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## As U.S. casualties rise

# Pentagon faced with new quagmires

## Resistance to domination flares in Middle East

By Deirdre Griswold

The Pentagon said on June 10 that 205 U.S. military personnel have died in Iraq since the war on that country officially began on March 20. Right now, the deaths are running about one a day. The government count of U.S. wounded is now 627.

These figures are low compared to the large number of Iraqi people killed and wounded. Iraqi civilian deaths alone number in the many thousands. Their homes have been bombed, children have been blown apart, whole families have died. U.S. forces have also fired on crowds of unarmed demonstrators.

On June 10, in what was described as the largest combat operation since the U.S. declared the war over, "more than 3,000 soldiers backed by fighter jets, armored vehicles and patrol boats" surrounded a 30-square-mile peninsula north of Baghdad called Thuluiya. (New York Times, June 11)

In a scene that could have been a Vietnamese village 35 years ago, or a German-occupied town in Czechoslovakia during World War II, they made a "sweep" of the area, arresting almost 400 people as possible resisters. The people there told reporters the troops handcuffed women and children, and beat to death at least one man during the roundup.

Just as during the Vietnam War, young people are being turned into brutal occupiers and killers by the Pentagon. They are put in a situation where they fear for their lives and are quick to pull the trigger. Later on, they find out that they killed a child or a pregnant woman, and many are scarred emotionally for the rest of their lives.

The Pentagon is worried about U.S. casualties, and for good reason. The troops, who have been wrenched from their families and spend their days in intense desert heat, are beginning to find out that their lives have been put on the line for a very different purpose than what was told them in orientation sessions.

The Iraqi people don't want them there. They are not welcome "liberators." The opposition to them ranges from sullen to fierce all over the country, in the Shiite south, the Kurdish north, and the Sunni central region. The Iraqis know that a military occupation cannot be called liberation. People in all walks of life say again and again to any reporter listening that they want the U.S. out, and that the troops are there to take their oil for U.S. corporations.

The other excuse for the war—besides "liberating" Iraq—was that the Saddam Hussein government had "weapons of mass destruction" that endangered the world. None have been found.

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## NO JUSTICE? NO PEACE! French workers defend hard-won gains 8



French police used a water cannon against the workers who were protesting pension cutbacks on June 10.

## WW editor speaks at Baltimore meeting:

# 'Why we need socialism'

By Sharon Black  
Baltimore

The Baltimore branch of Workers World Party inaugurated a series of summer meetings on June 2 with a talk by Deirdre Griswold, editor of Workers World newspaper. An eager audience of community, labor union and anti-war activists joined in to discuss socialism and hear about the origins of WWP.

A party like Workers World participates in all struggles to end the injustices and crimes of capitalism, Griswold pointed out. But its outlook goes beyond just fighting for reforms of this system. "A revolutionary party," she said, "takes the long view of history. This doesn't mean that social change takes forever. Sometimes more change happens in one week than over the previous 10 years. But it means we understand and explain to all who listen that capitalism is a crisis-prone system by its very nature. The profit system generates wars and economic depressions. And when it moves from relative stability into crisis, much of what the popular organizations have fought for and won over decades can be wiped out."

She gave as an example the Bush administration's "endless war."

"The grouping around Bush, and they represent a powerful section of the super-rich in this country, want to take the world back by at least 50 years," she said, "to the days of colonialism and open empire. They are committing crimes every day against the people of the Middle East, Korea, Latin America and elsewhere. They are oppressing people of color and immigrants here at home. And they are robbing the workers here of their pensions, their social services and their jobs.

"But at the same time they're winding up a spring of popular anger that will eventually push history forward. And when the fightback happens, it won't just be a gradual change, it will be a big leap."

The success of these struggles, she stressed, lies in the solidarity of the working class and its unity with all who

are oppressed. "The old socialist movement in this country thought the workers would make a revolution and then address the issues of imperialism, racism and sexism," she said.

"But that's impossible. You can't unite the working class—especially today when it has become so multinational and when women make up nearly half the work force—without battling all forms of oppression, including that directed against lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people and immigrants. The best fighters and leaders come from those who have the most to gain and the least to lose from a total social transformation."

That's why a party like Workers World stands out in today's left movement. It has practiced affirmative action ever since its very beginning in 1959, and its membership and leaders reflect that. Its first picket line was in solidarity with Patrice Lumumba and the people of the Congo against the U.S. government and other imperialists who were trying to crush the African liberation struggle.

"Can humanity be liberated from this hell created by capitalism, where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer every day? Yes, it can," she affirmed, "but only by liberating the vast wealth created by the working class that is now bottled up in private hands. The workers are the only class that can reorganize society, not on a for-profit basis, but to meet the needs of all.

"We don't expect elections to make this happen. The people must be organized to assert themselves independently of the capitalist political machines."

Those who attended and joined in the discussion represented a diverse group. They included Vietnam War veterans, along with young workers who had not yet been born when that war was being waged; community activists who had fought police brutality and utility hikes; and some of the key organizers of the recent anti-war protests.

Andre Powell, a local trade unionist and Baltimore Workers World Party organizer, chaired and opened the meeting with a description of the party's origins. □

## Help send youths to Cuba

By Sara Catalinotto

For the third summer, Workers World Party and the Peoples Video Network are collaborating on a youth camp.

In 2001, the students—and adult chaperones active in the sponsoring organizations—traveled to the Gullah islands off coastal Georgia to gain video skills and learn about resistance to chattel slavery.

In 2002, they learned basic video editing in New York City and discussed the struggle for reparations.

In 2003, the youths will visit a society that respects and politically develops children: Cuba.

Highlights of the July trip will include filming, donating toys and participating in the Day of the Children festivities, and a visit with the children of the Cuban Five.

The Cuban Five were working to pre-empt terrorist

plots against Cuba in south Florida, until unjustly imprisoned by the U.S.

The youths have learned much about the movements to free political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and against the racist Texas prison system; they bring that understanding to this case.

National fundraising for the summer camp includes a sale of youth-related PVN videos and a raffle. Also, in New York on June 22, there will be a Caribbean dinner with Cuban music videos and reports by the youths.

For details, call (212) 633-6646, ext. 24, or e-mail pvnync@peoplesvideo.org. Donations made out to Peoples Video Network/Youth will be gratefully received at 39 West 14 St. #206, N.Y., N.Y. 10011.

Learn more about the group at [www.wwpvnyouth.homestead.com](http://www.wwpvnyouth.homestead.com). □

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#### LOS ANGELES

**Sun., June 15**  
Special Red & Lavendar Forum. Hear Leslie Feinberg, author "Stone Butch Blues" and "Transgender Warriors," on LGBT Liberation and the Struggle Against Racism, Oppression and War. Host: Stuart Timmons, author "Trouble with Harry Hay" and executive director the ONE Institute and Archives. At ONE Institute and Archives, 909 W. Adams Blvd. For info (213) 487-2368 or (213) 741-0094

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**Every Friday**  
Workers World Party weekly meetings at 7 p.m. Phone (212) 627-2994 for topics and location.

#### SAN FRANCISCO

**Sat., June 14**  
Prospects for LGBT liberation through reform and revolution. Featuring Leslie Feinberg. Sponsored by Workers World Party. Donation \$5-\$10. At Women's Bldg., 3543 18th St. For info (415) 821-6545.

**Sat., June 21**  
Cuba: the next target in Bush's endless war? Featuring Andres Gomez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade and editor Areito Magazine Digital, and Gloria La Riva of the Nat'l Comm. to Free the Five. At Horace Mann Middle School, 3351 23rd St. For info (415) 821-6545.

### Workers World

55 West 17 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
Phone: (212) 627-2994 • Fax: (212) 675-7869  
E-mail: [editor@workers.org](mailto:editor@workers.org)  
Web: [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)  
Vol. 45, No. 24 • June 19, 2003  
Closing date: June 11, 2003

Editor: Deirdre Griswold;  
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk;  
Managing Editors: Greg Butterfield, John Catalinotto, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson;  
West Coast Editors: Richard Becker, Gloria La Riva;  
Contributing Editors: Joyce Chediak, Pat Chin, Naomi Cohen, Shelley Ettinger, Teresa Gutierrez;  
Technical Staff: Rebecca Finkel, Elena J. Peckham, Hank Sambach;  
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Carlos Vargas;  
Internet: Janet Mayes

Workers World-WW (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org).

Selected articles are available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to [wwnews-on@wwpublish.com](mailto:wwnews-on@wwpublish.com).

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World-WW, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

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If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.  
**National Office**  
55 W. 17 St.,  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
(212) 627-2994;  
Fax (212) 675-7869  
[wwp@workers.org](mailto:wwp@workers.org)

**Atlanta** P.O. Box 424,  
Atlanta, Ga. 30301  
(404) 235-5704  
**Baltimore** 426 E. 31 St.,  
Baltimore, Md. 21218  
(410) 235-7040  
[baltimore@workers.org](mailto:baltimore@workers.org)  
**Boston** 31 Germania St.,  
Boston, Mass. 02130  
(Enter at 284 Amory St.)  
(617) 983-3835;  
Fax (617) 983-3836  
[boston@workers.org](mailto:boston@workers.org)  
**Buffalo, N.Y.**  
P.O. Box 1204  
Buffalo NY 14213  
(716) 857-2112  
[buffalo@workers.org](mailto:buffalo@workers.org)

**Chicago** P.O. Box 06178,  
Wacker Drive Station,  
Chicago, Ill. 60606  
(773) 381-5839;  
Fax (773) 761-9330;  
[chicago@workers.org](mailto:chicago@workers.org)  
**Cleveland**  
P.O. Box 5963  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
phone (216) 531-4004  
[cleveland@workers.org](mailto:cleveland@workers.org)  
**Detroit**  
5920 Second Ave.,  
Detroit, Mich. 48202  
(313) 831-0750;  
[detroit@workers.org](mailto:detroit@workers.org)  
**Houston**  
P.O. Box 130322,  
Houston, Texas  
77219 (713) 861-5965  
[houston@workers.org](mailto:houston@workers.org)

