the issue of the Saddam Hussein regime (which serves only as an immediate justification for doing so), calls for complete control of space and cyberspace, calls for the establishment of a world-wide command and control system for ballistic missiles, and says that this “process of transformation ... is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event — like a new Pearl Harbor.”

From the parts of this document that have already been accomplished by the Bush regime since its publication, it is very clear that September 11, 2001, was that catastrophic and catalyzing event.

The extent to which political setbacks and world-wide resistance to Bush's wars will stall this “process of transformation” remains to be seen.

DESPITE THE DEGREE of danger that the neocons present to the world, to believe that simply voting the neocons out of office and replacing them with Democrats is a fatal mistake.

The neocons have not risen to power from their level of political savvy, but rather from material conditions that capitalism has created in the world.

The neocons represent a level of crisis in the profit system in which intensified im-

perialism is essential for expanding to new markets and maximizing profits.

This crisis is not a result of the capitalist system's miscalculated errors, but rather its natural development. This new wave of imperialism is also a response to the collapse of the Soviet Union, a once great impediment to U.S. unipolarity.

The Democratic Party does not remain unaffected by this stage of capitalism. Democratic presidential front runner John Kerry, a supporter of the U.S. occupation of Iraq who also voted for many of Bush's most loathsome proposals including both wars and the USA-PATRIOT Act, is a member of the “New Democrats,” formally known as the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC).

The “New Democrats” represent a similar faction in the Democratic Party to Tony Blair's “New Labour” faction in the British Labour Party. The temporal proximity of these two movements across national boundaries is no coincidence.

Both represent historically mainstream liberal parties moving in accordance with worldwide political and economic change and embracing a rightward, more anti-labor and pro-military-interventionist shift.

The DLC has established its own equivalent to the Project for the New American

Century, called the Progressive Policy Institute, an official DLC-sponsored think-tank advocating the establishment of a “third way” that embraces the “new economy” and moves beyond the “left-right debate.”

While sharing a more subtle contempt for workers' rights in the domestic sphere, the PPI fundamentally differs from PNAC by advocating a more multilateral approach to imperialism, an approach in which the United States cooperates with rather than subverts its Great Power capitalist allies.

The un-televised debate between the “New Democratic” and neoconservative segments of the ruling class this election year will primarily surround the issue of the extent and current method to which we engage in the “process of transformation” that PNAC has laid out.

It will be a debate over how much to stall this process and the degree to which older methods of conquest both at home and abroad will be used in relation to newer ones.

Regardless of which faction wins the White House in 2004, it is only workers' internationalism and the transformation from capitalism to democratic socialism that can permanently resist this process.

The stakes only get higher with time. ★

## Iraq

*continued from page 4*

W. Bush. He regards (again, quite correctly) the people of the United States and the people of Iraq to be “brothers [and sisters].”

This is a far cry from the reactionary religious fundamentalism commonly associated with al-Qa'ida and similar groups, which see no difference between the people and the government of a given country.

Such a distinction not only displays a kind of nuance and sophistication that is notably absent from the proclamations of the capitalist politicians in Washington, it also reflects an often-ignored reality within the U.S. itself.

FOR THE LAST 12 months, the people of this country have sat in shocked silence as the Bush regime has devastated one of the oldest civilizations on earth.

From the “shock and awe” attacks of the early days to the violent suppression of protests and torturing of innocent civilians, we

have watched the destruction of an entire people for the benefit of corporate donors to Bush and his Republican Party.

The combined power and influence of the government, media and ruling class have sought to either win over or silence Americans into supporting the war.

However, these efforts have only partially worked; mass antiwar demonstrations still occur with regularity, involving tens of thousands of people.

As a result, the capitalists have to spend more time dealing with the domestic situation (i.e., the antiwar movement), instead of securing their interests in Iraq (which includes brutally and violently suppressing the anti-occupation movement).

Many of them thought that the victory of John Kerry in the race for the Democratic nomination would be enough to keep those who dissent in line (see article, page 6). However, with the outbreak of the national liberation struggle in Iraq, the situation has once again went “out of control” of the ruling class.

There is now open talk of how long it

will be before Bush's proclamation that “all necessary force” will be used to suppress the national liberation struggle leads to the use of nuclear weapons.

For working people still caught in the grips of war propaganda and patriotism, the main concern seems to be how best to “save face.” That is, they are concerned about how to best end this situation without opening the people of this country to another attack on the scale of what happened on September 11, 2001.

