



**ZIMBABWE:
LAND TO THE PEOPLE!**

Zimbabwe has had to fight the ravages of capitalist globalization, U.S./British bullying and the continued control of 96 percent of its economy by white settlers and transnational companies. Now President Robert

Mugabe and Black Zimbabweans are taking back their stolen lands. Why is Washington in an uproar? **10, 11**

They don't feel your pain

A major new study shows that lack of health insurance kills at least 18,000 people in the U.S. each year. Last year 2 million more joined the ranks of uninsured as bosses cut benefits and workers are forced to pay higher contributions to premiums. Who profits from this crime against health? **3**

More blood on Bush's hands



Javier Suarez Medina, a Mexican citizen, was executed in Texas Aug. 14 in violation of international law and over the objections of Mexican President Vicente Fox. What role did the former "Governor Death,"

President George W. Bush, play? And what does the execution show about the true character of U.S./Mexico relations? **2**

Prison-industrial nightmare

Women prisoners abused in Pennsylvania. Massachusetts officials charging prisoners "rent." New York's billionaire mayor placing homeless families in a jail instead of decent housing. It's time to fight back against the out-of-control prison-industrial complex. **8**

Ecocide made in USA

Africa faces an impending famine brought on by drought. An earlier drought from 1970-1985 cost 1.2 million African lives, and has now been linked to pollution created in the U.S., Canada and Western Europe. **10**

As U.S. economy sinks

Bush, Pentagon plot criminal war on Iraq

Independent anti-war fight needed

By Deirdre Griswold

A world crisis is rapidly developing. The form it takes right now is preparation for an all-out war against Iraq by the Bush administration and the Pentagon.

The Pentagon is reportedly shipping huge amounts of military equipment from its bases in Europe to the Middle East, and the number of U.S. troops in the area is ballooning.

The Herald of Scotland reported on Aug. 16 that "The Pentagon has moved 50,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines within striking distance of Iraq in the past 10 months under cover of deployments targeting global terrorism, according to senior UK military sources.

"The quiet buildup includes the presence of up to five nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, each with an attack force of between 70 and 80 jets."

There are also "several U.S. Marine expeditionary forces, infantry battalions backed by helicopter gunships, tanks and armored personnel carriers, embarked on special assault ships in and around the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf."

The Scottish newspaper adds that "it is clear that preparations are being made for an aerial campaign which could be waged even if neighboring states such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan refuse to allow the use of their airfields for offensive action."

The storming of the Iraqi Embassy in Berlin on Aug. 20 by a small group calling themselves dissident Iraqis has been denounced by Baghdad as the work of U.S. and Israeli agents. While the White House denies this, as is to be expected, the brief hostage-taking episode is at the

very least the product of the expectations that a coming U.S. war would arouse among opportunists wanting to be included in a puppet government.

That it took place in Berlin, however, raises suspicions of more direct U.S. involvement, since the Bush administration has been angered by the refusal of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to give support to its war against Iraq during his campaign speeches.

Toothless criticism

The capitalist media all over the world are full of speculation as to whether the attack will begin sooner or later; whether President George W. Bush will be able to round up support from any U.S. "allies"; whether the meeting with most of his top aides in Crawford, Texas, on Aug. 21 was secretly meant to finalize plans for the war; and whether the subdued words of caution coming from a few old Republican hands will make any difference.

All the discussions within the organs and councils of the ruling class in the U.S. take for granted that the right-wing cabal running the government—this grouping so intimately tied to the scandal-ridden, criminal corporate world—has the right to kill tens of thousands of Iraqi people in the pursuit of its aims. Not said openly, but underlying all their analysis, is the old imperial maxim, "Might makes right."

Nor should anyone think that the veterans of Bush senior's 1991 war now speaking up have any scruples when it comes to putting U.S. troops in "harm's way," either. Their only concern is that too many body bags

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Protest advances movement for reparations



Millions for Reparations rally, Washington, D.C., Aug. 17. See page 5.

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Execution in Texas

A slap in the face to Mexican sovereignty

By Greg Butterfield

In a racist slap in the face to Mexico's national sovereignty, the state of Texas and the Bush administration went ahead with the Aug. 14 execution of Javier Suarez Medina, a former fast-food worker, over protests from Mexican President Vicente Fox.

A Mexican citizen, Suarez was denied his consular rights after his arrest in 1988 for killing an undercover cop posing as a drug trafficker. He was then 19 years old.

Suarez was never notified of his rights under the Vienna Convention of 1963 to seek representation and assistance from the Mexican government. The Mexican Embassy was never notified of Suarez's case through his entire trial, or after his conviction and death sentence. The Mexican government only learned of the case during an appeal.

Mexico has outlawed the death penalty and refuses to extradite suspects who may face execution to the U.S. Currently 17 Mexican citizens are on death row in Texas.

The Mexican government and people are acutely aware of the racist character of the death penalty, especially as it is applied in Texas, and of the lack of even the most basic safeguards and standards of representation for poor defendants.

"Whenever a Mexican citizen is facing the death penalty, prompt and extensive consular support is provided to ensure that the defendant has everything necessary to mount a full and fair defense," said a statement from the Mexican Embassy. "In case after case, timely assistance from the Mexican authorities has meant the difference between life and death."

International protest

On Aug. 9 the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights, composed of 26 independent human rights experts, called on Washington to intervene to stay Suarez's execution and reexamine the case.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson sent a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell expressing her "serious concerns that the trial proceedings in the case had not complied with international human rights standards."

Thirteen Latin American and European countries joined Mexico in filing a "friend of the court" brief with the U.S. Supreme Court when



Militant farmers from San Salvador Atenco stopped government plans to build an airport on their lands. On Aug. 14, they rallied in Mexico City against the execution of Javier Suarez in Texas.

Suarez's attorney sought a last-minute reprieve there.

The Mexican Senate took out full-page ads in several Texas newspapers. President Fox spoke to President George W. Bush and Texas Gov. Rick Perry, and wrote a letter to Perry spelling out why the execution was illegal.

All of it was to no avail. Washington did not intervene to stop the execution. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the appeal. The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles voted 17-0 to go ahead with the lynching, lacking even the usual "legal" pretext. And Perry refused to grant a 30-day stay to reexamine the case.

Suarez died by lethal injection at 6:23 p.m. Aug. 14 in the Huntsville, Texas, death chamber. Outside, the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement and other death-penalty foes protested.

Protests also took place in Mexico City, in front of the U.S. Embassy, and in Zocalo Plaza. There farmers from San Salvador Atenco, whose militant protests forced the Fox government to drop plans to build an airport on their lands, rallied against the execution and to drop criminal charges against their leaders.

That night, Fox's spokespeople held a news conference announcing that he had canceled a scheduled four-city tour of Texas, including a visit to Bush's ranch. "This decision is an unequivocal signal of rejection of the execution," Fox said in a statement. "It would be inappropriate, under the lamentable circumstances, to go ahead with the visit to Texas."

Orders came from the top

The White House responded with a patronizing statement about Bush's

and Fox's "excellent professional relationship and strong friendship."

Bush's refusal to intervene should not be taken to mean he had a hands-off policy toward the Suarez execution. In fact, it is impossible to believe that Bush was not involved in the decision to go ahead with the lynching when high-level international relations were at stake. The decision to kill Suarez came from the top.

As governor of Texas, Bush directly oversaw the illegal execution of another Mexican citizen, Miguel Flores, in November 2000, while the results of the presidential election were in disarray. Flores had also been denied his consular rights. The Clinton administration stood by quietly and did nothing.

In 1999, Bush had overseen the illegal execution of a Canadian, Stanley Faulder. His arrogant answer at that time was that "the state of Texas never signed the Vienna Convention," as if the state was not bound by the treaties signed by the U.S. government. That argument was echoed by prosecutors in the Suarez case.

In all, Bush oversaw 152 executions—more than any other governor in the country. Most of those killed were Black and Latino. All were poor and working-class people.

For public consumption, Bush and Fox—a pro-U.S. former Coca-Cola executive—have tried to portray themselves as buddies and equals who have each other's ear on matters ranging from trade to immigration policy.

But the Suarez execution shines a spotlight on the true neo-colonial character of the relationship. Bush, as head of the powerful imperialist empire, has no respect for Mexico's sovereignty or the pleas of his "good friend" Fox.

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U.S. health care crime

Lack of insurance kills 18,000 per year

By Sharon Eolis, R.N.

A study by the Institute of Medicine released in May concluded that about 18,000 people in the U.S. die prematurely each year due to lack of health coverage. Many must wait too long to get health care. Others die of preventable causes because they have no access to vaccinations, prenatal care, cancer-screening tests or well-baby care.

The IOM is a mainstream group affiliated with the National Academy of Science.

The soaring cost of health care is creating a life-threatening crisis for poor and working people in the U.S. According to federal government statistics, over 40 million people have no health insurance. Two million joined the uninsured in the past year. These numbers exclude the millions of undocumented workers and their families residing in the U.S. who lack access to medical care.

Even those with some kind of health coverage aren't out of the woods. On Aug. 11 the New York Times ran a comprehensive article covering the problems with the health-care structure in the U.S. This article was the source for much of the information presented here.

In 2000, some 93 percent of workers insured through the workplace were in managed-care plans, up from 27 percent in 1988. This number included two-thirds of the people under age 65.

Since 1988, more companies have increased employee co-payments and deductibles. Employers blame high health-care costs and benefit cuts on the insurance companies. The managed care companies blame the higher costs on patients who demand quality high-tech health care.

Higher costs have forced many workers to drop out of their health-care plans entirely. Self-employed workers also pay higher fees. All this contributed to increasing the uninsured population.

Struggling for coverage

Some examples illustrate just how hard it is for workers to cope with the health-care system. The construction company that hired Francisco Guillen in San Rafael, Calif., pays a large portion of health-care insurance costs only for employees and their children. Thus it cost Guillen \$138 per year to insure his four children.

But to insure his wife Adela Velasquez, who works elsewhere as an uninsured part-time housekeeper, would cost an additional \$3,250 per year. When Velasquez needed emergency hernia surgery, she could only get it from a surgeon working for a charity.

To hold his insurance premium to \$266 monthly, a self-employed poultry farmer in Texas has a \$15,000 deductible. This leaves him uninsured except for catastrophic illnesses.

On Long Island, N.Y., one family couldn't pay the premium increase demanded by their insurance company. It went from \$550 to \$750 monthly. To insure their three children, the family found the federally subsidized children's health insurance program (CHIP). This program is usually available to families with an income less than twice the poverty level, or about \$36,000 per year in the case described above. The two parents still had to pay \$514 per month to insure themselves.