**Los Angeles**  
422 S. Western Ave.,  
Room 114,  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90020  
(213) 487-2368  
fax (213) 387-9355  
[la@workers.org](mailto:la@workers.org)  
**Philadelphia**  
P.O. Box 9202,  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19139  
(610) 352-3625;  
[phila@workers.org](mailto:phila@workers.org)  
**Richmond, Va.**  
5920 Second Ave.,  
Richmond, Va. 23221  
[richmond@workers.org](mailto:richmond@workers.org)  
**Rochester, N.Y.**  
2117 Buffalo Rd., PMB.  
303, Rochester, N.Y. 14624  
(716) 436-6458;  
**San Diego, Calif.**  
3930 Oregon St., Suite 230  
San Diego, Calif. 92104  
(619) 692-4496

**San Francisco**  
2489 Mission St.  
Rm. 28,  
San Francisco,  
Calif. 94110  
(415) 826-4828;  
fax (415) 821-5782;  
[sf@workers.org](mailto:sf@workers.org)  
**Seattle**  
1218 E. Cherry #201,  
Seattle, Wash. 98122  
(206) 325-0085;  
[seattle@workers.org](mailto:seattle@workers.org)  
**State College, Pa.**  
100 Grandview Rd.,  
State College,  
Pa. 16801  
(814) 237-8695  
**Washington, D.C.**  
P.O. Box 57300,  
Washington, DC 20037,  
(202) 347-9300  
[dc@workers.org](mailto:dc@workers.org)

## Behind racist cover of U.S. war on terror

# 13,000 Muslims, Arabs face deportation

By Greg Butterfield

More than 13,000 Arab and Muslim men who voluntarily registered with the U.S. government from December through April face deportation in the largest planned mass expulsion since the attack on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

Only 11 individuals, out of the more than 82,000 who cooperated with the Department of Homeland Security's demands, were said to have ties to organizations the Bush regime considers "terrorist." But the government claims that 16 percent of those who registered were found to be in breach of some legal technicality in their immigration status and will be deported.

"Many had hoped to win leniency by demonstrating their willingness to cooperate with the campaign against terror," reported the New York Times, which broke the story on June 7. "They were not promised special treatment, however, and officials believe that most will be expelled."

Immigrant rights advocates charge

that many of those men termed "illegal" have lapsed visas due only to a government backlog in processing their paperwork, not through any fault of their own. Some have charged the Bush administration with deliberately stalling the process of re-registering work permits, student permits, green cards and citizenship applications.

Others are victims of the capitalist recession that has thrown millions of people out of work. Immigrants with work permits are only allowed to stay if they are employed. In the current climate, Middle Eastern and Muslim immigrants are often the first to be fired.

Like their sisters and brothers from Latin America and other parts of the world, these workers have been forced to come to the United States to seek jobs and decent living conditions, health care and other basic necessities denied to them by U.S. imperialist super-exploitation of their homelands.

Washington's registration campaign, coupled with the war and occupation of Iraq and the climate of racist demonization against Arab and Muslim people, is

having a ripple effect through working-class communities throughout the United States.

"Quietly, the fabric of neighborhoods is thinning," the Times noted. "Families are packing up; some are splitting up. Rather than come forward and risk deportation, an unknowable number of immigrants have burrowed deeper underground. Others have simply left—for Canada or their homeland."

More than 600 Arab and Muslim men were deported in the first wave of expulsions after 9/11. When the number of detainees reached 1,200, the Justice Department stopped releasing figures. A second, larger wave of expulsions took place last year, though officials refuse to release numbers.

Deportations of immigrants from Asia and Africa have swelled 27 percent in the past two years. Expulsions of Pakistanis, Jordanians, Lebanese and Moroccans have doubled, and those of Egyptians have nearly tripled.

In Brooklyn, N.Y., the Arab-American Family Support Center says that 500 of its clients are fighting deportation orders.

### Report exposes racist abuses

Attorney General John Ashcroft testified before a congressional committee June 6. He defended the USA Patriot Act, detentions and expulsions, and asked for even more sweeping powers to spy on, arrest and indefinitely hold without charges anyone alleged to have ties with "terrorist" organizations. (Associated Press, June 6)

During questions by members of Congress, Ashcroft brazenly demonstrated his disregard for civil rights. He and his staff couldn't answer simple queries about which personal records could or could not be seized under current Patriot Act provisions.

Just days earlier, on June 2, an official internal Justice Department review found that "Many immigrants rounded up after the Sept. 11 attacks were

*Continued on page 11*

## Protest spotlights secret police conference

By Jane Cutter  
Seattle

Hundreds of activists converged to protest the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU) annual conference in Seattle on June 2-6. Police attacked the permitted demonstration, arresting 12 and shooting rubber bullets at protesters.

LEIU is an allegedly private organization of police agencies that share "intel-

ligence" information. They have been in business since the 1950s when they gathered information on leftists and those labeled "communist sympathizers."

Today, the LEIU has garnered additional corporate support for its spying in the post 9/11 era of the "war on terrorism."

Numerous businesses sponsored the LEIU conference—including Starbucks and Pemco Insurance.

The protest was sponsored by the satir-

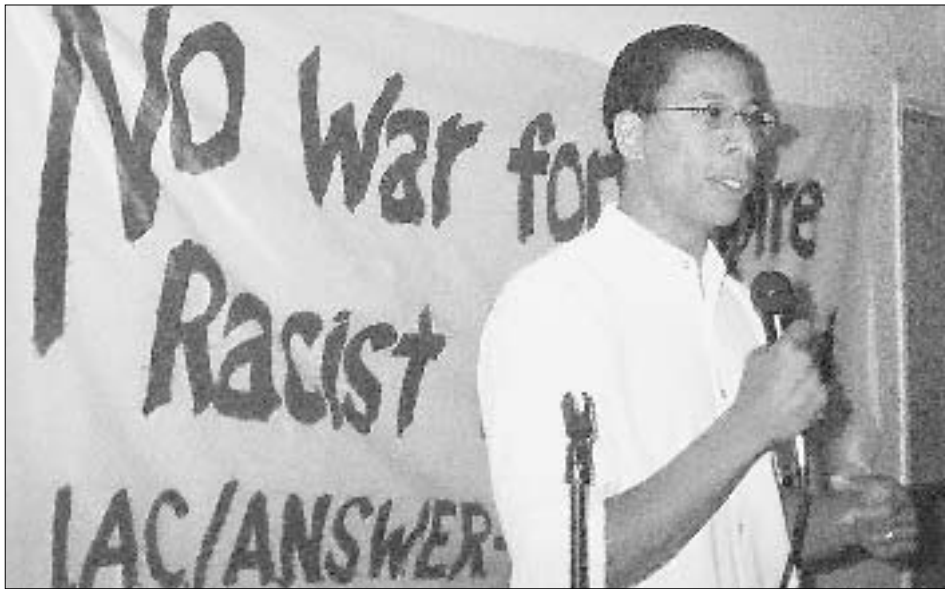
ically named "LEIU Welcoming Committee," which included Not In Our Name, the International Action Center, American Friends Service Committee and many other groups.

The June 2 demonstration started with a rally at Westlake Center and marched to the nearby Red Lion Inn—the site of the LEIU conference.

At the Inn, Seattle police began to harass and encircle demonstrators. It was there that police arrested 12 activists and shot at protesters with rubber bullets. Police dumped a disabled protester out of his wheelchair. □



WW PHOTO: JANE CUTTER



## 'U.S. out of Iraq!'

John Parker, a leader of ANSWER Los Angeles, speaking in Seattle against war, occupation and empire. Parker delivered the keynote at a May 31 public forum organized by ANSWER Seattle.

Dorli Rainey, ANSWER Seattle, spoke about the domestic war being waged by the Bush administration. Colleen Keane,

a Seattle university student, expressed solidarity with Cuba. Speakers also included a representative of the Filipino Workers Action Center on the impact of U.S. militarism on the Philippines, and a member of Voices of Palestine on the struggle for liberation in Palestine.

—Photo & story by Jane Cutter

## Oakland teach-in hits 'new colonialism'

Enthusiastic anti-war activists took part in an ANSWER "teach-in on war, occupation and the new colonialism" in downtown Oakland, Calif., on June 7.

The event coincided with the anniversary of the Israeli conquest of the West Bank and Gaza.

The educational forum and discussion focused on the nature of the U.S. war drive. ANSWER youth organizers LeiLani Dowell, Natividad Carrera and Natalie Alsop spoke, respectively, on the course of the anti-war movement, who is profiting from this war of conquest, and about budget cuts in health and education.

Richard Becker of the International Action Center spoke about developments in the Middle East. Gloria La Riva (pictured right) talked about attacks on immigrants in the U.S. The meeting was chaired by Alicia Jrapko of the National Committee to Free the Five. A lively discussion took place following the reports.

—Photo & story by Bernie Fox



# Workers trying to unionize MediaNews empire

By Bryan G. Pfeifer  
Amherst, Mass.

The MediaNews Group, led by its CEO William Dean Singleton, is busy attempting to smash a union drive at the Brattleboro Reformer—a daily newspaper it owns in Brattleboro, Vt.

But the workers are fighting back.

For years workers at the Reformer talked about forming a union because of numerous grievances, mostly focused on pay and benefits. Even before the MediaNews Corp. bought out the formerly “family-owned” Reformer in 2001, journalists and other newsroom workers made a pittance—about \$20,000 a year despite seniority.

Only five of the 170 newspapers MediaNews owns are unionized. The wages and benefits at the five show the difference: average wages are double that of the non-unionized newspapers.

In mid-spring 2003, 41 Reformer newsroom staff decided by card vote to join PACE—the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union. After the regional office of the National Labor Relations Board scheduled a June 26 election, a campaign of harassment began which, according to Reformer workers, included captive audience meetings, retaliation against PACE supporters, intimidation and coercion. In the most egregious action, the principal union organizer was fired on May 16.

According to the Boston Globe, Reformer journalist Eesha Williams says he was first suspended indefinitely and then fired because he informed his managing editor on May 12 that he supported PACE and the union drive.

Charles Kamen, MediaNews Group’s vice president of human resources, claims Williams was fired “for a breach of journalist ethics,” because Williams called

Sen. Jim Jeffords seeking support for the union drive. Williams says the call was made from his home and that he left his home phone number on Jefford’s voice mail.

