

Low-Wage Capitalism
By Fred Goldstein

Chapter 1: Doubling The Global Workforce

1. Goldstein states that capitalists are trying to "minimize and hide the damage. . . of cutbacks and layoffs here in the U.S. Do you agree? Why are they doing this? (page 3)
2. List 3 reasons why the global workforce has doubled from 2.5 billion to 6 billion since 1980. (page 4)
3. Why would capitalists be happy about the increase in available workers? What evidence does Goldstein give to support your argument?
4. NAFTA became active in 1994. How have the IMF, the World Bank and NAFTA been used as tools by capitalist countries to "super-exploit." (page 5)
5. Why is Friedman particularly happy about the increase in the professional section of the working class (service, engineering, research)? (page 6)
6. Describe how the increase in the number of workers world wide has affected the living standards of workers in the U.S.? (page 6-7)
7. On page 8 it says "Not since the industrial revolution has there been a transformation of this magnitude. . ." What are the key characteristics of this transformation? (page 8-9)
8. What are 5 characteristics of this new world economic pattern of global production that the author summarizes on pages 9 and 10? (page 9-10)
9. After World War II 1/6 of the world was in the socialist camp. Which countries were part of the socialist camp? What are the other ways in which countries resisted U.S. imperialism during this time? (page 10-11)
10. What's been the impact of capitalist restructuring since the 1980's. (page 12)
11. The globalization of capitalist production is eroding the national

determination of wages. What does this mean for workers in industrialized countries? (page 16-17)

12. Describe the last paragraph on page 17 means. Explain how this might happen. How is globalization benefiting the world wide working class?

Chapter 2

1. Bourgeois economists use the terms production chains, production networks, and value chains. What do these terms conceal? (pg 19)

Goldstein frequently mentions the term workflow software. This means . . . need simple explanation here. (pg 19-21)

2. What's the relationship between supply chains, living supply chains and workflow software? (21 second full paragraph)

3. What advantages did Dell's manufacturing structure have over Toyoda's? (pg 22)

4. Explain how Internet Technology (IT) (including workflow software) has changed production and how Hewlett Packard and IBM able were able to sell these (page 22-23).

Chapter 3

1. Why are the large corporations able to get such a large share of the profits compared to the vassal companies (pg 29-30)

*Clarification: who are the large companies
who are the vassals?

When Goldstein refers to monopoly corporations and the giant lords of capital and the big companies it usually means the multinationals that market the products and whose names are well known

The vassals are the ones that now make the products but whose names are not well known.

2. A few years ago there was a boycott of Nike because the shoes were made in foreign sweatshops. Given the points being made on pages 30, 31 did this make sense? Is the anti-sweat shop movement is still a good strategy?

*Add a section on the history of the
anti-sweatshop movement and the (Seattle?)* **

3. How does a reverse auction work? (pg 31)

4. What makes one contract supplier able to underbid others? (pg 31-32)

5. How is it that flextronics makes similar products for competing corporations in the same plant? (pg 32 first full paragraph)

6. What are the major advantages for the bosses in the new global restructuring arrangement? (pg 34-35)

7. How has the garnering of super profits from low-wage workers shifted since the development of contractors and subcontractors? (pg 35-36)

8. Why don't the bosses want any data on offshoring released? (pg 37-38)

*what's the difference between offshoring and outsourcing?