Ron Pollack, executive director of Families USA, says that in 42 states a person without children can be penniless and still not qualify for federally subsidized health coverage. Pollack said eligibility should be based on income, not family status.

The managed-care companies have only one goal: high profits. When health care costs spiraled, insurance firms cut benefits and quality of care. These firms often refuse to pay for tests like CT and MRI scans or for expensive medicines.

Lack of coverage and denial of tests have led to complications and death for many patients. There are many malpractice cases pending against managed care companies for refusing services.

Big issue for labor

According to Denise Mitchell, director of communications for the AFL-CIO, "In the last six to nine months, health care has become the biggest issue in collective bargaining."

In Spring 2002 there were two major local strikes where the main issue was the companies' attempts to cut health benefits or increase workers' premiums: at the Hershey Chocolate Company in Pennsylvania and Group Health, Inc. in New York state.

On a larger scale, in the past decade retired miners had to fight an attempt to remove them from the health-care rolls and communication workers fought against increased employee premiums.

In the 1990s, insurance companies competed to enroll seniors in plans that supplemented Medicare, thinking this would provide steady profits. Instead, rising health-care costs—especially costs of prescription drugs—forced losses on these companies. They moved rapidly to drop the plans, leaving the seniors, who often have complex and expensive needs, swinging in the breeze.

Federal and state governments have provided something of a safety net for children, seniors and the disabled. But in the present recession, with diminished state and federal revenues and reactionary ad-

ministrations in office, the government has cut other health and human services to the bone.

Part of the class struggle

The fight for adequate health care for all is part of the class struggle. In revolutionary countries like Cuba—even under a 40-year U.S. blockade—society has been able to provide universal free health care that is both superior and more egalitarian than in all the capitalist countries of the Third World.

Cuba, a poor country, provides better care than what's provided to much of the U.S. population, especially communities of color, where infant mortality rates are sometimes double those in Cuba.

The IOM report states that national health insurance would help eliminate inequality of care for "racial and ethnic minority groups" in the U.S.

Even other industrialized capitalist powers like Japan and Western Europe provide close to universal health care, with variations in quality and accessibility to richer and poorer people.

The big European monopolies have placed these plans under attack since the defeat of the Soviet Union and the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe. The socialist countries had provided free medical care to all, and set a standard that workers fought for in the West.

But even today, the U.S. is the only imperialist country with a completely inadequate, indeed, a non-existent national health-care program.

The early Clinton administration raised the need for a national health-care plan, but made so many compromises with the insurance companies that its final plan lost all mass support and was crushed by the medical-industrial complex—the pharmaceutical companies, managed-care conglomerates, private hospitals and American Medical Association.

The IOM report is available online at <http://bob.nap.edu/books/0309083435/html/>.

Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

The war against women's bodies

It is difficult to objectively observe how women are treated in the world of modern medicine, and not come to the quiet conclusion that doctors don't really care very much about patients of the female persuasion.



That suspicion ripens into fuller bloom when one thinks about the recent news that the popular medical provision of estrogen-progestin pills (known as hormone replacement therapy, or HRT) to menopausal women threatens them with increased risk of heart disease, stroke and breast cancer.

This, after the HRT regime has been marketed to approximately 40 million women as a kind of miracle drug that promises virtual eternal youth.

What's wrong with this picture?

Have millions of menopausal women been unwitting guinea pigs for the pharmaceutical companies? Have hundreds of thousands of doctors been duped by these same companies?

How can this happen?

In a nation where capital accumulation is seen as the greatest good, how could it be otherwise? Medicine is big business.

Doctors will call themselves scientists, who follow the scientific method. This suggests they will rigorously test powerful drugs (or test the validity of others' tests) before prescribing such items to their trusting patients.

Apparently, they relied on the glowing articles in the media, or the advertising material sent to them by the drug companies.

Do you know where pharmaceutical-grade estrogen comes from? Do you know the source of much of the hormone used in birth control pills?

It is collected, dried horse urine. Seriously. The urine of pregnant mares is collected, stored and processed into estrogen.

Did you know there are plant sources that contain natural estrogen? Several are wild yam, and black cohosh.

What is more important—the health of people, or the money that can be made by exploiting their fears and hopes?

The medical industry today is a wholly owned subsidiary of the multinational pharmaceuticals. They are a primary source of information to the average physician.

How many billions of dollars have been made off of American women in the last 30 years?

How many women have died since 1975 from breast cancer, heart disease or stroke? Many don't know and most don't care, much less the drug companies.

Were it not for the Women's Health Initiative, no one would know about the serious risks posed by HRT.

By treating menopause as a sickness, rather than a natural phase in the life cycle, and promising a magic pill that turns back time, the drug and medical industries have created a market based on a false hope.

Let us hope millions of women are safer now than yesterday.

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Part II

Black Reconstruction: the unfinished revolution

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The following is excerpted from a talk given by Pratt, a poet and Southern anti-racist activist, at a Workers World meeting in New York on Aug. 10. Part one appeared in the Aug. 22 edition.

The Radical Republican Party that had initially supported Black Reconstruction split after the financial panic and depression of 1873. In the South, the white small farmers and business elements most affected by this financial crisis began to bolt to the Democrats, the party of slavery and later of segregation.

In 1877, President Andrew Johnson ordered the withdrawal of the Federal soldiers who had provided some bulwark of protection to the revolutionary struggles in the South. These same federal troops, removed from protecting newly freed workers there, were immediately used to put down the first national railroad strike.

What resulted was the "White Terror" unleashed by the slavocracy—unrelenting persecution and murders of individuals, and a series of massacres of freed Black people and some remaining white allies attempting to retain freedoms that had been won.

Reactionary elements called this period the "restoration of home rule." By 1901 every former Confederate state had written "home rule" into new constitutions, thus formally and legally expressing the reaction begun in the Black Codes.

Using this repression, the slavocracy reorganized the old plantation system, worked by slave labor, into a system of sharecropping and share tenancy, which enabled cash-poor planters to minimize paying wages to farm workers. This system lasted in the South until the introduction and widespread use of tractors and mechanical cotton pickers in the 1940s and 1950s. In the mostly rural South, freed Black people and impoverished whites were forced into this economic arrangement to survive.

In the two levels of tenancy, farmers shared both the need for subsistence credit and a vulnerability to arbitrary demands by the landlord. The difference lay in this: Share tenants "often owned mules or equipment and might be able to supply some feed or fertilizer. Their furnishing needs varied, as did their supervision." (Encyclopedia of Southern Culture) Thus, their share of the crop could be from two-thirds to three-fourths, less advances and interest.

Sharecroppers usually had only their labor to bargain with, no animals or tools. They depended on lien credit for necessities of life, and usually received no more than half the crop, from which interest and supplies were deducted, typically leaving them in lifelong debt to the landlord. Two-thirds of Southern tenants were white, and among sharecroppers,

there were about equal numbers of Black and white farmers. (Encyclopedia of Southern Culture)

While this combination of legal and extra-legal terror and economic coercion kept Black workers in virtual peonage, the slavocracy mounted a vicious campaign to split white farm workers and the urban working class from newly freed Black labor. Alongside racist propaganda from public officials, state governments re-seized by the planter economic interests and by new Southern industrial interests began to allocate money and benefits like education in a calculatedly racist manner.

For instance, states began to pay pensions to the "relief of needy confederate soldiers and sailors who from wounds or other cause are now unable to earn a livelihood by labor." They granted these privileges to indigent whites loyal to the slavocracy while throwing freed Black people into jail to be used as prison labor on the pretext of being "vagrants" because they had wandered searching for less oppressive landlords or fairer wages. (Alabama 1891 legal code)

But in the renewed onslaught of reaction in the South—where lynching of African American men and rape of African American women became the most notorious terror methods of white ruling class interests—there was continued resistance.

For instance, the anti-lynching campaign of Ida B. Wells-Barnett is well known to many. Born a slave in Mississippi, she became a teacher and then also the editor of a Memphis newspaper, the Free Speech. In 1891, she lost her teaching job when she published articles criticizing the local school system's "unequal allocation of resources to Black schools." (Wells-Barnett, "A Red Record")

The next year marked the beginning of her lifelong national campaign against lynching—including supporting the right to armed self-defense—as she editorially denounced the murder of three local Black men on the pretext of charges they had raped a white woman. In fact, she revealed, all three had been targeted because their business pursuits threatened the white economic establishment.

Resistance by African Americans continued in every town and farm in the South, in places still not documented by historians. For instance, in 1899, in Bibb County, Ala., which had a population of no more than 5,000 people, Black and white, the Black workers on a road detail engaged in an armed battle with their white overseer.

The precipitating incident, which must have come after many brutal indignities and assaults, was this. The overseer, Mullen, sent one of the hands, John Sanders, who was Black, after water. On returning to the spring he passed the water to other African Americans before he did to Mullen.

In the resulting battle, the overseer was

killed, as were some of the Black workers; others were later lynched. A few days later, a young white worker was beaten and driven out of the county by white vigilantes because of his expressing sympathy for the African Americans who killed overseer Mullen. This white man was seen going out armed, together with African Americans, in his neighborhood, saying that Mullen got what he deserved and that others would get the same. (Centreville Press, May 4 and 11, and June 8, 1899)

A month later, when the local newspaper reported a "crowd of [African Americans] armed in the woods" near Eoline, it also ran a story about a strike in the coal mines of the adjoining county by the Black majority Knights of Labor. (Centreville Press, July 20, 1899)

For even as African Americans struggled for economic equity in mostly rural arenas in the South, there was a parallel resistance in the Black urban working class.

The first post-Civil-War strike by Southern women, for instance, was waged by Black washerwomen in July 1865 in Jackson, Miss. They organized themselves into a "protective association" and raised their prices.

In Alabama, ex-Union Black soldiers went on strike at the Birmingham iron works in 1866. In Mobile, a strike of Black levee workers spread to the sawmills and smaller industries. In Savannah, Ga., the dock workers, almost all Black, struck the City directly for imposing a poll tax on wharf workers. (Allen and Jacqueline Jones)

During Reconstruction and the counter-revolution, Black workers—both rural and urban—fought against their economic exploitation, in a struggle that continues today, through such campaigns as Millions for Reparations.

In addition to urban Black workers striking for fair and better wages during this time, Black farmers attempted to hold on to land they had won. Their tenacity is reflected in the fact that in 1910, in the Sea Islands area—part of the original revolutionary land re-distribution—almost 60 percent of Black farmers still owned their land.

In 1920 over 925,000 Black farmers controlled over 15 million acres. Today there are only 15,000-18,000 farmers, with less than a million acres.