While it is understandable that most people do not want to see another wanton attack on innocent civilians, most of whom really do not support the program of endless wars of conquest, the fact is that such “vulnerability” exists now because of the government's agenda of war and repression.

The continued occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, combined with uncritical support for the policies of the State of Israel in Occupied Palestine and a continued presence on Muslim “holy lands,” have been and continue to be the impetus for such attacks.

In other words: until the United States





**Broken: The charred remains of a U.S. CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter outside of Fallujah, Iraq.**

government ceases its role as imperialist superpower, the risk of another Sept. 11-style attack hangs over the heads of all Americans.

IT HAS BECOME clear that the only way the current war of national liberation could be successfully suppressed by the United States is for the Bush regime to commit to nothing short of genocide as its agenda.

As long as the occupation continues in its current form, the protracted conflict will continue to draw more and more Iraqis to the side of al-Sadr and the al-Mahdi.

Only immediate withdrawal of all occupiers or the brutal suppression of the Iraqi people can change that.

Certainly, the unconditional, immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces from Iraq would be a stinging defeat for the Bush regime and American imperialism in general.

However, the fact is that such a defeat is fundamentally more desirable than either continued occupation or the massacre of the Iraqi people — both of which will only lead to the loss of more innocent lives.

Anti-imperialist Socialists work for this kind of defeat, actively organizing and mobilizing people to demand the unconditional, immediate removal of all occupation forces from Iraq.

As part of this work, Socialists also point out that the only way to avoid this kind of bloody mess from happening again — the only way to secure real peace — is to transform the specific movement against war and imperialism into a general movement against capitalism and class rule.

In a conflict such as we see in Iraq today, where the people have armed themselves and are actively fighting against a foreign occupier, our sympathies and support are with the people.

We cannot reconcile our determined desire for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Iraq with acceptance of the continued occupation, and we cannot expect that such continuance would ever lead to a peaceful solution.

On the contrary, the continued occupation — to say nothing of its military victory over the forces of national liberation — would mean years and years more bloodshed and violence visited upon the Iraqi people (and, in turn, on the American people).

AT THE SAME TIME, while we Socialists stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Iraq, by working and organizing for the immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces, we give no measure of support to al-Sadr's religious movement.

Iraq has a long and proud history of secularism and democracy. Throughout the 20th century, the Iraqi people have continually fought to secure peace and freedom in their country.

Beginning with the anti-colonial strug-

gles against the Ottomans and British, and continuing through the guerrilla struggles against the Ba'athists and now the "Coalition" occupiers, the people of Iraq — especially working people — have fought for freedom and self-determination.

However, in the vacuum of power created by the invasion and occupation of Iraq, religious figures like al-Sadr have been able to come forward and be political leaders.

The Iraqi people deserve better leaders. They deserve a leadership that best reflects the traditions of secularism and democracy that have defined the people of Iraq over the years. While al-Sadr is certainly a sight better than many other politically active religious leaders, he stands on a political platform that is at odds with the desires of the Iraqi people.

The only advice we can give our brothers and sisters in Iraq is to come together and build the organizations and bodies that can effectively and democratically govern the country.

The best place to start with such work is among the many independent trade unions, organizations of the unemployed and, where they exist, the democratically elected workers' councils.

These bodies, still in many ways in their embryonic stages, can serve as the basis for a new democratic republic and new society in Iraq that is representative of the majority of the people.

It will be on the basis of such democratic assemblies and organizations of working people that a genuinely democratic (and socialist) solution can be created — a solution that can open the door to a better world for all humanity. ★

## Activist

*continued from page 3*

Reiterating this, longtime Grand Rapids-area activist Jeff Smith said, "we have no history of doing anything that could be deemed violent or a threat to anybody."

Most of the antiwar demonstrators know the history and motives of past interventions: Iran (1953, oil); Guatemala (1954, United Fruit); Indonesia (1965, oil); Chile (1973, ITT Corp. and copper); and, the past coup shifts from democracies to dictatorships.

While Saddam Hussein's Iraq was certainly no democracy, many believe Bush's

motive was the oil and a new U.S. hegemony in the Middle East.

American-owned businesses such as Halliburton and Bechtel are in Iraq in a pre-planned rebuilding effort, and will become some of the major profiteers from a questionable war.