MediaNews has retained the notorious, union-busting, Nashville-based law firm King and Ballou, which has sent various “representatives” to Brattleboro.

According to the May/June 2003 Columbia Journalism Review, the \$55-billion privately held MediaNews Group is the seventh-largest newspaper corporation in the United States, with 48 dailies and 121 non-dailies amid various other media properties in 11 states.

The most widely known newspapers in MediaNews are the Denver Post, Los Angeles Daily News and the Salt Lake Tribune—which Singleton recently bought with the help of the Mormon Church.

Although small compared to the “Big Five” U.S. media monopolies, MediaNews was one of the principal lobbyists for the recent FCC gutting of ownership rules.

MediaNews plans include massive expansion in the U.S. as well as in other countries—including formerly socialist countries.

In June 2002, Singleton—then chairperson of the National Newspaper Association (NNA)—led a delegation to the former USSR as part of the Russian-American Media Entrepreneurship Dialogue which he helped form. At the June conference, Singleton was accompanied by National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) President and CEO Edward O. Fritts and two capitalist media executives.

Singleton delivered his remarks before George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin. “Media cannot be inde-

pendent without economic viability. And that viability must come without government participation,” said Singleton (www.naa.org). Judging by his company’s record, this means the unrestrained right to exploit the workers.

The Reformer workers and their allies are continuing to draw support. A May 31 rally of more than 125 at the Brattleboro Common was sponsored by the Vermont AFL-CIO and endorsed by dozens of local unions and community organizations.

Before the June 26 election, Reformer workers are asking supporters to sign their petition at [www.vtlivablewage.org/vwc/reformer.html](http://www.vtlivablewage.org/vwc/reformer.html) or to download the form, obtain signatures and send to: Reformer Union, 111 Dutton Farm Rd., Brattleboro, VT 05301.

For more information, call (802) 254-2531. □

## NOW calls for spring mobilization

# Congressional abortion ban indicates need for struggle

By Sue Davis

The Republican majority in the House of Representatives, along with many Democrats, passed a law on June 4 to ban so-called “partial-birth abortions” and fine or jail doctors who perform them. The Senate passed a similar bill in March.

President Bill Clinton had vetoed such legislation twice. In 2000 the Supreme Court voted 5 to 4 that a similar state law was unconstitutional. But representatives defied the Supreme Court decision. They further defiled women’s rights by voting down an amendment that would have per-

mitted the procedure—if a doctor determined it was necessary—to avert “serious adverse health consequences” to the pregnant woman.

It didn’t matter to them that the procedure, known medically as “intact dilation and extraction,” accounts for only 0.1 percent of all abortions performed in this country.

It didn’t matter to them that it’s only performed as a desperate last-ditch effort to save the mother’s life, end a pregnancy of a severely malformed fetus, or keep a frightened teen from bearing a child she doesn’t want. It didn’t matter to them that this ban will affect the most vulnerable, needy, poor, young women.

“This bill is really an abortion procedures ban,” stressed National Organization for Women President Kim Gandy noted. She added that the bill is “purposely worded so vaguely that it could criminalize even some of the safest and most common abortion procedures after 12 weeks and well before fetal viability.”

Anti-choice zealots, with President George W. Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft leading the pack, see this bill as a giant stepping-stone toward overturning Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

They know that a group of pro-choice organizations plans to file suit to stop the legislation. But by the time the case gets to the Supreme Court, they are counting on Bush having appointed an anti-choice justice to overturn safe, legal, accessible abortion. Their strategy was the focus of a

lead article in the June 8 New York Times.

But what they’re not anticipating in their cynical calculation is the role of struggle.

## NOW calls for massive spring mobilization

In response to the growing attempts to override and overturn Roe vs. Wade, the National Organization for Women issued a call on June 10 to build for a mass mobilization on April 25, 2004, in defense of women’s right to choose.

A massive turnout of women and all who support their right to make critical life decisions without the intervention of the state or the church is just what’s needed.

But as important as the forces such a march could mobilize, the struggle to defend choice will be impacted by the political orientation of such a demonstration.

Will pro-choice forces be led by the demand: “Anyone but Bush in 2004”?

Channeling the independent struggle for women’s rights into the Democratic Party is marching the movement into a dead end.

Many pro-choice activists fear that Bush’s impending nominations to the Supreme Court will shift the highest court in the land to the right, further imperiling Roe vs. Wade.

But the Supreme Court is also vulnerable to a rising tide of angry protest. The 1973 Roe vs. Wade ruling was not a gift from on high. At that time, six of the nine

*Continued on page 10*

# CUNY tuition to shoot up 25 percent

By Heather Cottin

Students in the New York City community college system are facing a 25-percent tuition increase next year.

The tuition hikes are devastating news for the working-class youth and adults who attend the city’s two-year colleges.

Second-year La Guardia student Jose Legaspi is worried. He says, “A great majority of students will most likely drop out because they cannot afford to pay their bills and the increased tuition.” He might be one of those students, he notes.

For the many immigrant students, financial aid is not an option. And they already pay higher tuition fees at New York colleges than students from this country pay.

Venezuelan student Charly Doumat says, “I don’t have a job and I cannot apply for financial aid since I don’t qualify for it. After the rise I may have to drop out of school. It is very frustrating to know that you have so much to contribute to the society, and that you are an excellent student but you cannot get an education because you are poor.”

The New York City tuition hike follows a rise in subway fares and a jump in sales taxes.

All of these tax the poor, who are facing record unemployment and low wages in the job market.

And this is happening not just in New York State.

In over 30 states tuition costs are rising at two-year colleges.

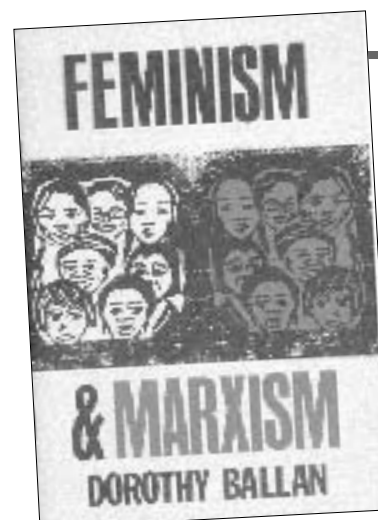
In California tuition is shooting up more than 100 percent. The state anticipates that 40,000 students may drop out of the community college system.

Budget cutters in California, anticipating a drop of possibly 200,000 students in the California system of higher education, crowed, “The fee increase is likely to trim community college enrollment [which is] a reason for reducing the state appropriation” for education.

Oregon and Missouri are slashing community college appropriations 10 and 11 percent. Kentucky, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut have made cuts of up to 24 percent to the state college systems and more are planned for next year.

As the tuition increases place a college or university education out of reach for so many students, military recruiters are all over the campuses.

No wonder that a common slogan on demonstrations these days is: “Money for education—not for war.” □



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# Ashcroft backs off ban on LGBT workers' celebration

By Leslie Feinberg

After a tempest of protest, on June 10 Department of Justice officials backed-pedaled on their ban on the annual lesbian, gay, bi and trans Pride celebration by the department's employees. However, the event will not get the department's stamp of sponsorship, as it has in the past.

The event is organized every year by a group of several hundred LGBT department employees called DOJ Pride. It's been held at the department's headquarters every year since the mid-1990s.

This was the first time any federal agency had ever forced the cancellation of an LGBT employee Pride celebration.

This year's DOJ event was scheduled for June 18.

But on June 6, said Melissa Schraibman, who works in the tax division, Attorney General John Ashcroft told the group that he would "not allow us to hold our annual pride ceremony in the building." The cancellation came as a surprise, she added.

DOJ Pride's vice president, Allison Nichol, related that the group was told employee organizations cannot hold celebrations or commemorations unless the president of the United States has officially issued a proclamation formally recognizing the event.

However, Nichol said she was informed, the department's policy was unwritten, so it could not be circulated

internally. "That would be an odd policy indeed for a group of lawyers to have," Nichol—an attorney—observed.

Not surprisingly, George W. Bush has failed to sign a Pride month proclamation. It's not a question of the commander in chief being too busy. Bush has penned his signature on more than 250 proclamations, venerating such events as "Leif Erickson Day."

The White House argues that Bush does not believe "in politicizing people's sexual orientation." Of course, it is institutionalized discrimination and other forms of economic and social oppression that politicize the sexualities of lesbian, gay and bi people and the gender expression and sex identities of trans people.

Bush couldn't have been pleased that one of the two people scheduled to be honored at this year's DOJ Pride was an attorney from Lambda Legal Defense. That group has worked to overturn a law criminalizing gay sex in Texas—Bush's Lone Star state. A ruling on the case by the U.S. Supreme Court is imminent.

The head of the Department of Justice is Attorney General John Ashcroft, who, in addition to being an outspoken opponent of gay rights, is also staunchly opposed to abortion. He supports the racist death penalty. He is an architect of the repressive Patriot Act. And he is point person for the racist round-up and mass "disappearings" of Arabs, Muslims and South Asians in the United States.

However, Ashcroft was at the helm of

the department last year. There was no proclamation from the president prior to the Department of Justice employees' Pride event then, either. And that one went off without an apparent hitch.

But last year's Pride celebration drew the ire of the right-wing of the political spectrum euphemistically dubbed "conservatives," creating a serious flap for the Republican Party.

Right-wing think tanks and organizations ratcheted up the pressure on the Republicans not to budge on bigotry—not even a nod to gay groups would be tolerated. And that weight is being brought to bear as national elections loom.

The Public Advocate, a group that cloaks itself as "pro-family," has been lobbying the Justice Department and other federal agencies in recent months

to abandon the gay pride events.

In early June, the National Liberty Journal, right-wing evangelist Jerry Falwell's publication, featured an article entitled "Christian Leaders Threaten to Abandon GOP in 2004." The article attacks Republicans as being "too cozy with gay groups" and also adds that the GOP is alienating and disrespecting its traditional base.

The Christian right-wing vote was not enough to put Bush over the top in the last election. The Bush team had to steal the election by disenfranchising Black voters in Florida.