The taking back of these lands continues today with the complicity of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in denying loans to Black farmers, thus furthering the interests of corporate agribusiness. Resistance also continues, however, as shown in the dramatic July 4 takeover of USDA offices in Tennessee by 300 Black farmers. (Workers World, July 18)

The continuation of the reactionary policies of the counter-revolution that crushed Reconstruction also continued in the attempt by white landowners in the South to keep Black people from migrating North toward wage-paying jobs. The Black Codes were used against Black workers, for in-

stance, during World War I, as they sought to travel to Northern industries, where labor was short because U.S. policies were limiting immigrant labor.

The so-called "convict lease" system grew out of the Codes. In this system, the state leased prisoners, the vast majority Black, at dramatically reduced wages, to "cotton, rice, sugarcane, and tobacco planters, coal mines, timber companies, railroad construction firms, and levee builders." (Encyclopedia of Southern Culture)

Prisoners of both sexes, sometimes as young as 8 or 9 years old, were kept on meager diets, given little or no medical care, and suffered overwork and physical abuse. (Encyclopedia of Southern Culture)

Though the system was phased out in the South in the late 1930s, we can see its resurgence now in the exploitation of prison labor by private companies like the Corrections Corporation of America, subcontracting with the states. (Workers World, Oct. 25, 2001)

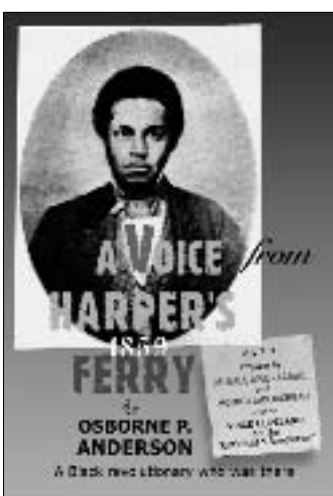
"Competitive prison labor" means that companies like Starbucks, Microsoft, Victoria's Secret and Boeing make profits off the labor of prisoners who are mostly people of color. In Tennessee, for instance, a CCA prison is allowed to pay prisoners a "maximum" of 50 cents an hour. (Workers World, November 18, 1999)

When we consider the implications of the Reconstruction period in the United States for the reparations struggle today, we can demand in addition to reparations for the losses of African American people under slavery:

- Reparations for wages lost to freed Black people because they were forced into virtual peonage through the use of the Black Codes.
- Reparations for the sale of the crops raised under sharecropping and share tenancy, lost to landlords' inflated interest and lien credit, and reparations for the resulting equity and interest that was lost.
- Reparations for lost wages in urban areas, where Black workers were paid unequally in relation to white workers.
- Reparations for the education never given by the states, or given in unequal measure.
- Reparations for being held prisoner and worked on prison farms, roads, industries, mines, plantations.

Reparations—yes! And more: Finish the unfinished revolution!

Sources: Encyclopedia of Southern Culture; The Unfinished Revolution: A Voice from Harper's Ferry, introduction by Vince Copeland; James Allen, "Reconstruction: The Battle for Democracy 1865-1876"; W.E.B. DuBois, "Black Reconstruction in America, 1860s-1880s"; Jacqueline Jones, "Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family from Slavery to the Present."



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WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mass protest moves reparations struggle forward

By Pam Parker
Washington, D.C.

Thousands of people, primarily of African descent, attended a spirited rally here Aug. 17 to demand reparations be paid to descendants of the victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The reparations would constitute recognition of centuries of slavery and the ongoing racism suffered by African Americans.

People young and old traveled from all over the country to attend this historic event. Some came from as far away as Canada and California.

The rally, held on the 115th anniversary of the birth of Black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey, took place on the Mall outside the Capitol building in Washington. Red, black and green flags peppered the crowd as they pumped angry fists in the air.

Chants of "Black power," "Mugabe" and "Reparations now" filled the air as the demonstrators listened to many representatives of the community and political movements make the case for reparations. Many viewed this event as sowing the seeds for building a powerful movement to win reparations.

The demonstration was organized by the National Black United Front, the December 12th Movement and the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (NCOBRA). Viola Plummer of the December 12th Movement and Conrad Worrill of the National Black United Front were the national coordinators of the rally, billed as "Millions for Reparations."

It gathered a broad range of supporters, including Rep. John Conyers from Detroit, Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam, Larry Holmes of the International Action Center, Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Black Workers for Justice, the New Black Panther Party, and many others from the Black nationalist and civil rights movements.

Many rank-and-file union members and local Black leaders were in attendance, including hundreds of 1199 Health and Hospital Workers from New York.

Justice delayed

After the Civil War the Union government promised "40 acres and a mule" to

freed slaves. This was to be not only an acknowledgment of the suffering endured by slaves, but compensation for the great wealth that resulted from many years of unpaid labor. Cotton and tobacco constituted roughly 70 percent of all U.S. exports during slavery's peak.

The government never kept its promise of reparations. Today politicians and many in the mainstream press ridicule the very idea that there are still adverse effects of slavery suffered by the vast majority of African Americans.

In spite of this attack on its legitimacy, the largely grassroots movement for reparations has gained significant momentum recently. The 2001 World Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, gave the issue prominent attention. Conference participants declared the Trans-Atlantic slave trade a "crime against humanity."

This declaration helped legitimize the reparations movement in a world forum. The popularity of this movement has also risen because African Americans currently face severe economic and social hardships and confront an administration that is unresponsive and often hostile to their needs.

This administration is instead bent on attacking other oppressed peoples in imperialist wars.

Prominent lawyers and professors have joined forces with many in the progressive and grassroots civil rights movements to demand compensation for slave labor and decades of Jim Crow laws. They argue that those laws were responsible for the economic and social ills that have adversely affected the Black community.

Substandard education, housing discrimination, racial profiling, inequitable health care and many other social and economic hardships are the legacy of slavery. The lawyers offer that there is no statute of limitations for acts of murder and genocide.

Attorney Roger Wareham has filed a class-action lawsuit, with Deadria Farmer as the lead plaintiff and every descendant of African slaves as co-plaintiffs. The suit targets Fleet Boston Financial, Aetna, and CSX for benefiting directly from slavery. A separate lawsuit filed by the Reparations Coordinating Committee targets the U.S. government.

These lawsuits estimate the accumu-

lated wealth produced by slave labor to be in excess of \$1.5 trillion. Many in the movement, however, emphasize that this is not yet a struggle for monetary compensation but one to revive and subsequently build the civil rights movement.

They also make the point that any money recovered would be shared in the community to improve housing, health care and education for all African Americans.

The organizers have tentatively called for another major reparations event at the UN in September 2003.

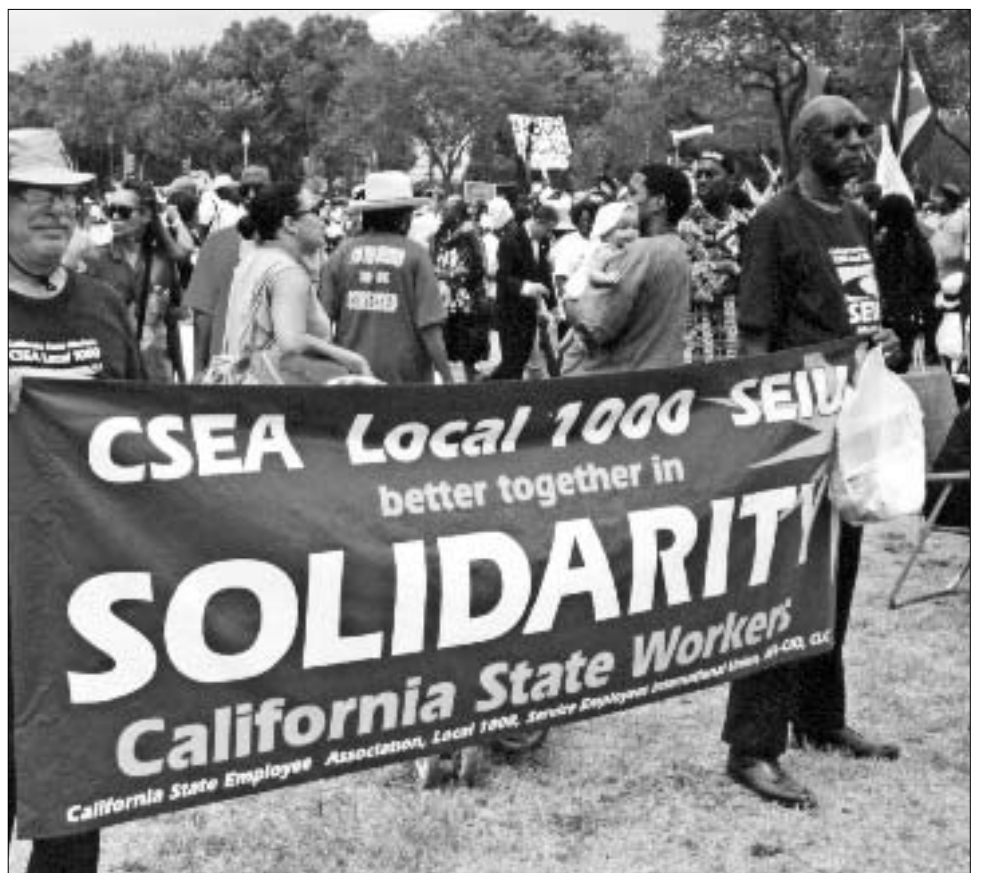


WWP PHOTO: GREG DUNKEL



WWP PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Scenes from the August 17 Reparations Rally in Washington, D.C.



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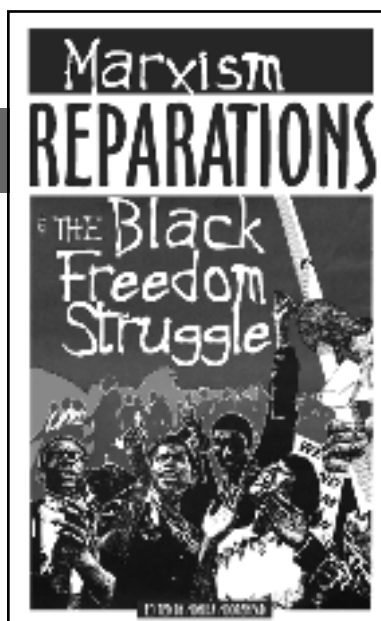
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As U.S. economy sinks

Bush, Pentagon plot criminal war on Iraq

Continued from page 1

coming home could ignite a firestorm of opposition and spoil their plans for total domination of the oil-rich lands where Europe, Asia and North Africa meet.

