

Workers of the world unite

by Adam Levenstein
Collegian Staff

Capitalism is the economic system who's heart is here in the United States. This system gives people absolute freedom to sell and buy. Or does it?

The phrase "free trade" implies that people have an unlimited ability to buy and sell whatever they want. This, of course, is not only false but is also completely impossible.

If "free trade" doesn't mean what it sounds, what does it mean? It means that the corporations are free to keep their profits high by whatever means they deem necessary. Layoffs, union busting, and wars are all old ways of keeping profits from dropping. During the Great Depression hundreds of acres of much-needed grain was burned to keep corporate profits from dropping. The fact that the grain was needed by a starving population was overlooked.

More myths come to the surface, for example, "anyone can pay for themselves to go to school so they can get a better job." \$4.25 is the current minimum wage. One person, working full time (40 hours per week), will earn \$8840 per year - before taxes. Take out taxes, housing costs, et. and a single person working at McDonalds is hardly in a position to pay the monstrous fees it takes to go to college.

But, whine the procapitalists, America is so successful! Sure, Bill Gates, H. Ross Perot, and all the rest of the multi-millionaire capitalists are successful. but what about factory workers, farmers, and

college students? Factory workers are being laid off by the tens of thousands. Farmers are being replaced with automated factory-farms. College students are paying more for school each year.

How can we fix society's problems? The answer lies in the one system that has had more propaganda against it than any other in the world; socialism. But, people will say, socialism doesn't work. Often



they will cite the single, most renowned "example"; the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union, however, was not socialist. So then, what is socialism/communism?

There is no easy answer to this question. However, I will do my best to try and explain it.

In a nutshell, socialism is the idea of having the workers control the economy. Under capitalism, there are owners and workers. Under socialism, the working class will collectively own the means of production through a revolutionary, democratic government. Obviously, this was not the case of the Soviet Union.

In the Soviet Union, the workers and

farmers of Russia staged a successful socialist revolution in 1917 under the leadership of the Bolshevik party of Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky. However, the capitalist countries of the world funded and supported a counterrevolutionary civil war that lasted four years. This led to a conservative, counterrevolutionary movement within the Bolshevik party itself led by a man named Joseph Stalin.

Stalin destroyed the gains of the Revolution by executing everyone that had helped the Bolsheviks get to power. He was responsible for the deaths of more people than the murderous fascist regime of Adolf Hitler. In addition, he set up a parasitic bureaucracy known as "Stalinism."

The one country that has carried out a socialist revolution is the Republic of Cuba. Contrary to common belief, Cuba is worlds different from the former Soviet Union. Workers are in power, and control the economy through a 500-member National Assembly of People's Power.

The achievements of Cuba's revolution are remarkable. Cuba continues to go along its socialist course. Despite the downturn in the economy - known to Cuba as the "Special Period" - not a single hospital, school, university, or other social institution has been closed.

The why is obvious. The where and when are obvious - here and now. But how do we build a socialist revolution in the United States, the heart of capitalism? The capitalist government has for years tried to suppress the socialist movement in the United States, from the McCarthy

witch-hunt to the FBI's illegal COINTELPRO program.

There is one party in the US that has survived. The Socialist Workers Party offers an alternative to workers and youth. Through the SWP, its sister organizations abroad (Communist Leagues), and the Young Socialists, members and supporters are working to build a society that puts human need before profit.

This past week, the SWP announced its candidates for President and Vice President of the United States. James Harris, a 48-year-old meat packer from Atlanta, is the candidate for President. Laura Garza, a staff writer for "The Militant" newspaper and former steelworker, is running for Vice President.

Harris and Garza represent the working class alternative for the United States. The first constitutional convention of the Young Socialists, to be held in Minneapolis this weekend, is the first stop in the election campaign. With the building of this revolutionary campaign, workers and youth that support socialism are working to support equal rights of African-Americans, gay, and to fight against the neo-fascist agenda of Patrick Buchanan.

In conclusion, I would like to quote the end of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engles' classic work *The Communist Manifesto*.

"Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians [workers] have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!"

Vote James Harris/Laura Garza in 1996!

