

LABOR DAY: AN AMERICAN MYTH

By C.S. Malerich

A seventh-grade student, stooping beneath the weight of his backpack, passed a group of Puritans torturing a man to death.

They had him pinned beneath a plank of wood upon which they laid boulder after boulder, and as they added each deadly stone, they bowed low to catch the strained words from the victim's mouth: "More weight."

"More weight!" those good people repeated in chorus.

"More weight!"

"More weight!"

"He said, 'More weight!'" They nodded their grave, sage heads below their conical hats.

So they added stone to stone, proud to be part of such a distinguished tradition, and pleased to have found a victim so willing, so ready and able to play his part.

As the man struggled for breath, determined to prove his worthiness and incapable of gasping out a new phrase, the young student did not even slow down to watch, but as he passed he muttered to the Puritans' victim, "Man, I know how you feel."