As the GIs found out all too well during the Vietnam War, the officer class and their buddies in the military-industrial complex consider the young workers in uniform as nothing more than a category of their war machine.

They are valued for the large sums of money spent on their training—not because they are Joe or Jane or Rasheed or Juana, with personalities and dreams and hopes. On the contrary, military training is meant to obliterate as much as possible the quirky and charming individual traits of each unique person and turn sensitive human beings into automated killing machines.

Lest anyone think these criminals' tears for their fallen troops are anything but crocodilian, just look at the shabby treatment of veterans, whose medical and other benefits are being cut even as young recruits are being rushed overseas for a new war.

Gangsterism against a small country

Those in the capitalist establishment who worry about the outcome of the coming war never admit that U.S. policy toward Iraq for decades has been nothing but a heinous exercise of gangsterism against a small country that is virtually defenseless in comparison to the massive high-tech firepower of the Pentagon. All the scare talk about "weapons of mass destruction" and "axis of evil" is just a public-relations scam to obscure the obvious—the U.S., not Iraq, is the Darth Vader the world fears.

The commentators here never seem to get around to even mentioning that the open intention of Washington to effect "regime change"—meaning the overthrow of the Iraqi government—is a violation of numerous international laws, which forbid such acts of blatant aggression and interference in the affairs of other countries.

Those laws were enacted, by the way, only after tremendous anti-colonial upheavals throughout the Third World, when hundreds of millions of people rebelled and threatened the continuity of exploitation by Western and Japanese capital.

Nor do the commentators seem to remember that the U.S. Constitution itself—which the flag-waving imperial adventurers love to invoke as the source of their authority when they're not claiming divine inspiration—explicitly forbids what the president and his cabal are doing in its very first article. The Constitution specifies that only Congress can declare war.

From Korea more than half a century ago to the present, every U.S. war—now euphemistically called "interventions"—has been illegal and unconstitutional. But an "undeclared" war can be every bit as bloody and destructive as a declared one.

The objections of the Republican foreign policy heavies who have weighed in recently—Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Henry Kissinger, Rep. Dick Armey—are based on their fears that the administration is not skillful and patient enough to drag the mass of the people along with it into this war. They are not opposing the imperialist foreign policy of the U.S. capitalist government, but the precipitous and clumsy way in which it is being carried out.



PHOTO: MARYANN DELEO/SIPA PRESS

Iraq's baby milk powder factory, bombed in January 1991. Washington claimed it produced chemical weapons.

Those in the capitalist establishment who worry about the outcome of the coming war never admit that U.S. policy toward Iraq for decades has been nothing but a heinous exercise of gangsterism against a small country

Like the German generals who got the jitters before carrying out some of Hitler's most ferocious offensives, these Republicans also fear the horror and outrage that are sure to follow a war, not only in the Arab countries but all over the world. Kissinger, it should be remembered, recently had to leave France in a hurry because of charges arising from his role in the Chile coup and the murder of President Salvador Allende.

Capitalist crisis drives them toward war

The determination of Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to press ahead with the war, even risking criticism from members of their own party and condemnation from other imperialist powers, indicates that they see the stakes as very high.

But what is at stake here? Not U.S. "national security," which Bush claims to be defending. Iraq is no threat to the U.S., and all attempts by the administration to link it to the Sept. 11 attacks have been exposed as fraudulent.

The real problem is that the administration cannot tolerate the continued defiance by the Iraqi leadership of U.S. efforts to roll back their independence, won in 1958 by an anti-colonial revolution, and bring their country under the total domination of U.S. oil companies.

In the minds of the geopolitical strategists for big business, this should be a time when U.S. hegemony is unchallenged across the globe. They demolished the bloc of socialist countries that had

tried to exist outside their sphere of influence and exploitation. They have brought down many of the anti-colonial regimes in the Third World through covert military action and overt economic sanctions. They have told their imperialist rivals not to even question U.S. hegemony.

Then, from a most unlikely place—right-wing fundamentalists who had worked for the CIA in the war against a pro-socialist Afghan government—came an attack on two symbols of U.S. power. The administration quickly utilized the shock and backlash here to ram through a major military buildup and another war on Afghanistan—this time against former U.S. allies. It also gave the green light to Israel to renew its assault on the Palestinian people in the name of fighting "terrorism."

Bush elaborated a new doctrine: No one, big or small, could sit on the sidelines in his spurious "war on terrorism" or they would be considered to be aiding the "enemy." Yet even these threats have failed to line up support for the coming war.

Now, at the moment of what should be their greatest triumph, these political wheelers and dealers on behalf of the bil-

lionaire ruling class find themselves confronting the greatest and most destructive weakness of capitalism: economic crisis is once again rearing its ugly head. A worldwide struggle is growing among the imperialist powers over control of the world's markets. Making it more ugly by the day is the general crisis of overproduction that is causing multi-billion-dollar corporations to fold and has sent the stock markets into a tailspin.

What will the mood of the workers be at this time next year if the crisis continues and millions of jobs are lost just when personal debt is at an historic high and the social "safety net" has been dismantled?

Under these circumstances, if the economic crisis deepens, another war in Iraq can be the prelude to a period of growing world tensions and the threat of yet another inter-imperialist war.

The capitalist class is pulling the masses of workers into a pit of military conflict that has no discernible bottom. Events are unfolding that will have the most profound effect on millions all over the globe. The motive for the carnage is the most crass possible: the super-profits of the lying, scheming capitalist corporations.

The only course away from disaster is an independent, anti-war fightback. It cannot rely on old warhawks of either capitalist party. But the current situation holds a real promise that the masses of workers—now being squeezed between a rock and a hard place—will fight to defend their own class interests and will resist the dictates of the exploiting crooks and criminals who have been running their lives.



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World opposition to U.S. threats on Iraq

Ramsey Clark letter galvanizes anti-war sentiment

By Greg Butterfield

A letter from former U.S. Attorney General and International Action Center founder Ramsey Clark to the members of the United Nations Security Council has been reprinted, e-mailed and posted on Web sites worldwide. The letter is helping to galvanize opponents of a new U.S. war against Iraq to take action, according to the IAC.

The July 29 letter has been translated into at least nine languages and is being used as an organizing tool by anti-war forces in many countries. It has also elicited an outpouring of heartfelt e-mails from individuals and groups thanking Clark for his strong stand and the IAC for its leadership in the global anti-war movement.

Echoing the themes of his letter on the Pacifica Radio program "Flashpoints" Aug. 15, Clark told journalist Robert Knight: "I don't know of a time in history where a government has so taunted a people with destruction ... The U.S. is telling Iraqis, 'We're going to bomb the hell out of you and install our Shah.' We have to mobilize."

Workers World spoke with the IAC's John Catalinotto, who coordinated the effort to have Clark's letter translated and distributed internationally. "We asked people about two weeks ago to translate Ramsey Clark's letter into as many languages as possible. The response was much stronger than we expected," he reported.

"Right now we have the letter in nine languages that we know of—Arabic, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish—and it's currently being translated into Chinese," Catalinotto said.

"On the one hand it is a sign of the respect that people in the anti-war movement around the world have for Clark. But it was also an even stronger sign that the international working-class and anti-imperialist movement is extremely concerned about the threats against Iraq and is mobilizing to fight against the war," he concluded.

The complete text of the letter is available on the Web at www.iacenter.org in several languages. It has also been posted on Web sites from Canada to New Zealand.

The IAC is part of ANSWER—the Act Now to Stop War and End Racism coalition. ANSWER has called for a day of internationally coordinated demonstrations Oct. 26 to launch a massive mobilization in opposition to a new war against Iraq.

ANSWER is urging local organizers to hold picket lines, rallies, vigils, teach-ins and more in their areas. Log onto www.internationalanswer.org for more information.

A call to action

Although Clark's letter is addressed to the UN Security Council, with copies sent to the UN General Assembly and Senator Joseph Biden of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, its real intended audience is the broad global opposition to a new U.S. war against the Iraqi people. It's a call to action for the people of the world to stand up to Washington and stop the war before it starts.

"Threats to attack, invade and overthrow the government of Iraq by President George Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, various cabinet officers and Pentagon officials have been routine for a year. The psychological warfare is itself a crime against peace and

violates the UN Charter," Clark wrote.

Clark warned that the U.S.-dominated Security Council has stretched the UN's credibility to the limit. "If the UN is unable to restrain the U.S., a permanent member of the Security Council, from committing crimes against peace and humanity as well as war crimes against a nation that has already been violated by the U.S. beyond endurance, then what is the UN worth?"

"At the very least, opposition to any attack or attempt to overthrow the government of Iraq by force must be publicly expressed by the UN."

Clark reminded the Security Council that "The U.S. led and glorified the massive assault on Iraq in January and February 1991. The Pentagon announced it conducted 110,000 aerial sorties against the defenseless 'cradle of civilization,' dropping 88,500 tons of bombs. The widespread bombing destroyed the economic viability of civilian society throughout the nation. It killed tens of thousands of Iraqi citizens and others. A major part of the bombing was directed at civilians and civilian facilities. ...

"The U.S. crafted economic sanctions against Iraq which the Security Council approved on Aug. 6, 1990... Those sanctions are the direct cause of the very cruel deaths of more than a million people.

"The sanctions continue to this time to cause hundreds of deaths each day. Every UN agency dealing with food, health and children—including FAO, WFP, WHO, UNICEF—has proclaimed the horror, magnitude and responsibility for this human catastrophe," Clark charged.

U.S. is biggest threat to peace

Refuting Bush's claim that Iraq is developing weapons of mass destruction, Clark noted, "Two of the highest UN officials responsible for weapons inspection within Iraq and a principle U.S. citizen participating in the inspections have resigned, denounced the sanctions and denied that there is a threat that Iraq will develop weapons of mass destruction."

The real danger comes from Washington, Clark said.

"The U.S. has more nuclear weapons than all other nations combined as well as the most sophisticated and numerous systems for the delivery of nuclear weapons... It possesses the greatest stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons and the most advanced and extensive research in mass destruction weaponry in the world. Military spending by the U.S. exceeds that of the nine next largest budgets for war combined. President Bush has repeatedly declared the right to strike first.

"The U.S. has renounced treaties controlling nuclear weapons and their proliferation; voted against the protocol enabling enforcement of the Biological Weapons Conventions; and rejected the treaty banning land mines, the International Criminal Court and virtually every other international effort to control and limit war. The U.S. War Against Terrorism is a declaration of right by the U.S. to attack first—anyone, anywhere, on mere suspicion, or without excuse, unilaterally.