This administration is far to the right, and the Justice Department is one of its pillars. Yet even this bastion of reaction is not immune to the struggles of workers and oppressed peoples against the injustices of this system. □

## Fascists menace LGBT Pride weekend Buffalo activists drown them out

By Beverly Hiestand  
Buffalo, N.Y.

Progressive activists organized by the Buffalo International Action Center and members of Radikats from the State University of New York at Buffalo prematurely closed down a white-supremacist rally here in downtown Niagara Square on June 7.

The "Racial Nationalist Party of America," headquartered in nearby Lockport, held a rally in downtown Buffalo in front of City Hall at the same time the annual lesbian, gay, bi and trans pride march was taking place elsewhere in the downtown area.

The day before, right-wing bigots had held up huge anti-gay signs along the route of the annual Dyke March. They did it again at the pride march the next day.

The white supremacists had stated that their June 7 rally would be two hours long. They hoped to capture media attention.

But during the small ultra-right rally, Nazi leader and spokesperson Karl Hand had to complain about the shouting, taunting, dancing and drumming by progressive activists, which totally drowned out his attempts to be heard over a megaphone.

Drivers passing by in cars tooted their horns in support of an IAC banner reading: "No hate mongers here or in the White House."

After only 45 minutes, Hand and four supporters who had stood next to him holding flags with swastikas gave up and left. Only two people had showed up to listen.

The anti-fascist demonstrators who organized the protest on only a few days' notice felt it was very important to not allow the racist, anti-LGBT and anti-Semitic filth to go unchallenged for even one moment.

### Read why the Pentagon declared war on lesbians & gays

Author Rebeca Toledo writes on the fight for gay rights in the armed forces and tells why it is a battle in the struggle to end oppression, exploitation and war itself.

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Some 22 years ago, the same Karl Hand and his fascist band attempted to hold a rally in the same location, City Hall, on Jan. 15, Martin Luther King's birthday. They announced their plans after a series of racist murders of Black men had shocked the city.

In an exemplary show of strength, anti-racist forces organized more than 3,000 protesters to march down Delaware Avenue in sub-zero weather to rally in front of City Hall, where Hand and four others huddled on the steps—completely surrounded and protected by Buffalo police.

Tom Scahill, one of this year's counter-protesters, also took part in the 1981 anti-fascist mobilization.

He noted: "Hand and his followers felt emboldened by the white supremacist murders in 1981 and saw it as an opportunity to organize racist elements. However, after they saw the anti-racist community response, they went back into hiding.

"Today they feel emboldened by the Bush administration's racist attacks on civil rights—especially those of Arab, Muslim and South Asian people. There are growing reports of distribution of Klan and Nazi literature and exhibition of racist objects being displayed on people's lawns—including Confederate flags—in the upstate New York area.

"We have learned that the only way to stop these fascists is to come out each and every time to push them back," Scahill concluded.

He stressed that the anti-racist, pro-LGBT and anti-sexist forces in Buffalo are strong. Over the last decade, progressive activists in this city have successfully blocked three national right-wing mobilizations that tried to close women's health clinics that provide abortion and attack LGBT meeting spaces. □

## Rain doesn't dampen interest Boston event focuses on rainbow resistance

By Frank Neisser  
Boston

The pouring rain didn't seem to dampen the standing-room-only crowd of more than 150—some 80 percent youths—who packed the Community Church of Boston on June 7 for a meeting titled "Queer resistance: From Stonewall to today."

The event featured Leslie Feinberg, an LGBT leader and a managing editor of Workers World newspaper. The evening was organized by Stonewall Warriors and ANSWER. It was co-chaired by Stephanie Simard of Stonewall Warriors and Simmons College Feminist Union, and Flynn of the Theatre Offensive.

The program was kicked off by a moving and spirited dance tribute to the late Silvia Rivera, a 1969 trans Stonewall combatant, by Heriberto Garcia/Miss Erica—an AIDS education activist from Manchester, N.H.

Kyl Stone defined the personal meaning of pride for him as political struggle. He outlined upcoming plans of Stonewall Warriors and ANSWER for a "No pride in war and occupation" contingent in Boston's upcoming Dyke March and Pride March.

Feinberg held the young crowd spellbound with an account about "the year Pride came in December": the leading role of lesbians and gays in the 1974 mobilization against racist attacks on desegregation in Boston. She described how a nine-

woman squad of lesbians covered virtually all the racist graffiti in South Boston during a 7-hour-long poster paste-up, evading radio patrols of armed fascists in their neighborhood stronghold.

Feinberg emphasized the need for the LGBT communities to play an active role in struggles against racism and war. She referred to historical examples such as the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement, which was set back during World War I—a struggle among the imperialist countries for colonies. She also analyzed the young U.S. gay liberation movement that came up during the Vietnam War and the domestic siege against national liberation movements of the oppressed in this country.

Speaking as a communist, Feinberg pointed out that racism and war are endemic to capitalism. She urged the crowd to stand up to red-baiting, to develop an anti-capitalist liberation current, and to open up discussion about socialism in the movement. Her call received a standing ovation.

Feinberg also spoke at a Workers World forum the following day entitled "Lavender and Red: LGBT struggle and socialism." That forum, also very well attended, inspired many thoughtful and probing questions.

Both events were brought to a spirited conclusion with revolutionary songs sung by Puerto Rican independence activist Marta Rodriguez. □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

## When rich folks meet (G-8)

For 29 years now, the group known as the Group of 8 (G-8) has met in various countries.

They are a self-selected group that describes itself as industrialized democracies, and they meet together to try to manage the world's economic affairs.

Composed of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan (the original G-7), and later Russia, the group sets the tone of global capital for decades to come.

The G-8 is set to meet soon in Evian, France. They are meeting in a time of economic downturns, and the aura of a depression. Once again, consumption is simply not matching production, and global business is facing a challenge that it doesn't seem willing to solve.

Can they solve the problems looming on the world's economic horizon? Perhaps. Will they? That certainly remains to be seen.

In July 2000, the G-8 met in Okinawa. The group pledged to cut the percentage of people in poverty in the world by 50 percent of the 1990 poverty figure. They also pledged to reduce the percentage of AIDS cases in the world 25 percent by the year 2010.

The world's richest nations can certainly pledge whatever they wish, but does it appear they're living up to those pledges?

There is certainly still time, but the trend doesn't seem to be moving in those directions.

These sweet promises to "share the [money]" with the suffering in the world seems to have stemmed from the mass demonstrations against the WTO (World Trade Organization) in Seattle the year before, rather than any altruism on the part of the rich nations. Seattle revealed the depths of unrest in the American psyche at the galloping growth of globalism; as well as anxiety at the dearth of good-paying jobs in the "New Globalist Order."

The rich nations, which are but instrumentalities for the wealthy classes, are interested in one thing: more wealth. To them, the poor, the poverty-stricken, the ailing, are as dismissible as the homeless that we divert our gazes from in the subways. They are the modern incarnation of the classical invention of Black writer Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. In this culture, to be poor is to be invisible. Until they fight. Until they unite! Seattle should've been a deep-rooted beginning, not a high-water mark! It should have been a rallying cry, instead of a lost opportunity.

In this age of capitalist triumphalism, when scholars dare to proclaim "the end of history" (as did one conservative thinker) it remains for the people of the "industrialized democracies" to add their names to the annals of history, by creating a tradition of resistance to the status quo. History does not end, as long as people are determined to write their own page.

Capitalist economies can produce prodigious quantities of products. But it cannot buy all that it produces. That is left to people.

If people cannot afford to buy the commodities that are flooding warehouses, then the economy simply cannot function. That means that people must be provided with the means, the economic wherewithal, to purchase the goods that are produced.

The world sorely needs some balance and perspective in this ongoing war against the poor. Greed and unabashed accumulation cannot rule the day.

The G-8 meets in the place where the very symbol of the well-to-do is reflected in the name (Evian). How many billions of people in this world can't afford a bottle of Evian water with a week's wages (if they could get wages)?

What is needed is globalized resistance that is humanistic, and life-centered. To counter the predations of the G-8, and the WTO, there must be a G-8,000,000,000 (a "Group of 8 Billion"! ) where the interests of the vast population of the world—every nation, every continent, every tribe—is respected and truly represented. When all of humankind is seen as precious as every other nation.

Wouldn't that be a "New World Order"?



## As U.S. casualties rise

# Pentagon faced with new quagmires

## Resistance to domination flares in the Middle East

Continued from page 1

That lie is now so thoroughly discredited that it has come close to bringing down the Tony Blair government in Britain and is being discussed openly, even by some in the U.S. capitalist political establishment, as the basis to impeach George W. Bush.

This falling out among those who supported the war reflects fear of the tremendous mass anger all over the world at the U.S. colonial occupation, which continues to be resisted tenaciously and courageously within Iraq.

At the same time, U.S. troops have been sent to the Philippines. There are at least 37,000 stationed in South Korea. Some are still in Afghanistan, where fighting continues and casualties continue to mount. They are fighting a revolutionary insurgency in Colombia.

### GIs to Palestine?

And now there is even talk that GIs may be needed to implement Bush's alleged "road map to peace" in Israel and Palestine. Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel now associated with the Brookings Institution,

suggested as much after the virtual collapse of the agreement that the Bush administration had cobbled together between the new Palestinian prime minister hand-picked by Washington, Mahmoud Abbas, and the Israeli government of Ariel Sharon. (Washington Post, June 11)

As he has done so often in the past, Sharon pretended to go along with the process, but had his helicopter gunships launch a major missile attack June 10 on the Palestinian enclave of Gaza in an attempt to assassinate a leading resistance leader, Abdul Aziz Rantisi of Hamas. The aim was to provoke retaliation that would blow up the accord and any move toward recognition of a Palestinian state, no matter how limited.

At least three Palestinian groups—Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad—have refused to go along with the road map. The attack on Hamas was sure to provoke new acts of Palestinian resistance, as happened in Jerusalem the next day, when a suicide bomber killed 16 Israelis. Israel immediately launched another missile attack that killed Hamas leader Tito Massaoud,

along with five other Palestinians.

In general, Palestinian casualties have been running about three times those of Israelis, but most get little publicity.

The Bush administration acts surprised by Sharon's actions, but it should know better. The U.S. created this monster and has unleashed him on the Palestinian people many times before, all in pursuit of its geopolitical goals in the oil-rich Middle East. Washington foots the bill for Sharon's military and keeps Israel's artificial economy from falling apart.