Where is your spirit?

by Mary Began
Collegian Staff

The problem with today's society is that no one has courage anymore. Courage is a word we learned about through stories and movies of the olden times when people stood up for what they believed in and were not afraid to speak their minds - good or bad. Nowadays, people cower under the threat of what could happen to them if they spoke their minds or what would be said about them if they stood up for something.

Why is this so? Why are people so afraid and so self-centered in this day and age? Things have changed between now and 300 years ago but there are some things that will always stay the same: we all have something to live for but, alas, we are all going to die someday.

A long time ago people fought for the things they believed in without much the worry of who would say something mean about them the next day. They stood up to a challenge even if it was for life or death. They were willing to take a risk because life was always a factor and so was the possibility of achieving recognition and acceptance of their beliefs.

never changed; no one wants to shame his or her own family or lose his or her life. But the same outcome is evident: we will all die eventually.

It is up to us to start realizing that unless we take action in our lives, nothing will be changed. We will just go about complaining day in and day out about things that bother us.

If you feel differently than the mainstream, speak up. If your opinion is unlike that of the norm, say it with confidence. But just don't say something and cower away. No matter if what you say is good or bad - you deserve recognition because if you were strong enough to open your mouth and say it, be strong enough to stand behind it. It creates many problems when people make strong statements and no one can figure out who proclaimed it.

I don't know, maybe it's just me who feels this way. Maybe I've watched "Braveheart" one too many times. But all I can say is Behrend is lame. Where is the activism? Where are the rallies, the protests, the marches? The only thing noticeable here is the Student Government race although the number running is pathetic and so will be the voter turnout.

I just don't know anymore. Where has the spirit gone?

Taco Liberty Bell?

by Sharain Sashelr
Collegian Staff

This Monday's "New York Times" sold Taco Bell a full page ad on page 5. The top half of the page was a picture of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. The bottom of the ad had this to say:

"Taco Bell Buys The Liberty Bell. In an effort to help the national debt, Taco Bell is pleased to announce that we have agreed to purchase the liberty bell, one of our country's most historic treasures."

"It will now be called the 'Taco Liberty Bell' and will still be accessible to the American public for viewing."

"While some may find this controversial, we hope our move

will prompt other corporations to take similar action to do their part to reduce the country's debt."

Other companies are following suit. Walmart tried to purchase part of George Washington's orchard so they could build a store there. The local people fought against the corporation and won. There will not be a Walmart on our first President's orchard.

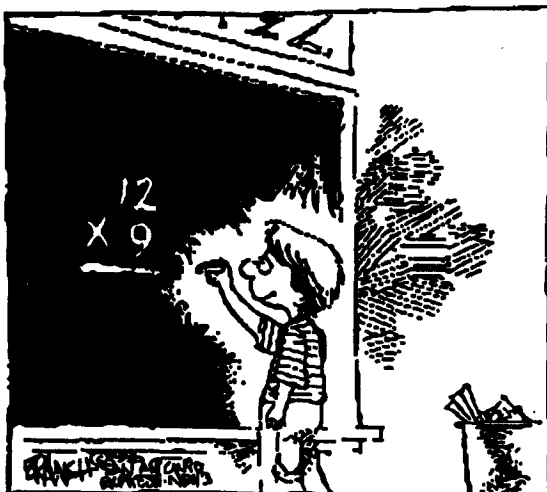
As for the "Taco Liberty Bell," there won't be one of those either. It was a spoof - just a big joke. Taco Bell donated \$50,000 to the restoration fund. But what if it wasn't a joke? When the news "joke" was announced, thousands of people around the country were outraged. Many others believed that, at least,

they're helping the national debt. Some people just don't understand what this symbol means. What is Liberty? A word on all our money? A giant woman statue with a book and a light? An idea?

We are so concerned with money in this world. Money=Power. I think it equals certain unhappiness.

The National Debt is a problem that Everyone should be concerned about, yes; but we should never resort to selling our national historical landmarks or parks or whatever else we could possibly commodify. Imagine the Statue of Liberty being called "Pepsi Statue of Liberty."

SHOULD U.S. TAXPAYERS FOOT THE BILL FOR EDUCATING CHILDREN OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS?



YES...



... OR NO?