While ignoring the lack of a presence in Iraq of the authors of Sept. 11, Bush had reoriented the focus to Iraq. What was his motivation?

Bush's Iraq war is clearly evolving into his Vietnam as we continue to send more troops and the body bags continue to return to the U.S., in what has become the incorrect motivation of a "profits-before-people" foreign policy. ★



*"[It is not possible to find someone] more foolish than you [Bush], who deals with matters by force rather than with wisdom.... Kerry will kill our nation while it sleeps because he and the Democrats have the cunning to embellish blasphemy and present it to the Arab and Muslim nation as civilization. Because of this we desire you to be elected." — Open letter from al-Qa'ida to George W. Bush, March 16, 2004*

**Thanks to the policies enacted by the Bush Administration, my business has experienced unprecedented growth. I have expanded into new markets, diversified my capabilities and created thousands of new jobs. George W. Bush made me everything that I am today, and I am eternally grateful to him for that. That is why I support President Bush in his bid for re-election.**



**I ENDORSE**



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**GEORGE W. BUSH**

---

**PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

Authorized and Paid for by Qa'idaPAC, c/o Dick Cheney, Undisclosed Location, USA

*This message brought to you by the staff of the Michigan Socialist*

Parody ad. Not to be taken seriously. However, the quote from the al-Qa'ida letter is real, and, yes, they do want Bush to be in the White House for four more years. Food for thought.

# Budget

*continued from page 16*

In addition, Kilpatrick proposes to “spin off” (i.e., privatize) the City’s Housing Department and to mortgage the City through the selling of municipal bonds.

Kilpatrick shed a few crocodile tears for the workers he chose to condemn to starvation, but made it clear that he plans to make the working people of the City pay for the bosses’ mistakes.

City workers who protested outside of the Coleman Young Municipal Building during Kilpatrick’s presentation were not fooled.

“It sounds as though the mayor is taking it out on the worker ants,” said Dora Jennings, a DDOT mechanic with 18 years seniority. “We work very hard for the City because we are the City.”

IT SHOULD COME as no surprise that Kilpatrick has decided to make workers pay for his (and his masters’) mistakes.

One of the main reasons he was chosen by the ruling class to be its mayor in the first place was because he was perfectly willing to wage war against the working people of the City.

Almost immediately after entering office in January 2003, Kilpatrick demanded renegotiation of all City contracts, with an eye toward imposing massive layoffs and cutbacks.

He reorganized the Detroit Police Dept. in order to stage a “show of force” in work-



**Detroit City workers protest Mayor Kilpatrick’s proposed budget, which will mean hundreds of laid off transit and maintenance workers.**

ing-class neighborhoods — and just in time for the federal government to take it over.

Working in conjunction with the racist suburban media, Kilpatrick also engaged in a number of high-profile stunts aimed at “sending a message” to City workers: stand up to me and you’ll be fired.

His proposed budget is little more than an extension of this anti-union record.

In fact, all of what Kilpatrick does now as Mayor of Detroit was fashioned when he was a leading member of the State House of Representatives.

During his time in Lansing, Kilpatrick

was infamous for his “bipartisanship” — that is, his collaboration with, and capitulation to, outstate Republican politicians and their rightwing agenda.

This “bipartisanship” reached its highest point when Kilpatrick sided with the Republicans to strip Detroit residents of their right to vote and elect members of the Detroit Board of Education.

(Kilpatrick even tried more recently to keep Detroiters from getting back their right to vote by trying to push through legislation in Lansing to declare him dictator over the school district. See “Dictatorship 101,”

# Williams

*continued from page 16*

Bloomfield Hills and Birmingham. Within a 15-minute drive, you can go from the heights of wealth and power to the depths of poverty and ruin.

The County government, like most places in Michigan and the U.S., is dominated by representatives or members of the capitalist class, as are all boards and local offices. This fact alone makes Williams’ campaign significant.

Of the nine people seeking the three spots on the OCC Board of Trustees, Williams is the only candidate who is not a representative or member of the capitalists.

“As someone who both works at and attends OCC as a student, I feel I can bring a

unique perspective to the Board of Trustees,” says Williams. “I want to build my candidacy around the needs and concerns of the people who attend Oakland Community College and maintain its operations on a day-to-day basis.”