There is no peace in any of these areas around the world where U.S. big business has been trying to run the show for decades. There can be no peace as long as the people there are deprived of their land, their sovereignty and their resources. As more and more working-class youth in uniform, so many of them people of color who get a raw deal here, are sent abroad to revive the flagging profits of the transnational corporations, the only certainty is that their desire to come home will grow along with the resistance of the occupied peoples. □

## STOP U.S. WARS AT HOME & ABROAD

National **PROTEST**  
**July 4<sup>th</sup>**  
 against George W.  
**BUSH**  
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8 am – Gather & Protest • 10 am – Rally • 12 noon – March • 2pm - Closing Event

**Tuesday**  
**July 1<sup>st</sup>**  
 Oppose State  
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**Thursday**  
**July 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
 10am

Women's march vs  
 ROTC, cuts &  
 privatization  
 12 noon  
 Demonstrate  
 against  
 the Death Penalty  
 4pm  
 Avenging the  
 Ancestors  
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 demonstration at  
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 Constitution  
 Center

**July 6**  
 Interfaith Prayer  
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George W. Bush and former U.S. presidents will be opening the new National Constitution Center on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

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# The U.S. Big Lie: Iraqi 'weapons of mass destruction'

By John Catalinotto

The big lie is that the U.S. invaded to destroy Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction." By the end of May and early June this lie began coming back to haunt the Tony Blair government in Britain and then the Bush administration here.

WMDs was the main reason George W. Bush gave to Congress last September and October for needing a clear go-ahead for war with Iraq. He told the United Nations on Sept. 12 that, "Right now, Iraq is expanding and improving facilities that were used for the production of biological weapons."

This falsehood continued up to the eve of the war. In his March 17 talk giving Saddam Hussein two days to leave Iraq, Bush said, "Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised."

Bush also hinted broadly that Iraq was somehow behind the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. According to polls, some 40 percent of the U.S. population believed Iraq had some responsibility for this attack. Most of the rest of the world knew the "Iraq connection" was fiction. Bush never spelled out this ridiculous charge, but just let it hang in the air.

Now, U.S. and British troops have had two months since the seizure of Baghdad to freely look wherever they want within Iraq. They have found no WMDs. Captured al-Qaeda operatives have told the CIA their organization had nothing to do with the Iraqi government.

This lack of evidence for the war's alleged main cause has turned into a

major scandal for British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Here in the U.S. the media have only begun to give it publicity, and have been quite gentle with Bush and Co.

## Wolfowitz admits ploy

In an attempt to deflect criticism over this issue, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz—one of the most outspoken war mongers—has as much as admitted that the WMD charge was an administration ploy.

In a recent interview with Vanity Fair magazine, Wolfowitz said: "The truth is that for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy, we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on, which was weapons of mass destruction, as the core reason."

Stories about disagreements between members of the "intelligence community" and the Bush administration have surfaced. These are all pro-imperialist agents who want the U.S. to crush any obstacles in its path. But the agents felt their role was being abused by the Bush administration, which told them in essence, "We need this war. Come up with the intelligence to justify it."

The U.S. spies were all anonymous and vague about this. But the United Nations weapons inspectors, whose information wasn't classified, were more frank in their critiques of Bush and Blair.

On June 5, chief United Nations weapons inspector Hans Blix, due to retire this June, criticized Britain for "jumping to conclusions" that Iraq posed a serious threat to world security.

Bernd Birkicht, a former UN weapons inspector, said he believed the CIA had invented intelligence on WMDs to provide the legal justification for the war. "We

received information about a site," he told the British Guardian, "giving the exact geographical coordinates, and when we got there we found nothing. Nothing on the ground. Nothing under the ground. Just desert."

The alleged decontamination trucks that Colin Powell showed to the Security Council in satellite photographs turned out to be fire engines, he said.

Speaking to Info-radio Berlin-Brandenburg, Birkicht said: "If something should be found now, then I would have the opinion that it was not there before [the war]." (Junge Welt, June 6)

On June 8, Bush administration spokespeople were all over the Sunday television news programs trying to talk their way out of the lie.

## Behind the lie

In the U.S. corporate media, even as they question the WMD excuse, most look for other ways to justify the war. They hope a few weapons are discovered, to give the Bush administration a way out and to give the U.S. a chance to regain some credibility on the world scene.

It's no secret now that within days after Sept. 11, 2001, the most aggressive elements in the U.S. ruling class, inside and outside the Bush administration, met privately to activate plans for an invasion of Iraq, which had been their goal for a long time. From the earliest days they demanded that the intelligence services "find" something to pin on Iraq that would justify such a war. Workers World wrote about this "Wolfowitz cabal" in September and October 2001.

This grouping was determined to lead the U.S. into war with Iraq. They aimed to slaughter the Iraqi people should they

resist. They planned to place young U.S. workers on the front lines of battle where they would risk their lives to expand the empire of the U.S. rich.

After "terrorism" and "dictatorship" failed to carry the day as excuses for war, they settled on what Wolfowitz called the bureaucratic compromise of WMDs. It was a "big lie" by committee.

It is not the first time Washington has used a big lie to justify a war. From the provoked sinking of the battleship Maine in 1898 to the Bay of Tonkin incident in 1964, the U.S. has used deception to mobilize popular support. The media now reporting the WMDs as a possible lie could just as easily have questioned it back in September or in March.

The only difference now is that the takeover of Iraq—which seemed such a brilliant imperialist success in mid-April—is starting to look more like chaos.

The U.S. is unable to set up a stable puppet government. The Iraqis hate Washington so much that the only stable regime would be an anti-U.S. one.

Instead of being crushed by the Pentagon's military defeat of the Ba'ath regime, Iraqi resistance has continued. U.S. occupying troops are under fire. U.S. youths, deceived by Bush into thinking they were liberating a country and then going home, are forced to remain as an oppressive police force and a legitimate target of every Iraqi freedom fighter.

If the controversy remains confined to the corporate media, the Bush gang will just push its way through to the next war.

The next necessary step is for the anti-war movement to use the scandal of the WMD big lie to mobilize for an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq. □

## Eyewitness Evian & Geneva

# Massive protests rock Switzerland and France

By Sarah Sloan  
Geneva, Switzerland

It was no surprise that the June 1-3 meetings of leaders of the seven richest imperialist countries in the world—France, the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, Canada and Italy—together with Russia, were a target of protest for all people who seek social and economic justice.

The protests were stronger than expected and a sign that the vast anti-war movement that sprung up in Europe in the winter and early spring was still ready for struggle.

Originally called the G-7 when formed in 1975, this group was to direct the capitalist world's major financial institutions. Known as the G-8 since Russia's addition, it is responsible for the neo-liberal policies that constitute attacks on workers' rights, lower living conditions for the vast majority of the world's population and environmental harm.

A "Week of Resistance" that started May 28 in the cities surrounding Evian, France—including Geneva and Lausanne, Switzerland, and Annemasse, France—was the first major protest in the world since the U.S./UK declaration of "victory"

in Iraq and implementation of the occupation.

For all progressive forces in Europe, these protests were an opportunity to continue the struggle—against the war, the occupation and corporate globalization—that had grown so massive in the fall, winter and spring.

Organizers expected a turnout in the range of 30,000 people. They recognized that Switzerland did not have a history of massive protests. The trade unions and many progressive organizations in France were deeply preoccupied with protests and strikes surrounding critical issues of pensions, wages and domestic social programs.

But almost 100,000 marched from Geneva and a comparable group from Annemasse to join up at the French-Swiss border. Several thousand others demonstrated in Lausanne or marched from Annemasse toward Evian. This turnout of almost 200,000 is of great and lasting significance for all progressive people and organizations throughout Europe.

## Sunday, June 1: Geneva, Evian and Lausanne

At about 5 a.m. on Sunday, June 1, a delegation from Youth & Student ANSWER



in the United States marched with hundreds from a Geneva campsite to join thousands of others who formed blockades at all the city's main bridges. People removed wooden boards covering up shop windows and used them, along with benches, street signs and other materials, to block the bridges.

Thousands more arrived starting around 10 a.m. to join a massive three-hour-long march to the French border, where they met with tens of thousands more.

That same day at around 5:30 a.m., about 5,000 people began a march from Annemasse, France, to Evian. At St. Cergues, about 2 miles from the starting point, police tear-gassed the demonstrators. While a heavy police attack continued with tear gas, water cannons and con-

cussion grenades, some demonstrators blockaded the road leading to Evian.

Local people actively supported the demonstrators by bringing out water and lemons to help against the tear gas. Protesters succeeded in blocking this

critical road to the summit for two hours before police pushed them back.

In Lausanne, Switzerland—directly across Lake Lemman (Lake Geneva) from Evian—another march began at around 7 a.m. in defiance of the many riot police attempting to block the route with water cannons, tear gas and stun grenades. The police eventually forced that march back to its campsite in Lausanne.

Police blocked all exit routes to the campsite and demanded identity checks of everyone in the camp, though Swiss law does not require people to carry around identification. The majority of the people in the camp were arrested, and some were severely beaten.

During the Lausanne demonstration, the police attacked a bridge blockade that

*Continued on page 9*



## Fightback in Germany & Austria, too

# French workers to government: 'No justice? No peace!'

By G. Dunkel

Strikes and protests by hundreds of thousands of French workers on June 10 to stop pension cuts boiled over into clashes between police and demonstrators outside the National Assembly and at the Opera House in Paris. The police attacked the demonstrators with water cannons. This third nationwide strike in a month stopped much of the public transportation and jammed traffic.

The European Union governments agreed last year to attack workers' benefits continent-wide, calling these cutbacks "reforms." Currently workers are fighting back in France, Austria and Germany.

Historically, class struggles have been sharpest and most decisive in France, and so far the current situation is no exception.

Teachers and school staffs have been striking in France since early March. They want the government to withdraw its proposals to decentralize education and to reduce pension benefits. So far they have forced the government to promise to put off passing the decentralization plan until September.

The struggle continues.