"If, as promised so many times, the U.S. does attack Iraq to overthrow its government, it will be the most notorious, arrogant and contemptuous violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Nuremberg Charter and international law yet experienced, or likely hereafter," Clark wrote.

"An attack on Iraq by the U.S. would also

If the U.S. does attack Iraq to overthrow its government, it will be the most notorious, arrogant and contemptuous violation of the UN Charter, Nuremberg Charter and international law yet experienced

violate the Constitution and laws of the U.S. and expose President Bush to impeachment by the House of Representatives under the Constitution for the highest of crimes, those against peace and humanity, to judgment by the Senate and trial in federal court for crimes charged," he added.

'Thank you for speaking the truth'

The IAC has released some of the dozens of responses prompted by Clark's letter. Many people who wrote wanted to know how they could get involved in anti-war organizing, while groups said they want to work more closely with the IAC and ANSWER to mobilize resistance.

Some reported that they had sent copies of Clark's letter to local legislators or parliament members. Some, like Lawyers Against the War in Iceland, want to send their own letters to the UN supporting Clark's.

Others are from people outraged by the complete lockdown on alternative views by the mainstream, corporate media. One correspondent, Sally, wrote simply, "Thank you for speaking the truth." Margery from New Orleans said, "I believe you speak for thousands of us who feel the same anguish and outrage you feel about the out-of-control U.S. war machine and its current target, Iraq."

"As an Arab woman and as a human being, I am so grateful that you exist," wrote Dunia. And Ala said, "I am an Iraqi living

in Northern Ireland ... I love my country. I will do whatever I can to stop the USA from bombing Iraq."

"Many here in Canada look on in disbelief and pain as the U.S. rattles its sabers and threatens monumental attacks on Iraq," wrote Jack of the Alberni Social Justice Group. "We wonder why the U.S. government appears to be so completely out of touch with the majority of world opinion."

Jo Anne wrote: "In this time of despair and shame because of the terror acted on the people of Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq and other U.S. targets, it is so good to see a powerful and respected figure speak out against the madness. Every Friday we vigil for one hour in our little city, praying and raising our spirits for peace. We cannot have peace while the president bullies and terrorizes the world."

Peter from Berlin added: "It's horrible to read and to listen to all the news from your country every day. It makes me and all my friends sick in our mind that a country which pretends to represent freedom and democracy behaves like an imperialistic and fascist regime! However, it is not only Bush, it's our [Social Democratic-Green Party coalition] government too, which so many progressive people had a lot of expectations in. And now they have disappointed so many peace-loving people.

"I'm so glad to see that an opposition exists in the U.S. against this nightmare."

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MASSACHUSETTS

Should prisoners pay rent? They say no!

By Phebe Eckfeldt
Boston

An attempt by the state of Massachusetts to balance the budget on the backs of the poorest of the poor—prisoners—is meeting heroic resistance from prisoners themselves.

This spring the state came up \$2 billion short in tax revenues and began slashing social-service programs. In a desperate attempt to raise funds, the government attached language to the appropriation line item for the operation of the Office of the Commissioner of Public Safety that requires prisoners to pay \$5 a day towards the cost of their incarceration.

House Budget Line 8000-0000, as it is called, would give the state the power to take that money out of prisoners' canteen funds or their pay, if they have jobs.

Prisoners are already forced to buy all their personal items such as soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toilet paper, clothing, footwear and medications from the prison-run canteen.

In addition, the state would force released inmates to pay up to 25 percent of their earnings from any job on the outside in order to pay back the accrued debt. It is estimated that a prisoner released after serving five years would owe more than \$9,000.

When in the spring the warden at the Bristol County House of Corrections arbitrarily decided to impose this \$5-a-day fee before the law was passed, prisoners rebelled for two days. On Aug. 7 a lawsuit was filed against this fee on the prisoners' behalf.

Item 8000-0000 has passed the State House of Representatives and is now before the Senate. Proponents say that it would generate \$1.1 million in revenue from prisoners and their families.

Prisoner leads protest

Nathaniel Atkins is an inmate serving a double life sentence at the Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center (SBCC) in Shirley, Mass. At great personal risk, Atkins, along with other inmates, wrote a sample letter protesting this attack. Prisoners were asked to get family members, friends and other supporters to send this letter to their senators in protest.

The letter says the budget rider "is designed to guarantee that poor people who become incarcerated will be consigned to degrading sub-poverty status for the rest of their lives. A financial slavery that will extend for many years after their release from prison.

"To charge \$5 a day to the person committed to a State/County correctional facility only furthers desperation and op-

pression in the lives of that person and their family. It makes a bad circumstance even worse. A huge majority of the incarcerated are at a poverty level to begin with and they have family to support.

"Allowing this \$5 a day to accrue and then the bill managed by probation/parole to be paid after the person wraps up a sentence is legalizing extortion. It is also a motive for someone NOT to seek legitimate employment upon completion of his sentence."

At SBCC jobs are available for only around 20 percent of the prisoners and the average pay is \$1.50 per day. Working six days per week, this translates into \$9.00 per week.

To add insult to injury, Line Item 8000-0000 also states that if a prisoner is found responsible for injuring a guard and the guard needs workers' compensation or has medical bills as a result, the prisoner will be responsible for those costs. Many observers consider these new rules an expansion of racism, as in Massachusetts African American men make up 40 percent of the prison population but only 5.4 percent of the state population.

SBCC is a super-max, high-tech prison. Prisoners are kept in their cells 20 hours a day. Contact among prisoners in a cellblock is only possible for very short periods during gym and yard time and 20 minutes during meals.

Despite this isolation, Atkins and fellow prisoner activists were able to flood the entire prison with this letter, reaching all 16 cell blocks with 64 men per block. This underscores the tremendous respect Atkins has earned over the years as a political activist.

Prison authorities frame Atkins

To stop his organizing and remove him from the general population, the

Department of Corrections decided to frame up Atkins on bogus charges. A prison informant told authorities Atkins said he would take the superintendent hostage if the bill passed.

Atkins was thrown into the segregation unit where a prisoner is confined to a 7-foot by 10-foot cell 23 hours a day for five days a week and 24 hours a day for the other two. Abuse by guards is random, arbitrary and frequent. No televisions or radios are allowed, only Walkmans, a Bible or Koran and first-class mail. Human contact is irregular and infrequent and only with staff.

Atkins remained in segregation for 43 days. But he refused to be intimidated and managed to continue to educate other prisoners in the segregation unit on this issue.

Atkins' supporters were able to secure legal assistance for his disciplinary board hearing and in writing his subsequent appeal. Recently the Department of Corrections ruled Atkins guilty on two charges, including threatening the warden. His punishment is the loss of six weeks of library time and no work anywhere for six months. This translates into total loss of income.

Atkins told Workers World, "People cannot concern themselves with individual repercussions because that isn't what it's all about—the individual. It's about the collective, the good for the whole. Someone has to step forward to fight the good fight. We all know a standing stream will become stale and putrid so to keep it healthy you must agitate, agitate and agitate."

Atkins and his supporters outside the prison are asking Massachusetts residents to write a letter to their senator protesting House Budget Line 8000-0000.

Letters of support can be sent to: Nathaniel Atkins, Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center, P.O. Box 8000, Shirley, MA 01464.

Pa. ruling

Guards may assault women prisoners

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Women members of the MOVE 9 currently incarcerated at the Pennsylvania State Correctional Institute at Cambridge Springs are protesting an Aug. 5 ruling that allows male guards at Cambridge Springs to "pat search" women prisoners.

Under the policy, already in effect at other women's prisons in the state, male guards can run their hands over all parts of women prisoners' bodies, including vaginal searches, any time they want to.

A statement from the MOVE 9 women—Janet, Janine and Debbie Africa—issued Aug. 12 notes that there have already been instances of sexual misconduct by employees. In August 1997, Cambridge Springs prison was under investigation by state representatives for misuse and abuse of authority and sexual misconduct. At that time four officers were found guilty of sexual harassment and fired.

Their statement points out that there is an adequate number of women officers at Cambridge Springs—a minimum-security facility—to make any searches by male guards unnecessary.

The MOVE women are challenging the Aug. 5 ruling as a violation of the prison rulebook policy DC-ADM 008 on sexual harassment, which defines it in part as "the intentional touching, either directly or through clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thighs, or buttocks of any inmate."

In their view, allowing a male guard to touch a woman prisoner's vagina as part of

a "pat search" is not just sexual harassment, it amounts to rape, and they fear it will only encourage more molestation of women prisoners.

In response to the ruling, on Aug. 14, a delegation consisting of lawyers and scholars from Spain traveled to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections head office in Camp Hill, Pa., to meet with the head superintendent of the Department of Corrections. The delegation voiced opposition to the ruling.

A demonstration for prisoners' rights is being planned in Pennsylvania in early October. Time and location will be announced. Calls to demand that this policy be repealed statewide should be made to Secretary Jeffrey A. Beard of the Central Office for Pennsylvania Prisons at (717) 975-4859. Calls should also be made to Cambridge Springs Warden Brooks—herself a woman—at (814) 398-5400 to explain that allowing this policy to go into effect would constitute her endorsement of violence against women.

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NYC mayor makes homeless sleep in jail

By G. Dunkel
New York City

New York's billionaire mayor Michael Bloomberg decided he would solve the housing crisis for homeless families in New York City by putting them in prison.

His team picked an unused detention center in the Bronx, a few blocks from the Emergency Assistance Unit. They tacked up a few sheets of plywood here and there to hide the bars, and tied back the doors so they wouldn't bang in the night, like they do in active jails.

Then the first families were moved in. Soon pictures of kids playing in front of the bars and behind the barbed wire, and families marching into a building that could be nothing but a prison, started hitting the local press and television.

Bloomberg and his allies found it hard to justify putting homeless people in prison, when their only crime was being poor. The Legal Aid Society, which has had a suit against the city for years for its treatment of the homeless, quickly examined the prison and found elevated levels of lead in peeling paint.

The city responded by removing children younger than 5 and saying it was considering other alternatives, like convents and YMCA facilities. Bloomberg's people say they will conduct their own testing to make sure Legal Aid got it right.

Part of the pressure on Bloomberg comes from the case of 16-year-old Jason-Eric Wilson, who committed suicide Aug. 5 after his family was shuttled between the Bronx unit and temporary shelters. Wilson was mentally ill, and his family had become poor after his father was diagnosed with leukemia in 1996 and lost his job. He could not cope with the stress of the Emergency Assistance Unit, which his social worker noted.

But Wilson would have been no better off going to spend the night in a jail.