Among the elements of Williams’ platform are demands to provide year-round childcare for students, additional online courses for working students, greater participation by workers and students in the decision-making process, and eliminating the criminal background check for students applying to the nursing program.

In addition, Williams has committed himself to opposing any increase in tuition or fees at OCC, declaring his support for free, quality education.

Williams’ election to the OCC Board of Trustees would be a small but significant

victory for working people in Oakland County.

For the first time, workers and students will have one of their own sitting on the main decision-making body for the college — someone who understands what it means to balance work and school while trying to make ends meet.

Since the overwhelming majority of those who attend OCC are workers, or the children of workers, Williams’ election as an OCC Trustee would mean their concerns would not simply be ignored or dismissed.

The OCC Board election is June 14, and we encourage all our readers in Oakland County to go to the polls and vote for Carl Williams for OCC Board of Trustees.

For more on Williams’ campaign, or to help out, check out his website at [www.williams2004.org](http://www.williams2004.org). ★

There is little doubt that, as long as he is in a position to do so, Kilpatrick will use his power to make the workers of Detroit responsible for repairing the damage he and his capitalist handlers create in the City.

KWAME KILPATRICK is, without a doubt, the “new” face of the Michigan Democratic Party — or, more accurately, the face of the party machine.

The son of Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks-Kilpatrick, with several relatives in high places in the state government, Kilpatrick represents the “New Democrat”/DLC wing of the party, made famous by Bill Clinton and Al Gore (and Joe Lieberman, John Kerry and John Edwards).

That is, he is in fact a conservative capitalist politician using the party machine as a means of gaining office in a traditionally liberal Democratic stronghold.

Once in office, however, he willingly serves his capitalist masters, using heavy-handed bureaucratic tactics to launch attacks on working people throughout the City.

His proposed budget is only the latest example.

For the moment, it looks like Kilpatrick is going to have problems getting the City Council to approve the budget. The Council has traditionally been more left leaning and social-democratic in its outlook and composition.

Nevertheless, he will continue to use strong-arm tactics to make sure his (and his bosses’) agenda of unionbusting and massive cuts in services goes through.

At this point, it is clear that the City, under the leadership of the Kilpatrick, is moving in the opposite direction that its residents want.

For all of his imagery as the “hip-hop mayor” — the flashy suits and gator shoes, the diamond earrings and sport utility vehicles — Kilpatrick is, in the final analysis, little more than a shill for capitalist corporations that want a free hand.

After all, if he really wanted to close the budget gap in the City and state, he could have called on the City Council and State Legislature to repeal the fat tax breaks and corporate welfare handed out to capitalists in Michigan, to the tune of over \$6 billion a year.

If the legislature in Lansing were to end corporate welfare, they could quite easily

make up for all the budget shortfalls found throughout the state.

In fact, the \$6 billion saved by ending corporate welfare in Michigan could not only fill all the budget gaps, it could also restore school funding to previous levels, allow us to finance schools without the “assistance” of federal funds tied to Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” act, and would have enough left over to put into repairing schools, reducing class sizes through new hiring, etc.

NONE OF THIS, however, is in the interests of the capitalists who pull the strings in City and state government, or the politicians from both parties that administer them.

In order for the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan to operate in the interests of the overwhelming majority — the 7 million-plus working people and their families in the state — requires a government and system that is guided by, composed of and serving in the interests of working people.

This year, the Socialist Party is working to give working people the opportunity to start building that system.

We are seeking to place our candidates on the ballot for the November 2004 election in order to build support for the principles and policies of democratic socialism, and for measures that put the interests of the working majority ahead of profit and corporations.

Much of the work we Socialists are doing today is also in anticipation of local elections taking place in 2005, including in the City of Detroit.

If there is anything that the tenure of Kwame Kilpatrick has taught the working people of Detroit so far, it is that the only way to have a City government that works in our class interests is to elect our own — i.e., working people — to the City Council and Mayor’s Office.

The Socialist Party of Michigan, working closely with its brothers and sisters in the Detroit Socialist Party, and other working-class and community organizations, will actively seek to present a working people’s alternative in that election.

Our goal will be to finally give a voice to the overwhelming majority of Detroit residents, and send a message to the capitalists that we will no longer be slaves on their 21st-century “plantation.” ★

# Election

*continued from page 16*

As well, Ben Burgis has declared himself a candidate for the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University.

Burgis, a native of Lansing and currently a graduate student at Western Michigan



**Ben Burgis**

University, has been a longtime political activist in the Capitol area.