The government hopes that teachers will lose the sympathy and support of parents by boycotting the standardized tests scheduled for 626,899 finishing secondary school students this year. Without passing these tests, known as the "bac," students can't go on to a university.

The government has threatened to "requisition" 125,836 teachers, essentially drafting them, to give the bac. The main education unions have called for a joint strike on June 12, the day the bac starts. They made it clear they intended neither to boycott nor picket the bac, though teachers might withhold grades.

The unions have called on the government to seriously negotiate rather than hold public-relations meetings that avoid discussing the real issues. More than one teacher has told the media, "We have the impression that it's we who are the barrier to reforms aiming to remake France. If

they pass, we will never be able to go back to what we have."

Other unions have been battling the government's proposal to redo the retirement system by making people work to a longer age for a smaller pension. Unions held a national mobilization June 3 that was more widespread and militant than the one on May 13.

While the total number of protesters on the streets was smaller than in May, they were even more combative, blocking runways in airports and train tracks, and surrounding city halls. They booed government ministers when they came to small towns and forced them to hold their rallies in back yards. Striking railroad workers calmly held a picnic in one train station, undisturbed by any trains.

In northern France, protesters set up road blocks on traffic circles. They only let passenger cars pass after handing them a leaflet. They told trucks to park. When the cops arrived, they moved on to another traffic circle.

Bernard Thibault, head of the CGT union confederation, told the newspaper Liberation after the June 3 mobilization, "I want there to be a multitude of initiatives gathering the maximum number of employees. It is the only way to convince the government" to drop its plans to overhaul the pension system.

While French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin's government is trying to maneuver the unions into a position where they can be crushed, as the Thatcher government did in England, the unions are planning to continue and extend their struggles.

### Austria, Germany

One million Austrian workers, who have been relatively passive for decades, held a one-day general strike June 3 to oppose that government's proposal to reduce pensions. Austrian unions had held two smaller general strikes in May.

Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel is still trying to get his cuts through parliament in early June. They aim to cut pensions by 10 percent, to raise the retirement age to



Striking workers in the streets of Paris.

65 and to eliminate early retirement, a common practice in Austria.

It could take a few years for all of Schuessel's cuts to go into effect, but

Austrian workers feel they are just the beginning.

Schuessel got an unexpected problem on June 6, when a faction of Austria's far-right party, for narrow political reasons, announced it would not vote for pension reforms. They have enough votes to keep it from passing.

Between intense pressure from the unions and the frittering away of his right-wing coalition, Schuessel's reforms are in a precarious state.

In Germany, unions have been struggling against the government's attempt to force retired workers to pay more for health-care. They held a series of rallies May 24.

The workers know that more drastic cuts, like the ones in France and Austria, will soon follow if they allow these first ones to pass.

In addition, a strike of 90,000 metal workers in eastern Germany began May 30 for equal wages with their western co-workers. According to the union IG Metall, there has now been a partial settlement calling for a gradual phase-in of the 35-hour work week from the current 38 hours, with working hours being reduced by an hour every two years beginning on April 1, 2005.

The agreement covers only 8,000 of the striking steelworkers, but probably will be used as a pattern for other settlements. □

## INDIA

### 40 million answer call for general strike

An estimated 40 million workers in India held a 14-hour general strike on May 21 to protest plans to privatize state-owned assets and to reform labor laws. A huge march brought Calcutta to a standstill.

Banks, insurance companies, telecommunication and postal services, the public transport system and various government departments were hit as workers and employees stayed away in response to the strike call.

Shops and markets closed in the states that responded to the call for the strike and roads appeared deserted.



Women workers from the Central Indian Trade Union.

At a press conference held to analyze the strike, All-India Trade Union Congress General Secretary Gurudas

Dasgupta attacked the government for "downsizing, retrenchment, reckless privatization and job cuts."

—G. Dunkel



# Korea truth comes to Chicago

By Beth Semmer  
Chicago

Yoomi Jeong, Deputy Secretary General of the Korea Truth Commission, addressed over 600 people in Chicago on the weekend of May 31 through June 1. In multiple presentations and venues, Jeong was able to reveal the truth of both past and present atrocities committed against the Korean people by the U.S. military. She was also able to give Chicago peace and justice activists an overview of U.S. foreign policy toward the Korean peninsula and a political analysis of what is behind the current U.S. threats against North Korea.

Her specific information about Korea was woven into the context of the tremendous threat U.S. imperialism poses to numerous sovereign nations around the world.

Over 50 Chicago activist organizations jointly sponsored and built a Peace & Justice Teach-In on May 31 at a downtown high school. The teach-in drew over 600 activists from all over Chicago and northern Illinois. Simultaneously with the teach-in, another 400 activists were demonstrating against 13 Klan members and the 300 police "protecting" them in Berwyn, Ill. All in all, the weekend was an

indication that the activism of the recent period is not dead.

Jeong is originally from South Korea but had been a Chicago activist for many years. She was invited to address the opening plenary to give a political analysis of the current period, using the threats against the Korean peninsula as an example of the U.S. drive for empire. She told the crowd that an attack on North Korea by the U.S. would be an attack on all Koreans.

Jeong also conducted a workshop at the teach-in specifically on the Korea Truth Commission. She showed a video that contained testimony the commission had gathered as well as footage of a tribunal held in New York City on June 23, 2001. She told the participants that the Korea Truth Commission is organizing a peace delegation to Korea this summer marking the 50th anniversary of the Korean armistice. It also plans a Korea forum at the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Geneva in August of 2003.

On June 1 at the First United Methodist Church in Chicago, Jeong addressed a group of 50. The Chicago Coalition Against War and Racism, the International Action Center of Chicago and the Nicaragua Solidarity Committee spon-



Yoomi Jeong, Deputy Secretary General of the Korea Truth Commission

sored this meeting. These three organizations had been instrumental in bringing Jeong to Chicago for the Peace and Justice Teach-In.

Pastor Thomas Kim of the church welcomed the group and thanked all for their commitment to the truth and struggle for peace and justice in the world. Jeong showed the BBC video "Kill Em All," which

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**'An attack on North Korea by the U.S. would be an attack on all Koreans.'**

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documented the Nogun-ri massacre as well as other civilian casualties during the Korean War. Ik Tae Kim, who is currently the assistant public defender in Kane County, just outside Chicago, also addressed the meeting. Ik Tae had been imprisoned in South Korea while a student government leader at Yonsei University. He had been an activist in the struggle for democracy and reunification and he spoke on the current fight against U.S. occupation in Korea.

At all three presentations, Jeong encouraged everyone to continue to arm themselves with knowledge of the crimes of the U.S. and to continue to join in struggle with the millions of anti-war activists who have been in the streets opposing Bush's invasion of Iraq. □

## Massive protests rock Switzerland & France

*Continued from page 7*

included a rope stretched along the bridge with activists hanging on both sides. Knowing that they were hundreds of feet from the ground, the police cut the rope. Martin Shaw, an activist from England, fell to the ground, suffering life-threatening injuries. He is now in stable condition.

### June 2—unanticipated mass participation

On Monday, June 2, several hundred people from Switzerland joined others who were still in Geneva in a march there. At about 6:30 p.m., two marches, each with a few hundred people, met up in an intersection in downtown Geneva near the train station.

When the police accompanying the march drove away, the protesters regrouped and made a decision to begin marching south towards the bridge. But as they began marching, large numbers of police vehicles—including ones filled with suited-up riot police with gas masks and water cannons—began assembling.

The police equipment included empty vans and buses, presumably to remove the demonstrators. Police on foot and in vehicles began moving in to encircle the demonstration, which was blocking the bridge.

Police from Geneva and Zurich and some of the 14,000 German cops present for the protests moved into the area in force, with several water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets.

As police moved in to block the protest from all four sides of an intersection, passersby began to gather in large numbers. They stopped to watch the police action and the protest. As one Geneva resident remarked, "This is not usual here."

The vast majority outside police lines were Geneva residents who had stopped to watch on their way home from work. Many were enjoying the evening, drinking beer and wine and eating fast food, smoking, standing with their friends. Women in

skirts and high heels pondered whether to move on to a bar or to stay. People were talking to friends on cell phones, joking and laughing, and enjoying a new form of entertainment with their friends, girlfriends and boyfriends, children and dogs.

As it became increasingly clear that the police would only let the group of 500 trapped demonstrators leave if they were under arrest, the crowd began to chant in their support. In French, they chanted to the police "Let them pass, go fuck yourselves." Later, the chant "Fuck the police" caught on in English.

The situation became untenable for the police. Despite their large numbers and massive instruments of repression, they faced thousands of angry Geneva residents, a group largely composed of youth and people of color who, instead of moving on with their evening, were growing in numbers and militancy.

To arrest the demonstrators, they would have to move through thousands of local people. Each time a Swiss police officer tried to raise his bullhorn to order the crowd to disperse, people would scream and boo. When he finally succeeded in declaring the gathering illegal and ordering everyone to disperse, no one left.

Soon, a water cannon that had been pointed at the trapped demonstrators was turned around, at first as if to leave, but then it began firing on the crowd. People moved back at first, but most returned, some walking directly into the water. People threw fire crackers, as well as bottles and metal rods, at the water cannon.

When the water cannons didn't disperse the crowd, police began firing rounds of rubber bullets, hitting some people in the legs and ankles. Hundreds of bullets were fired at the crowd. Many ran out of range, but others continued to talk, smoke and kiss. Some left, but many would return as soon as the firing let up and begin to move back towards the police line to pick up bullets.

Suddenly, the air seemed full of flames. At first it appeared they might be coming

from firecrackers that protesters had been throwing earlier. But soon the area was overwhelmed with tear gas that affected people's ability to see and breathe. While many ran away from the police lines, some were able to escape into apartment buildings opened by residents to aid the crowd, and others fled into restaurants.

Eventually, using the gas that people were totally unprepared for, the police reached the train station and surrounded it. People arriving in Geneva from out of town were greeted with police orders to evacuate the train station. People exiting through the front doors of the station were the target of water cannons. Those remaining from the original crowd were forced north, east and west of the train station, unable to return south because of the heavy police presence in the area.

On Friday, June 6, coordinated demonstrations took place throughout Europe protesting Swiss, French and German police brutality.

