

URPE (Union for Radical Political Economics) and Dollars & Sense at the 2006 Left Forum (www.leftforum.org)

See reverse for speaker bios

Hungry Capital: Food Security and Global Migration

SATURDAY, 10:00 AM SPONSOR: URPE/D&S

Paul Hancock • Julio Huato • Fred Magdoff • CHAIR: Renee Toback

Countries that were once able to feed their populations are now importing food, and millions of people who were once able to survive in rural areas have been forced to migrate – first to overcrowded cities in their home countries, and then to the U.S. Our panelists will shed light on the forces that have created this situation, including the size, concentration and power of agribusiness; government policies in the Third World; and World Bank and IMF policies that force countries to grow food for export. They will describe the jobs and working conditions these workers find in their own countries and in the U.S., and how U.S. agribusiness benefits from their labor. They will also talk about the role migrant workers play in the U.S. labor force.

The War on Pensions

SATURDAY, 2:00 PM SPONSOR: URPE/D&S

David Brennan • Sara Burke • Eric Glynn • Chris Rude • CHAIR: Rina Garst

“Pension Curb Accelerates Broad Corporate Shift on Worker Guarantees,” announced a February *Wall St. Journal* headline. Is this the “End of Retirement?” the headline continued. Our panelists will describe what exactly is happening to pensions, why it is happening now, and how this attack fits into the Neoliberal agenda, which included last year’s attack on Social Security and encompasses our health care crisis. They will talk about how unions are fighting back. And they will explore whether stockholder activism and democratic control of pension funds can be vehicles for social change.

Is There a Dollar Crisis?

SUNDAY, 12:00 PM SPONSOR: 2006 LEFT FORUM

Max Fraad Wolff • Arslan Razmi • Chris Rude • CHAIR: Arun Gupta

Is the decline of the dollar’s exchange rate a serious problem or are its ups and downs just business as usual? Who benefits from a low dollar, and who is hurt? To the extent that it is a problem, is it an independent problem or a symptom of a more serious US economic decline? Is it an immediate crisis, or a long-term trend? What has caused the dollar’s fall? Does it signal the end of US hegemony? Can other countries afford to challenge the dollar? Progressive analysts differ on these questions – join us for a lively discussion!

Oil, Nukes, Mullahs, Democracy and U.S. Hegemony: The Political Economy of the Iran Crisis

SUNDAY, 12:00 AM SPONSOR: 2006 LEFT FORUM

Ervand Abrahamian • Reza Ghorashi • Tom O’Donnell • CHAIR: Fatemeh Moghadam

The Iranian people face dual burdens: the constant prospect of a bloody U.S.-led intervention, and the continued internal rule of the mullahs. This panel examines the motivations of both sides, and addresses the political-economic basis for the persistent hostility towards Iran by the U.S. and its allies, the role of oil and nuclear power, the political economy of the present clerical regime and the prospects for internal transformation, and the current status of women in Iran. Our panelists will cut through the abundance of official misinformation on Iran, and discuss effective ways to express our solidarity with the just struggles of the Iranian people.

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Ervand Abrahamian (B.A., M.A., Oxford University; Ph.D. Columbia University), an Armenian born in Iran and raised in England, teaches world and Middle East history. He has published *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, *Khomeinism*, *Tortured Confessions*, and *Inventing the Axis of Evil*. He teaches at the CUNY Graduate Center, and has taught at Princeton, New York University, and Oxford University. He is currently working on two books: one on *The CIA Coup in Iran*; and another, *A History of Modern Iran*, for Cambridge University Press.

David Brennan is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Franklin & Marshall College, in PA. He specializes in the political economy of corporate governance, shareholder issues, and financial crises. He also specializes in the history of economic thought with a particular emphasis on national income accounting.

Sara Burke is the founder of Gloves Off and a journalist committed to the revolutionary tradition within the field. She studied economics and political economy at the New School in New York. She has been a member of IATSE Local #16 in San Francisco, and worked in 2001-02 on an (unsuccessful) organizing campaign to unionize the *TIME Magazine* online production group in which she worked. She is currently working on projects about oil, labor and education.

Max Fraad Wolff is a doctoral candidate in economics and freelance writer in the areas of international finance and foreign policy. Max is the managing director of Global MacroScope.