In addition, several SPMI members are seeking nominations for state representative.

In Lapeer, Sterling Heights and Detroit,

Party members have already begun to campaign as Socialist candidates for the State House.

To aid the work of the Socialist Party during this campaign season, the SPMI has established the Michigan Socialist Campaign Committee to coordinate and assist candidates in their races for public office.

The MSCC is being chaired by Martin Schreder, a member of the SPMI and a Socialist candidate for state representative in the Ninth District, covering northwest Detroit.

Over the coming weeks and months, more members of the SPMI will be declaring themselves candidates, in anticipation of the success of the Party’s petition drive.

The full slate of Socialist candidates for the Nov. election will be finalized at the SPMI’s State Convention, scheduled for July 17-18, 2004.

If readers are interested in helping the Socialist Party of Michigan gain ballot access, or if you are interested in being a Socialist candidate for public office, visit the website of the MSCC at [vote.mi-socialists.org](http://vote.mi-socialists.org). ★



## On the Internet...

**Michigan Socialist Campaign Committee**  
[vote.mi-socialists.org](http://vote.mi-socialists.org)

**Lisa Weltman for Mich. Board of Ed.**  
[www.weltman2004.org](http://www.weltman2004.org)

**Ben Burgis for MSU Board of Trustees**  
[burgisformsuboard.spmichigan.org](http://burgisformsuboard.spmichigan.org)



**Tears of a clown:** Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick tries to look concerned about the possible layoffs and privatization. It's not convincing, is it?

# Kilpatrick takes aim at workers, disabled

By **MARTIN SCHREADER**

Editor, the *Michigan Socialist*

IT HAS BECOME something of a general rule that, when capitalist politicians mismanage their affairs and run up huge deficits, working people are expected to pick up the tab and clean up the mess.

Thus, it is no surprise that the budget proposal by Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, presented to the City Council on April 12, once again forces workers to pay for his — and his paymasters' — mistakes.

The City of Detroit is facing a budget gap of over \$330 million for the coming year. A large portion of this gap is due to a loss of income tax revenues as a result of the re-

cession.

Another major factor in the budget problem is the rising cost of health care and pensions for City workers and retirees. Skyrocketing health care costs have been breaking municipal budgets across the country.

Kilpatrick's budget calls for the elimination of 670 jobs, including laying off hundreds of maintenance workers at the Detroit Department of Transportation — the agency responsible for the City's bus service.

As well, he proposes to charge disabled riders 75 cents to take the bus — a plan that will devastate the meager fixed incomes on which most disabled people are forced to live; currently disabled persons ride for free.

*continued on page 14*

# Socialist Party starts 2004 campaign season

By **L. MEYERS**

The *Michigan Socialist*

IN THE 2004 election, working people of Michigan are being given a definite choice.

The Socialist Party of Michigan has begun the work of placing itself on the ballot for the November 2, 2004, election, and members have begun to come forward to be candidates.

On April 13, the Board of Canvassers of the State of Michigan formally approved the "New Party" petition submitted by the SPMI, giving formal sanction to the Party to collect signatures to secure its place on the ballot.

For a new political party to be placed on the ballot in Michigan they have to collect at least 31,776 signatures from registered voters. In reality, it takes close to 50,000 signatures to guarantee success.

The Party has not been on the ballot here since the 1970s, when it ran under the banner of the "Human Rights Party."

Anticipating the success of securing ballot status, SPMI members have already begun to campaign as Socialist candidates for various state offices.

Lisa Weltman, who sought the Socialist Party's nomination for president last year, has declared her intention to be the Socialist candidate for Michigan Board of Education.

Weltman made her formal announcement following the March 8 meeting of the Board in Lansing.



**Lisa Weltman**

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## Carl Williams for OCC Board!

IN THE MONTHS leading up the Nov. 2004 elections, there are a number of local races that will be decided.

Among these is the election for the Board of Trustees of Oakland Community College.

What separates that race from others is that the working people of Oakland County have a choice in that election.

Carl Williams, a student and worker at OCC, and a supporter of the Socialist Party of Michigan, has entered the race to present a democratic socialist and working people's alternative to the candidates of big business.

Oakland County, one of the largest and richest counties in Michigan, is also a microcosm of class division and antagonism.

Working-class cities like Pontiac stand beside capitalist enclaves like

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