New York City has a serious problem with homeless families. Some 8,400 are officially on the waiting list for emergency housing, a 25-percent increase from last year at this time.

But to adopt a dangerous, dehumanizing, hasty and ill-conceived vehicle doesn't even come close to a solution—except perhaps in a billionaire's dreams.

Cops for the empire

U.S. to stay in Afghanistan 'for years'

By John Catalinotto

Each successive U.S. military intervention has turned into a long-term occupation of countries in every region of the world. Lately the top officials have even stopped making promises about "bringing the troops home."

On Aug. 15, War Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and U.S. commander for Afghanistan Gen. Tommy Franks laid it on the table: U.S. troops will be staying in Afghanistan for years. Franks says it's to make sure there is no base for "terrorists."

When U.S. troops went into Bosnia in 1996, then-President Bill Clinton promised to bring them home by the end of the year. But there are still U.S. troops in Bosnia, plus a long-term base in Kosovo, plus U.S. and NATO bases all over the Balkans.

You might gather from the above that a major difference between Democratic and Republican administrations is the character of the lies they tell to justify imperialist foreign policy. The Democrats pretend the occupation doesn't exist. The Republicans try to cover up everything by harking back to Sept. 11,

2001, and the "war on terrorism."

"We are engaged in military-to-military relationships in a great many countries around the world so it does not surprise me that someone would say, 'Oh gosh, the military's going to be in Afghanistan for a long, long, time,'" Franks said at a Pentagon briefing Aug. 15. "Sure we will be."

"Truth be told, the security situation in Afghanistan is reasonably good," Rumsfeld claimed from the same podium. "Is the situation perfectly tidy? No."

The truth is that the U.S. destruction of the Taliban regime has left Afghanistan with a central government split into hostile factions, none of them having the support or respect of any large part of the population.

U.S. troops guard president

The current president, Hamid Karzai, is an acknowledged U.S. puppet, so much so that 70 U.S. Special Forces troops serve as his personal bodyguards. This is a blatant admission that without direct U.S. support, he'd be assassinated in days.

It is also an admission of failure by Washington. It means that any opponent of Karzai need only point to his bodyguards to show that the U.S. is directly running the country and Karzai is nothing but a puppet.

For all the talk about preventing the use of Afghanistan by "terrorists," what Rumsfeld and Franks really mean is that without U.S. military occupation Afghanistan would not currently exist as a cohesive unit. The country has been so ravaged by decades of U.S.-fomented civil war, followed by the U.S. invasion and occupation, that it is instead a region of various ethnic groups ruled from Washington.

And it is a region where 6 million people face starvation, where women have no

rights, where U.S.-backed forces massacred hundreds of Taliban captives at Dasht-i-Leili—now to be investigated by a United Nations commission—and where the mass of the people face a future even bleaker than it was under the Taliban.

This is the result of the U.S. war on that country.

At the present time, as Franks admitted, the Pentagon has its forces stationed in bases and actively engaged in battles in all parts of the globe. There are U.S. "advisers" actively involved in the Philippines against the revolutionary New People's Army, in Colombia against the revolutionary FARC-EP, and even in Georgia in the Caucasus, just over the border from the civil war in Chechnya.

Since Sept. 11 the U.S. has set up bases in various Central Asian countries using as its excuse the "war on terrorism." Once the troops are there, however, they remain to protect U.S.-based transnationals, especially the big energy companies and the pipelines delivering energy sources.

They are the troops of the Empire, fighting without allies and relying more and more on naked power and the fear they inspire.

Now Rumsfeld, Cheney, Bush and the whole gang are not only planning the invasion of Iraq, they are also—according to the Aug. 19 Newsweek—talking of taking on north Korea, Myanmar, Iran, Syria, maybe even Saudi Arabia, and occupying all of Asia and the Middle East.

It may look like a great vision to them. But it is a formula that promises suffering throughout the world and the life of hired killers for U.S. youths.

It's a formula that has failed before. It promises to stir resistance, at home and abroad.

Report from Assisi, Italy

International Anti-Imperialist Camp

Special to Workers World Assisi, Italy

Over 200 anti-imperialist activists from Europe and around the world gathered in an outdoor camp in Assisi, Italy, the first week in August to discuss experiences, strategy and theory in the fight against war and repression through a series of plenary sessions and workshops.

In an attempt to frighten activists and obscure the issues, the big business press of Italy immediately ran headlines baiting the gathering, such as, "1,500 terrorists have come to Assisi."

Sharon Black Ceci, a delegate from the International Action Center in the U.S., was loudly applauded when she declared in response to the press at the opening plenary on Aug. 5, "The real terrorists are 45 minutes away from my home town in Baltimore. They reside in Washington, D.C., at the Pentagon and the White House. Capitalist exploitation is terror! Imperialist war and domination is terror and the U.S. is the citadel of both!"

In this atmosphere, Italian police demanded that the camp organizers allow them to seize Chilean revolutionary Jaime Jovanovic Pietro to expel him. The organizers refused the police requests. A tense standoff began until Jovanovic Pietro, known as Professor J, decided to ask for asylum at the Catholic Church in Assisi.

But church officials allowed police to enter. They seized Professor J and deported him to South Africa. Picket lines and press conferences took up a campaign to expose the Italian authorities for refusing to support an anti-fascist fighter. Professor J is accused of assassinating a fascist Chilean general and of attempting to kill dictator Augusto Pinochet.

Camp activities continued despite police searches of cars coming and going. Discussions centered on the issue of the increased use of repression by both the United States and European capitalist powers, the role of social democracy in Europe, support of liberation struggles around the world and the threat of U.S. aggression against Iraq.

Representatives from liberation struggles around the world, including Palestine, the Basque Country, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Argentina, Indonesia, the Philippines and Morocco, made exciting presentations.

Cesar Taguba, BAYAN Philippines representative, discussed his organization's support for the independence of the island



At Iraq workshop in Anti-imperialist Camp.

of Mindanao while fighting against U.S. domination. He announced that the U.S. had deployed up to 7,000 troops in the Philippines. He declared, "We will resist the U.S. war of terror against our people."

The Basque people's movement for freedom was highlighted because of the tremendous attacks that Spain is now waging against their struggle. Spain has sought to ban Batasuna, the Basque people's organization, which has garnered 15 percent of the vote in recent elections. This attack is being orchestrated under the guise of declaring Batasuna a "terrorist organization."

A special session was devoted to the illegal trial in The Hague of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. All the panelists attacked the U.S. war against Yugoslavia and called for an end to the tribunal. Speakers were Fulvio Grimaldi, Italian journalist and member of the International Committee for the Defense of Slobodan Milosevic; Aldo Bernadini, professor of international law; Serguei Novikov, historian and representative of the Communist Workers Party of Russia-Revolutionary Party of Communists; and Andrea Martocchia, National Coordination for Yugoslavia in Italy.

Representatives from organizations in Greece, Turkey, Germany, Russia, Scotland, Britain, Austria, Italy, France and the United States attended.

The camp passed important action resolutions, including an international day of support for the Palestinian struggle on Sept. 28, the second anniversary of the current Intifada. The camp also called for demonstrations Oct. 26 in Brussels against the European Union and its adoption of a "Black List" similar to Washington's targeted list of countries and liberation struggles. It also called for an international delegation to travel to Iraq in the event of a U.S. attack.

Czech CP says:

Call off NATO meeting, use funds for flood relief

By John Catalinotto

Are the floods devastating Central Europe and South Asia a result of global warming? No proof yet, but these record floods—which have killed hundreds in Asia and brought as much as \$20 billion in damage to the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary and eastern Germany—have already had political repercussions.

The floods have aroused protest of the next major summit meeting of NATO ministers, scheduled for Prague on Nov. 20. At that meeting, NATO plans to increase its membership by adding at least a few more formerly socialist Eastern European countries, tightening the grip of the Western imperialists on this region.

The meeting will require a substantial outlay of funds by the pro-capitalist Czech government, which brought the Czech Republic into NATO in 1999. Not everyone in the country thinks this is a good idea.

According to the newsletter Postmark Prague, on Aug. 15 the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia demanded that the government call off the NATO summit and use the \$560 million saved to help the victims of the catastrophic floods.

"Party Vice-Chair Miloslav Ransdorf (MP) told journalists that official estimates of the damage caused by the flood were too

low. Reports from the CPBM's regional and district organizations suggested that the real cost would be nearer" \$2.8 billion, Postmark Prague reported.

In recent national elections, the CPBM made substantial gains, increasing its vote from 11 to 18.5 percent and its seats in Parliament from 24 to 41.

The experience of living under real capitalism—with its unemployment, cuts in social services, economic instability and foreign domination—has turned a larger portion of the population back to communist and pro-socialist parties in the Czech Republic, as it has in other former socialist countries.

The Western powers look to integrating these countries into NATO in order to ensure that they remain under imperialist domination, with de facto military occupation by NATO forces.



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Hands off Zimbabwe

In a spasm of arrogance fitting an ancient emperor, the Bush administration announced it considers Zimbabwe's government "illegitimate and irrational." They say they will work to overthrow President Robert Mugabe, whose recent election victory they assert was "marred by fraud." More to the point, Mugabe is now carrying out a long-promised land reform. (See related article on page 11.)

Isn't this the same Bush gang that won an election in 2000 by blocking the count of Black voters in Florida? Wasn't that election thus "marred by fraud" and by bribery? The bribers were George W. Bush's buddies who ran the giant monopolies that later went bankrupt and are now being investigated for record-breaking fraud and theft. Didn't Vice President Dick Cheney grow rich at Halliburton from the same schemes that brought these other speculative firms to disaster?

Aren't they meeting in Crawford, Texas, where the agenda may be secret, but which will certainly end up pouring many more hundreds of billions of dollars into the most destructive military in human history? Haven't they spread U.S. "advisers" and combat troops to the Philippines, Colombia, Afghanistan and all over the Persian/Arabian Gulf region to prepare a massive invasion of Iraq, to kill how many more million Iraqi civilians?

This gang dares to talk of "illegitimate and irrational"?

Perhaps we are confused and this isn't the same administration that refuses to even join talks about the dangers of global warming and the threats of industrial pollution to the environment. Such industrial pollution is a probable cause of the 1970-1985 African drought that starved 1.2 million on the continent. (See article, page 10.)

Instead they are blaming President Mugabe for hunger in southern Africa because he is seizing the land of wealthy farmers who grow tobacco. The experts at the U.S. Agency for International Development who attacked Mugabe

have failed to explain how the tobacco will feed the people of Zimbabwe.

At present Bush and Co. don't seem to worry that using the terms "illegitimate and irrational" will boomerang. But they should.