Rina Garst is a long-time URPE member who has experience working for trade unions, early Federal anti-poverty programs, and New York City, always as an active union member.

Reza Ghorashi has a Ph.D. in economics from Fordham University and teaches at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. His areas of research and interest are international trade, globalization, and the Middle East, particularly Iran. He has published articles in both English and Farsi on the listed subject matters.

Eric Glynn is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has served as Review Editor of *Rethinking Marxism* and taught economics at Northeastern and Quinnipiac. His thesis analyzes the class structure of the US automobile industry.

Arun Gupta is an investigative journalist who writes frequently for *Z Magazine*, *Left Turn* and the *Independent* newspaper in New York. He is an editor at the *Independent* and a former editor at the *Guardian* weekly in New York.

Paul Hancock is Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Sustainable Community Development at Green Mountain College. He has published articles in labor history and labor migration theory.

Julio Huato is an economics doctoral candidate at the CUNY Graduate Center in the fields of international economics/economic development and finance economics. He holds a MA in economics from the New School for Social Research and a BA in economics from the Universidad de La Habana, Cuba. His main research interests are at the intersection of inequality, growth, finance, political economy, and policy-making. One of his dissertation papers is an empirical study on the impact of maquiladora manufacturing on the local standards of living in Mexico. He has taught economics, econometrics, and finance at St John's University, Drew University, and St Francis College. He is currently working for the Howard Samuels Center at CUNY on a study on the economic status of women in New York. He is originally from Mexico, where he was a social activist and organizer for several years.

Fred Magdoff is Professor of Soils in the Department of Plant and Soil Science at the University of Vermont. Magdoff was Plant and Soil Science Department Chair for 8 years, a member of the National Small Farm Commission, and is the Coordinator in the 12-state Northeast Region for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. Magdoff has oriented his outreach activities to explaining how to apply ecological principles to agricultural production. He is also interested in political and economic issues surrounding agriculture and was senior editor of *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food, and the Environment* (2000, Monthly Review Press, NY).

Fatemeh Moghadam teaches courses on Economic Development, Women and Development in the Middle East, Economic Development in the Middle East, and International Economics. She has published extensively on economic history, agricultural development, and women and development, including a book, *From Land Reform to The Revolution: The Political Economy of Agricultural Development in Iran (1960-1979)*. Her research work includes several field studies in Iran. Her most recent publications include entries in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History* (New York, 2003), entries in *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures* (to appear 2006), as well as articles on women and work in Iran.

Tom O'Donnell (PhD, nuclear physics) is Lecturer at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in the Science, Technology and Science Program (STS), the Center for Middle East and North African Studies (CMENAS), and the Residential College. He lectured on "The Global Oil System and the Middle East" in graduate economics at The University of Algiers and, as visiting professor, at The New School for Social Research in New York City in spring-summer of 2005. He is currently writing a book on *The New Globalized Oil Order*. He is also Associate Member of the Michigan Center for Theoretical Physics (MCTP). He previously spent a decade as an industrial worker and organizer-activist in Detroit auto plants and on Chicago railways.

Arslan Razmi got his Ph.D. from American University and works in the areas of international trade and finance, open economy macroeconomics, development, and political economy. His recent work, which has focused on balance of payments-related constraints on the growth of developing countries and the limitations of the export-led growth paradigm, borrows from diverse streams of economic theory. His empirical examination of balance of payments-related constraints on Indian growth performance appears in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics*.

Chris Rude, a former NY Fed and Wall Street economist, has just finished his PhD in Economics from the New School. At the NY Fed, he conducted research on the sustainability of the US current account deficit and monitored US and foreign intervention activities at the FRBNY's Foreign Exchange Department. While studying at the New School, he was Assistant Director of the Center for Economic Policy Analysis (CEPA), where he organized a conference on the current crisis in the US retirement system in September, 2004. He recently taught political science at York University in Toronto, where he did research on economic mechanisms of US imperialism.

Renee Toback is an economist and a federal employee active in the National Treasury Employees' Union. She teaches at Empire State College and works with Economy Connection (URPE) and the NLC, an anti-sweatshop research and action group.