### Mobilize against war, colonial occupation and imperialism

Prior to the massive demonstrations that took place, the Youth & Student ANSWER delegation had spoken at meetings hosted by anti-war and anti-globalization organizations that had traveled from all over Europe and the world to converge in Geneva and Annemasse.

The ANSWER representatives addressed meetings of the anti-globalization group Attac-Germany and of the Swiss youth groups No War and Movement for Socialism. They also spoke at an International Anti-War Assembly that featured George Galloway, a member of the British Parliament and an outspoken opponent of the war on Iraq, and representatives from the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

These protests followed months when millions of people, through their own actions, had helped change the political climate in the world by focusing global opposition on the U.S. government's drive

to endless war.

The Bush administration, in fact, has in recent days announced that there was no "Iraq war" but only the battle of Iraq in a bigger war. By this he means that Washington intends to continue to wage war, under the false slogan of the so-called war on terrorism, on any government that asserts its independence.

Not only has Bush threatened new confrontations with Iran, Korea, Cuba and Zimbabwe, and sent troops to the Philippines and Colombia, but the U.S./British war in Iraq itself is far from over. The people of Iraq did not and will never view the occupation of their country and the elimination of their sovereignty as a benevolent act of liberation.

To support the resistance in Iraq, which demands that the U.S. and British occupiers leave, not tomorrow, but today, the ANSWER Coalition has rallied thousands of organizers and activists in the United States to embrace a new slogan. For the next phase of the anti-war movement, this will be: "Organize against war, colonial occupation and imperialism."

A few years ago, such slogans may have seemed like rhetoric, but today the Bush administration's ultra-militaristic and transparently expansionist world strategy reveals the imperialist objectives of the war itself.

In this spirit, the ANSWER Coalition is working with anti-war organizations in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America to carry out coordinated actions. This includes an Internationally Coordinated Day of Action in Solidarity with All Those who Resist on Sept. 27, and an International March on the Pentagon under the slogan "The World Unites Against U.S. Imperialism" on Oct. 25.

The ANSWER youth delegation included Peta Lindsay, Sarah Sloan, Caneisha Mills, Sarah Friedman and Ben Becker. This article is based on their experiences and on Independent Media Center reports. □



## That sinking feeling

**F**reddie Mac is not a double-cheeseburger served under the golden arches of a fast-food palace. There is cooking involved, but it's the books that are being cooked.

Freddie Mac is the nickname for the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp. Together with Fannie Mae—the Federal National Mortgage Association—these congressionally chartered private companies were established to ensure a stable mortgage market.

Things aren't so stable.

A management shake-up on June 9 was a serious tremor that could, at the very least, destabilize the housing market, possibly leading to its collapse.

Freddie Mac doles out the federal loans for housing. Now it turns out management might be eligible for a Pulitzer Prize for fiction for making their books look like things are better than they are. The reshuffling at the top says it's serious.

Who audited the books? Corporate expert Arthur Andersen—the company accused of shredding the evidence of Enron's cover-up of its real economic picture.

Freddie and Fannie buy home mortgages made by banks, savings and loans and other lenders. They enjoy an "implied guarantee" that the govern-

ment would bail them out in a financial crisis.

Together, these two giants own or have guaranteed about 42 percent of the \$7-trillion home mortgage market. Freddie Mac owns or insures \$1.29 trillion worth of real estate.

At the end of last year, the total assets of both private companies were estimated at nearly \$1,600 billion—roughly 44 percent more than the assets of the biggest U.S. bank, Citigroup.

Could the Treasury keep this big a financial yacht afloat?

While the media eye is trained on Martha Stewart's mug shot, she's just a little fish, accused of some insider trading.

The big corporate executives, like Enron's former CEO Kenneth Lay, are still wearing pin stripes, not prison stripes, after grand theft of so many workers' life savings. Lay—known to the Bush clan as "Kenny Boy"—swam with the big fish in the military-industrial complex, the Oval Office and Congress.

The Freddie Mac purge is not just about corruption that led to covering up the economic reality—it's a big tipoff about that reality. The luxury liner of the U.S. capitalist economy has not turned around. It's continuing to take on water and sink. □

## WW raises its debt ceiling by \$1 trillion

Bush can do it. Why can't we?

**O**kay, just kidding. We can't raise our debt ceiling any more than you can. Bills have to be paid and, even though we have good graphics artists, we can't print our own money either, the way Washington can.

Right now, Workers World is completing the reconstruction of our New York offices. We're painting the ceiling—not raising it—and a lot of new walls. Our meeting room is better than ever, as are the phones and computer system. We hope to invite you to a house-warming soon.

All this is so we can continue to publish a newspaper and Web site that hit back at the monstrous lies told by the corporate bosses and the Bush administration. WW isn't "embedded" with the Pentagon. We let you know about the resistance to these would-be colonial occupiers. And we show how the lust for global profits of Big Oil and Big Business just means more suffering for workers and oppressed here.

We've been getting a lot of praise lately—and a lot of attacks from the right-wing, too. That's cool. Unfortunately, we can't pay bills with that. So we have launched a Spring Fund Drive and aim to raise \$70,000. We're asking you to find some money, somehow, and send it to us. We promise to be there for you as a source of information and thoughtful, hard-hitting analysis, and as a resource for organizing work.

Help us out — and stick it to Bush!

Here's my contribution of \_\_\_\_\_ to the WW Spring Fund Drive.

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## The New York Times

### Why some lies are fit to print

By Gary Wilson

The sudden announcement that two top editors of the New York Times resigned June 5 was greeted with both cheers and jeers.

Right-wingers were cheering. But many progressives also probably didn't mind seeing the biggest national daily newspaper in the United States taken down a peg or two. Its offenses are many and its air of self-importance pervasive.

But much of what happened at the Times remains hidden. The official story is that this is all about a young reporter who had made up facts and plagiarized his way through some 30 articles published in the newspaper.

That might only be a small part of what the fuss is about. The shakeup at the New York Times comes at a time of social crisis for the U.S. ruling class. Despite the Pentagon's apparent military victory in Iraq, that country is in a state of resistance. The whole of the Middle East is a cauldron nearing a full boil. At the same time, the global capitalist economic crisis is deepening as the U.S. economy shows many signs of further decline and rising joblessness.

Hidden just below the surface is a story of inter-capitalist rivalries that have become dangerous and unstable.

There are many levels to what is happening at the Times. The official story about the young reporter, Jayson Blair, is no more sensational in its detail than other stories of liars and plagiarizers in the corporate media, but none have received anywhere near the attention this one did.

By focusing on Jayson Blair, a Black reporter who admits he was suffering from mental illness and substance abuse, the right-wing-dominated media have used the incident to further their attacks on affirmative action. Howell Raines, who resigned from his post as executive editor, was faulted because of his openly stated support for affirmative action. And Gerald Boyd, the managing editor and one of the few Black editors in a top executive position at any news organization in the U.S., was forced out simply because he is Black. He had not covered for Blair in any way.

What is left out of almost all the media reports is that not only are there almost no Black executives at any of the corporate media in any position, but there are few Black journalists at any of the big business-controlled media conglomerates. They make up only 5.3 percent of the profes-

sional news staffs across the U.S., according to the National Association of Black Journalists.

Thus, statements attacking affirmative action are coming from one of the most segregated industries in the whole country.

The crisis at the Times was never really about Jayson Blair. "One clue," reported Jack Shafer on Slate.com on May 13, "...can be found in the story of fabricator Christopher Newton. Last fall, the Associated Press fired Newton after learning he invented sources and quotations in at least 40 stories, an act of journalistic malfeasance equivalent to Blair's. Who called for the resignation of the editor of AP or the heads of Newton's editors? (Can you name the editor of the AP? I can't, either.) Nobody cried for blood, as far as I know, even though the AP is as important a journalistic institution as the New York Times."

The shakeup at the Times is supposed to give the impression that there was just this one breach of honesty and it won't happen again. The reader is supposed to conclude that everything else printed in the Times is the unvarnished truth.

### Lies reported as fact

Of course, the Times is full of stories that rely on unnamed, unverifiable sources. Most often these are cited as "high-ranking Washington officials." These lies are then reported as fact.

Many think the all-time expert at these kinds of stories filled with officially sanctioned lies and fabrications is Judith Miller. Miller co-wrote with Michael Gordon a Sept. 8, 2002, front-page report in the Times that purported to reveal an Iraqi effort to purchase aluminum tubes to be used for nuclear weapons. Was the story coordinated with the needs of the White House? That same day Vice President Dick Cheney pointed out the story when he was being interviewed on Meet the Press. He implied it proved the need for a war on Iraq.

When, months later, the United Nations weapons inspectors conclusively refuted all aspects of the story and said it was based on outright lies and fabrications, the New York Times did not print even a word of clarification, let alone any kind of public disgrace for Miller or Gordon.

Instead, the Times followed that with another front-page story by Miller. On April 21, just as it was becoming clear to all that even under total U.S. military occu-

## Congressional abortion ban

*Continued from page 4*

justices were Republican appointees—four of them put in by conservative Republican Richard Nixon. Yet five of these Republican appointees voted to legalize abortion. And one of the two judges who voted against the decision was a Kennedy appointee.

Despite the overall political character of the Supreme Court at the time, the ruling class felt the enormous pressure from the grass-roots movement in the streets and made a concession to it.

Today, the belief that a Democrat in the White House will automatically protect Roe vs. Wade and women's right to choose is disempowering to the movement that can defend women's rights.

Even though President Bill Clinton twice vetoed similar bans on so-called "partial-

birth abortions" like the bill that just passed Congress, it was during his administration that women's health clinics faced a siege of terror.

And his administration also dismantled the welfare system—a devastating blow to the health and welfare of working class and poor women. Could a Republican have carried out such a brutal measure without mass protests?

Clinton could only get away with slashing this safety net for the most vulnerable women during a period of economic upturn because so many in the mass movement were working to get the Democrats re-elected instead of organizing an independent movement to confront whichever party of big business was running the Oval Office.

And Republicans weren't alone in get-

# shakeup

# Imperialists step up attacks on Zimbabwe

By Monica Moorehead

pation no “weapons of mass destruction” could be found in Iraq, Miller wrote a story quoting an unnamed Iraqi scientist with alleged knowledge of a secret Iraqi weapons program.