We wonder if they will somehow accuse the Zimbabwe leadership of being in league with "terrorists." The "War on Terror" is the Bush gang's usual excuse for intervention. Since Sept. 11, 2001, they've found this to be an easier pretext for war and intervention than "the need to defend human rights and democracy," the favored excuse of the Clinton group.

We want to be clear on two points: First, neither the U.S. government nor the former British colonial rulers of "Rhodesia" nor any of the imperialist countries in Western Europe or NATO have any right or any business whatsoever intervening to undermine the Zimbabwe government, let alone sending military forces to intimidate or invade that people. Nor have they the right to use economic threats, withholding food aid, etc., to carry out changes in the government there. The imperialists owe this aid as a minimal part of the reparations due Africans for the colonial and slave eras. Progressive forces in these countries should do whatever is possible to prevent such intervention.

Second, the Bush gang are more and more dependent for their continued stewardship of U.S. imperialism on the raw power of the state apparatus they have their hands on. They manage on the one hand a declining economy and on the other an endless war. They are the prime example in the world of "illegitimate and irrational" rule, and they are the gravest danger to humanity. And more and more people not only throughout the world but here in the United States are daring to say it and raise a challenge to this illegitimate regime.

U.S. pollution behind African drought

By Gary Wilson

The African drought from 1970 to 1985 killed 1.2 million people in one of the most devastating famines ever known. A new study by scientists from Australia and Canada has concluded that the cause was sulfur dioxide spewed out by factories and power plants in the United States, Canada and Western Europe.

The pollution of North America and Europe disrupted weather patterns, dramatically changing the temperature of the Earth's surface. This led to a reduction in rainfall by as much as 50 percent in the Sahel region of Africa that stretches from Senegal to Ethiopia.

Tiny airborne particles called sulfate aerosols, which are found only in the highly industrialized countries, boost the number of small droplets in clouds; researchers have found that this extends the lifetime of clouds. Some suspect that the particles also make clouds reflect more sunlight, cooling Earth's surface below, reducing evaporation, and ultimately decreasing rainfall.

"Global climate change is not solely being caused by rising levels of greenhouse gases. Atmospheric pollution is also having an effect," says Leon Rotstajn, the Australian scientist who headed the study.

According to Rotstajn, the sulfate aerosol pollution concentrations are far greater in the Northern Hemisphere, cooling the atmosphere there more than in the Southern Hemisphere. It is this imbalance that affects the tropical rain belt. As a result, the tropical rain belt, which migrates northwards and southwards with the seasonal movement of the sun, is weakened in the Northern Hemisphere and does not move as far north.

The New Scientist magazine quotes another scientific researcher, David Roberts:

"It's an effect of the thermal balance between the two hemispheres. There has to be a rough balance between the north and south hemispheres—you can't have spare energy in one place or the other. If the Earth was completely symmetrical, then the point of thermal equilibrium, where the total energy on either side of a line was equal, would be the Equator. But because the Northern Hemisphere isn't the same



as the south [because of the vast energy reservoir of the Pacific, which retains energy more efficiently than land] we find that the Northern Hemisphere is warmer than the South."

However, the cooling of the Northern Hemisphere by aerosol pollution pushes the point of thermal equilibrium south—and with it go the rain clouds that had covered the Sahel. It may also explain the flooding rains that are now sweeping southern Africa.

One change that the researchers cite in the study occurred in the 1980s. At that time, improvements in anti-pollution laws meant that sulfur emissions dropped because they were blamed for acid rain. Following that change, the droughts in Africa became less severe.

With the new understanding of the connection between sulfate aerosol pollution and rainfall, the position taken by Washington administrations from George W. Bush to Bill Clinton can no longer be sustained. Washington had claimed that nothing needed to be done about global warming because the aerosol pollution cools the Earth. Now it has been shown that this kind of cooling contributes to changing weather patterns in ways that are disastrous for millions of people, just as are the rising sea levels caused by global warming.

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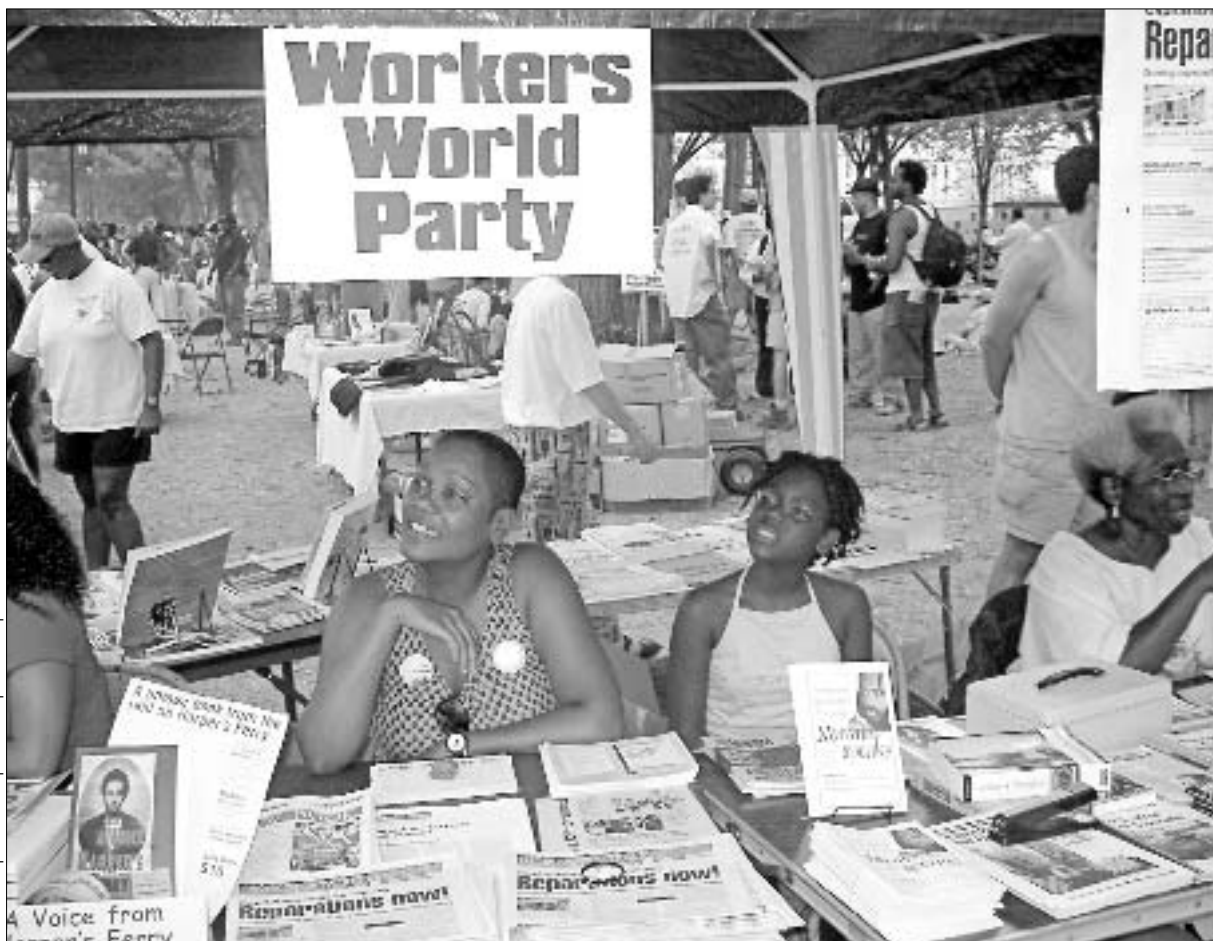
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ZIMBABWE

The driving force behind land seizures

By Monica Moorehead

On Aug. 15, the Zimbabwean government, led by President Robert Mugabe, began the process of physically expropriating the land from white farmers who had defied the timetable given them to abandon their farms.

The Western capitalist press reported that as of Aug. 18, over 130 white farmers had been arrested for refusing to relinquish the lands to war veterans. These veterans are Black Zimbabweans who fought a national liberation struggle against Ian Smith's white racist regime.

Smith ruled what was then called Rhodesia from 1965-1980. It was much like the apartheid regime of South Africa. Smith remains a landowner in Zimbabwe while the masses remain landless.

The Lancaster House agreement the liberation forces of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) signed with the Smith regime in 1980 fell far short of winning total liberation for the masses. In essence, the agreement helped the white farmers and corporate interests to maintain economic control of Zimbabwe, while former members of the liberation forces took over the administrative reins and ran the country politically.

In the 19th century, Zimbabwe was made a colonial possession by the racist colonizer, Cecil Rhodes, on behalf of the then British Empire, which named the nation after Rhodes for this conquest. For many generations to the present day, the Zimbabwean people along with the rest of the African continent have been brutally robbed of land, resources, cultural and economic development and subjected to slave labor under colonialism and neo-colonialism.

The capitalist press has characterized Mugabe in the most horrible racist way, calling him a dictator and a tyrant. But what is really behind this demonization? It is a cover-up for the main crime against humanity.

Poverty: Who's to blame

What is the relationship of these land seizures to the deepening impoverishment of the Zimbabwean people?

The Zimbabwean economy is based mainly on agriculture, like most of Africa, due to colonial underdevelop-



Some 96 percent of the economy is out of the hands of the Black Zimbabwean people. Now they're taking back the land.

ment. Before the recent land seizures, 4,500 white commercial farmers controlled at least 70 percent of the most arable lands. Most Zimbabweans were reduced to being peons or tenants in relationship to the land. Others exist in barren, Bantustan-type conditions.

Black Zimbabweans do not hold the reins of the real power—they neither own the major means of production nor control how the economy is run. The Zimbabwean people are dispossessed not only of their lands but of the economy as a whole.

Baffour Ankomah spent two weeks in Zimbabwe after the recent reelection of Mugabe. In his special report called, "Zimbabwe: Life after the election," in the May edition of the New African publication, he makes this point on the economy: Black Zimbabweans control just 4 percent of the economy while the white farmers control 30 percent and the British-dominated transnational corporations control 66 percent of the economy.

That means that 96 percent of the economy is out of control of the Black Zimbabweans people.

The life of Black workers on these white farms is very similar to a slave plantation in the old U.S. South. The New African report states that on one farm in the northern part of the country, Black workers are forced to work 13-hour days for Z\$1,500 per month. The Zim dollar amounts to Z\$55 to the US\$1 on paper but in reality, on the informal market, the Z dollar is really Z\$300 to the US\$1. So in U.S. dollars this amounts to an astounding \$5 for these Black workers, not per week but per month!

Ankomah quoted a number of Black workers who described this super-exploitation: "If you are employed on January 1, you get your first pay check on February 15, and the cycle goes on. At the end of the year, it adds up to three months lost pay. And we never get paid our full salary, never; because by the end of the month, we already owe the boss money that he takes out of our salaries before paying us."

The highest paid farm worker in Zimbabwe reportedly makes Z\$3,000, or US\$10 per month. Urban Zimbabweans are relegated to being servants for corporate management.

Food Production

The land question ultimately leads to the issue of food production. Zimbabwe is in the throes of a horrible famine brought by a long period of drought. Pro-imperialist critics have accused Mugabe of wielding



Squatters build homes, farm and rally around President Mugabe.



food policies as a "political weapon."

Some of the big-business press and Western imperialist apologists state that yes, war veterans should have the land, but white farmers are needed because they have the expertise to grow food to turn around the famine. This is not only a racist insult to justify these white-owned farms, but a lie to boot.

These racist farmers couldn't care less about the plight of six million starving, malnourished Zimbabweans. These farmers are tied to the worldwide capitalist market, meaning that they are driven to sell their harvest to the agribusiness market to make the most profits.

It has been documented that these white farmers have destroyed maize, the main staple crop of the country, for political reasons or have turned this crop into animal feed rather than provide it for human consumption.

George Monbiot, in his article "Our Racist Demonology" that appeared in the Guardian (UK) on Aug. 13, states that 70 percent of the maize crop is not grown by white farmers but by Black peasant farmers, who are desperately trying to feed their families. In reality, a majority of the white farms grow tobacco and not food for the population.



In the aftermath of the national liberation struggle, Zimbabwe was able to produce enough food to feed its population. Today, as a victim of the globalization of capitalism, it is forced to rely on food aid. Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund forces the government to use money that used to go for education, health care and other social services to pay the foreign debt.

It is no wonder these war veterans have decided to take matters in their own hands to reclaim the farm land that should be theirs by birthright. By expropriating the land, these former colonized masses are carrying out their own form of Reconstruction or reparations that is long overdue. What is going on in Zimbabwe today is really another stage in the ongoing revolution for winning democratic rights.

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Una acción energética para detener la guerra de EEUU contra Iraq

Por Brian Becker

Pensando en dos audiencias, el Presidente Bush, el Vicepresidente Dick Cheney, el Secretario de la Defensa Rumsfeld y el sub Secretario de la Defensa Paul Wolfowitz están creando un aura de inevitabilidad en torno a la guerra. Esperan dividir al ejército iraquí; pero Bush y 'compañía' también están tratando de desmoralizar a cualquiera, tanto dentro del país como fuera, que quiera desafiar la guerra antes de que empiece: Bush y el Pentágono conocen la historia de la guerra de Vietnam y ahora están asustados por el potencial que tiene el masivo movimiento de resistencia contra la guerra, desde Washington DC hasta las calles de Amán o de El Cairo.

Es imprescindible que todas las organizaciones en contra de la guerra y la clase trabajadora progresista traten de detener la próxima guerra de EEUU contra Iraq. Estas organizaciones progresistas deben basar su estrategia y su táctica en el supuesto de que la Administración Bush está determinada a atacar Iraq y a sustituir al actual gobierno con un régimen títere como el que se ha instalado en Afganistán. Sin embargo, y a pesar del objetivo de la Administración Bush, tanto en EEUU como en el resto del mundo existen suficientes elementos disuasorios potenciales que aún podrían evitar una nueva invasión.

Una guerra contra Iraq es una guerra del imperialismo contra un pueblo que anteriormente estuvo oprimido y colonizado. Es una guerra por el petróleo contra un pueblo que osó nacionalizar sus campos de petróleo y trató de utilizar los ingresos petrolíferos para lograr que su país emergiera como un poder regional moderno e independiente en el Golfo Árabe/Persa, una región contiene dos tercios de las reservas mundiales conocidas de petróleo.

La clase trabajadora no se debe dejar engañar por la propaganda de guerra de la Casa Blanca, que no es más que propaganda cuyo objetivo es justificar la agresión a Iraq. Hace diez años fue filtrado al New York Times -que lo publicó el 8 de marzo de 1992- un análisis político autorizado del Pentágono, redactado por Paul Wolfowitz, hoy subsecretario de Defensa y en el que los estrategas estadounidenses dejaban claro que no iban a aceptar ningún desafío al

dominio de EEUU en cualquier región del planeta. Bush y el Pentágono están preparando una guerra, pero no porque temen la capacidad de Saddam Husein para desarrollar armas de destrucción masiva, o porque les asquee la naturaleza no democrática del gobierno de Iraq. Washington apoya a monarquías dictatoriales como las de Arabia Saudí y Kuwait, y envía 15 millones de dólares al día a Israel cuando este gobierno ha invadido Líbano, ocupa los Territorios Palestinos y ha creado un vasto e ilegal arsenal de armas nucleares.

Guerra psicológica como preludio de la invasión

Recientemente la Administración Bush ha incrementado una guerra psicológica a gran escala contra el régimen iraquí y su pueblo. Se ha desviado por crear un aura de inevitabilidad respecto al próximo conflicto. Se trata de una importante campaña coordinada planificada para dividir al gobierno iraquí como preludio de la acción militar de EEUU.

Una reunión de cientos de [desertores] militares iraquíes y opositores políticos a Saddam Husein, celebrada en Londres del 11 al 13 de julio y apoyada por la CIA, anunció la creación de un virtual gobierno en el exilio. Es destacable la presencia en la reunión del segundo máximo dirigente jordano, el príncipe heredero Hasán. Aunque Jordania se ha opuesto públicamente a una guerra contra su vecino más extenso territorialmente, el 12 de julio los medios de comunicación occidentales informaron ampliamente de que su monarquía pro-estadounidense "accedía secretamente a permitir que las fuerzas especiales norteamericanas operaran desde dos de sus bases aéreas" cuando tuviera lugar la invasión (The Herald of Scotland, 12 de julio de 2002).

Otros artículos importantes han aparecido en los principales periódicos de los aliados de EEUU con llamativos titulares como éste del National Post de Canadá de 16 de julio: "Iraq está abocado a perder, rápidamente, completamente". El mismo día, el Primer Ministro británico, Tony Blair, se desvivía por comunicar a los miembros del parlamento que su gobierno no tenía la obligación de discutir con esta cámara ningún tipo de participación británica en la próxima guerra.

El 14 de julio, Paul Wolfowitz, el ahora número dos del Pentágono y principal defensor de la guerra, mantuvo una con-



MO FOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Nasiriyah, Iraq, 1996. EEUU bombardeó la ciudad durante 42 días en 1991.

ferencia de prensa en Turquía—probable lugar desde el que EEUU empezará su ataque—anunciando que este país cosecharía beneficios económicos del derrocamiento del régimen iraquí. Turquía está sufriendo una grave crisis económica, y su gobierno estaba al borde del colapso en el mismo momento en que Wolfowitz representaba su función, cubierta extensamente por los bravucones medios.

Impacto del plan de guerra 'filtrado'

La guerra psicológica de la administración (o Psyops, tal y como se conoce en la jerga militar), empezó con especial intensidad cuando un expediente reservado de más de doce centímetros de grosor y que detallaba los planes para una invasión de Iraq con 250.000 soldados fue filtrado al New York Times. El 5 de julio este periódico publicó la noticia de forma destacada en la portada. El editorial subsiguiente dos días después no discutía la legalidad o rectitud de la planeada agresión— a diferencia de como lo había hecho, extraordinariamente bien, cuando publicó los papeles secretos del Pentágono en junio de 1971, lo que incrementó la oposición pública a la política estadounidense en Vietnam. El editorial de The Times del 5 de julio sobre la noticia de la invasión a Iraq se limitaba a pedir que la táctica del plan de guerra se debatiera en el Congreso y en otras partes.

Desde la noticia de The Times del 5 de julio, la prensa escrita y la televisión se han visto dominados por una discusión sobre la táctica de la próxima guerra. ¿Debe ser ésta una invasión a gran escala de cientos de miles de soldados o una operación relámpago de las fuerzas especiales acompañada de un bombardeo estratégico? El debate, limitado exclusivamente a lo que serían la "mejor táctica" está planificado para dejar a todo el mundo, tanto en Iraq como entre el público estadounidense, con la nítida impresión de que el conflicto militar es inevitable y, por lo tanto, imposible de resistir.

¿Quién plantea la cuestión de quién filtró el documento clasificado al New York Times en primer lugar? "Al The Observer

de Londres se le dijo que la filtración procedía del Pentágono, del despacho de la Junta de jefes de Estado Mayor, la elite militar encargada de diseñarlo", afirmaba este medio el 14 de julio.

¿Se puede parar la guerra?

Pensando en dos audiencias, Bush, el Vicepresidente Dick Cheney, el Secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld y [su Subsecretario] Wolfowitz están creando un aura de inevitabilidad en torno a la guerra. Esperan dividir al ejército iraquí, pretendiendo que secciones del alto mando iraquí deserten antes de enfrentarse a una aniquilación segura. Pero Bush y compañía también están tratando de desmoralizar a cualquiera, tanto dentro del país como fuera, que quiera desafiar la guerra antes de que empiece: Bush y el Pentágono conocen la historia de la guerra de Vietnam y ahora están asustados por el potencial que tiene el masivo movimiento de resistencia contra la guerra, desde Washington DC hasta las calles de Amán o de El Cairo.

Mientras que los centros del liberalismo burgués desempeñan su habitual papel temeroso y colaboracionista frente a los ultra-militaristas, los verdaderos luchadores progresistas y antiimperialistas tienen que hacer todo lo que esté en su mano por movilizar una oposición de las bases en cada campus, instituto, lugar de trabajo y comunidad.

Mientras Bush rebaja drásticamente el dinero destinado a la educación, vivienda, empleo y sanidad, llama a los hijos e hijas de la clase trabajadora a matar y a morir en los desiertos de la Península Arábiga por el bien de ExxonMobil, Texaco, Chase, Citibank y sus socios. Esta guerra no tiene que producirse. Ahora es el momento de que el movimiento contra la guerra intensifique sus movilizaciones entre la clase trabajadora y los pobres, y especialmente entre los jóvenes, incluidos quienes llevan uniforme. Todas las fuerzas contra la guerra deben unirse ahora mismo para lanzar una enérgica y decidida movilización popular, tanto en EEUU como en el resto del mundo.

Es el momento de recordarles a los que hacen la guerra que no se puede detener la resistencia a sus planes de matanza y destrucción.

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