Slate’s Jack Shafer wrote on May 15 about Miller’s apparent piece of fiction, pointing out that it is not all that uncommon for the New York Times to print falsehoods:

“Other equally dubious Times stories go uncorrected to this day, such as the ones about the Saudis’ agreement to allow the United States to use Saudi bases to fight Iraq, the plans for long-term military bases in Iraq, and Czech President Vaclav Havel’s alleged phone call to President George W. Bush about Mohammed Atta.”

At the root of the shakeup at the Times is the social crisis of capitalism. V.I. Lenin, in his guide to imperialism, noted that the imperialist stage of capitalism is not just about taking control of foreign countries. It involves monopolization and the concentration of finance capital, as well as inter-imperialist and inter-capitalist rivalries. Like imperialist countries, capitalist monopolies rival each other, and internecine battles take place that are usually hidden from public view.

As the economic crisis deepens, these rivalries become more desperate and dangerous. Twice in the last century, inter-imperialist rivalry led to world war.

In the U.S. ruling class, bitter rivalries for control are taking place. They could be seen in the Florida coup that put George Bush into the presidency. Among the backers of the Bush clique are two of the most powerful media conglomerates in the country, both very big and powerful businesses: Clear Channel and Fox.

Is it just a coincidence that Clear Channel and Fox are the main beneficiaries of a recent decision by the Federal Communications Commission to ease what few restrictions there are on monopoly ownership of the media?

Generally, the New York Times, a pillar of the Democratic Party, is seen by the right-wing as a liberal opponent of the Bush administration. Fox News chairperson Roger Ailes had particularly targeted the Times and Howell Raines for giving less than lock-step support to the Bush administration’s war on the people of Iraq.

As Lenin noted, imperialist capitalist rivalries tend to become bloody. This is not something that can be ended by reform, but rather is built into the system. The only cure is a total makeover. □

The Bush administration and its European allies, especially Britain, have stepped up their political and economic destabilization machinations against Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe.

Cybercast News Service announced on June 7 that the U.S. government plans to condemn Zimbabwe’s “flagrant and devastating human rights abuses” at the United Nations Human Rights Commission hearing scheduled for this week in Geneva, Switzerland.

Patrick Chinamasa, Zimbabwe’s justice minister, responded by stating that lobbying efforts will begin to defeat this U.S. campaign.

Last year Britain attempted to pass a similar resolution in Geneva. But at the behest of Nigeria and a number of other African, Asian and Middle Eastern representatives, the resolution was defeated.

The U.S., through a presidential order, has just extended economic sanctions against Mugabe and 76 other governmental officials. The sanctions, imposed in early March by Bush, freeze these officials’ financial assets in U.S. banks. The sanctions also prevent U.S. corporate interests from doing business with these representatives. The U.S. and Britain are demanding that Zimbabwe carry out “free and fair elections” before the next scheduled elections in 2007.

Furthermore, the U.S. State Department has released a study entitled, “Zimbabwe’s Manmade Crisis.” This “study” supposedly documents how Mugabe single-handedly transformed Zimbabwe from being a self-sufficient country that could feed itself into an indebted nation.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has also suspended Zimbabwe’s membership rights. The reason given by the IMF is “failure to deal with its serious economic problems.” (CNSNews.com, June 7)

Zimbabwe’s debt to the IMF is estimated at \$233 million—much lower than other African countries that cannot pay the interest payments on their debts, let

alone the principal. The IMF also reported that for the past four years, Zimbabwe’s inflation rate has risen 207 percent and its production output has fallen by one third.

The unemployment rate is 70 percent. Anti-government protests are being carried out by the Movement for Democratic Change, a Zimbabwean opposition group backed by the U.S. and Britain. The main goal is to create political and economic unrest to bring down the Mugabe government.

## What’s really behind these attacks?

Why are Bush, Blair and their European imperialist allies so hell bent on ousting Mugabe? Mugabe is not targeted for being a socialist, like Cuba’s President Fidel Castro.

Mugabe is a former leader of a national liberation movement that helped to bring an end to a racist, apartheid-like regime led by Ian Smith in 1980. In fact, Mugabe is a bourgeois nationalist, similar to other African leaders.

But what distinguishes Mugabe from others is his willingness to stand up against U.S. and British imperialists. Mugabe has let the world know that he will not bow down to imperialist threats and schemes without a struggle. When the U.S. demanded that new elections take place in Zimbabwe sooner than later, Zimbabwean officials stated that it is the U.S. that should have new elections, since Bush stole the presidency in 2000. It is this kind of heroic defiance that has generated great ire and scorn at imperialist bullies like Bush and Blair.

There is no doubt that the Zimbabwean people face tremendous hardships daily, as do millions of people throughout the rest of southern Africa. Years of drought have created a famine that has affected at least 6 million Zimbabwean people alone.

Who believes that one person can cause a drought?

How can a governmental policy cause such a catastrophic inflation rate when 96 percent of the economy is still in the private hands of the former colonial oppressor of Zimbabwe—Britain?

The greatest “crime” that Mugabe has carried out in the eyes of the U.S. and Britain is his support for the confiscation of land from the white commercial farmers, initiated by its rightful owners—landless African farmers.

The State Department claims that Mugabe has “displaced” 2 million farmers, meaning white farmers. These privileged farmers are part of a racist legacy of colonialism that began when the first British occupiers carried out a bloody conquest of Zimbabwe in the late 1880s. This included a campaign of massive forced removals of the indigenous population from the most arable lands. To this very day the relationship between the white farmers and the indigenous population in Zimbabwe is comparable to U.S. slavery a few centuries ago.

A large sector of those who fought for the liberation of Zimbabwe were landless indigenous farmers, now commonly referred to as war veterans. They are the ones who pressured the Mugabe government to remove the commercial farmers, by force if necessary, once the British government reneged on its 1980 Lancaster House agreement. This agreement held the British government accountable for financially compensating these white farmers so that Black farmers could reclaim their lands.

The U.S. and Britain want to give the impression that only the white farmers can save the Zimbabwean people from starvation. This falsehood is meant to justify the reintroduction of colonization. These white farmers are tied to the worldwide capitalist market. This means that they grow and cultivate crops, like tobacco, to be bought and sold for a profit, not to alleviate the hunger and suffering of the Zimbabwean people.

These schemes should be viewed within the overall context of Bush’s quest for endless war and imperialist empire building. Progressives and revolutionaries here and worldwide must understand that defending the Mugabe government from imperialist attacks is synonymous with supporting Zimbabwe’s ongoing struggle for sovereignty and complete independence. □

## 13,000 Muslims, Arabs face deportation

Continued from page 3

chained, physically and verbally abused, held without bail and denied access to lawyers.” (French Press Agency)

The report confirmed the charges levied for nearly two years by organizations that defend civil rights, civil liberties and immigrant rights.

“We found significant problems in the way the detainees were handled,” admitted Justice Department Inspector General Glenn Fine. His report dealt only with the first wave of detentions. Most of the men were Pakistani and had no connection to so-called terrorist groups.

The report singled out the New York branch of the FBI and Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, the site of numerous demonstrations in solidarity with the illegally detained.

“The FBI should have expended more effort attempting to distinguish between [immigrants] who, while possibly guilty of violating a federal immigration law, had no connection to terrorism but were

simply encountered in connection with a ... lead.”

And, “The evidence indicates a pattern of physical and verbal abuse by some correctional officers.”

All 762 people detained at the time were found guilty of violating immigration law, the Justice Department says. But according to the inspector general’s report, 130 of these had no lawyer, and at least 54 were held for more than the 90 days in violation of the “anti-terrorist” laws.

Detainees at the MDC were wrongly classified as “witness security” inmates. This designation “frustrated efforts by detainees’ attorneys, families and even law enforcement officials, to determine where the detainees were being held.

“We found that MDC staff frequently—and mistakenly—told people who inquired about a specific Sept. 11 detainee that the detainee was not held at the facility when,

in fact, the opposite was true.”

The report can be read at [www.usdoj.gov/oig/lgwhnew1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/oig/lgwhnew1.htm).

The capitalist government is trying to eradicate liberties won over decades of struggle and go back to the days when immigrant workers had few rights. It’s a threat that needs to be answered with the old union maxim, “An injury to one is an injury to all.” □

ting this bill banning a form of abortion through Congress. Democrats voted alongside them.

Only a movement that isn’t beholden to either party of big business can secure the rights needed by all sectors of the working class and oppressed.

Kate Michelman, president of NARAL Pro-Choice America, noted the irony of congressional legislation that curtails women’s rights domestically while the U.S. claims to be waging wars for “democracy” abroad. This war drive is being used to try to frighten the population into accepting a reactionary agenda that undermines progress that has been made on all social issues.

The demand for women’s rights will be strengthened by linking it to the broad, multi-faceted movement against “endless” Pentagon war that both parties in Congress voted to endorse and to fund. □





# Una visita con Ramón Labañino

Por Teresa Gutiérrez  
 Prisión Federal de E.U.  
 Beaumont, Tejas

Cualquiera que visita Cuba se encuentra con mujeres y hombres que defienden a su país y a su diario vivir. Es una experiencia muy rica y maravillosa.

Los cubanos tienen un tremendo gusto a la vida, una perspectiva única de los eventos mundiales, y una intensa pasión por el mundo, y en especial por su querido país.

Ramón Labañino es uno de esos cubanos.

Pero él no está en Cuba. Está sirviendo una sentencia de cadena perpetua en una prisión federal en Beaumont, Tejas.

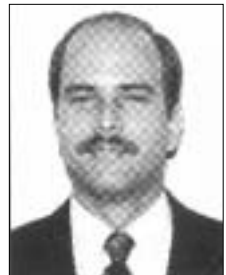
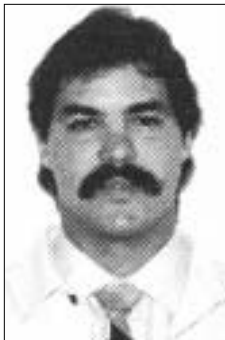
Él y otros cuatro prisioneros políticos—Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, René González y Fernando González—están en cárceles federales esparcidos por todos los Estados Unidos. A ellos se les ha llegado a conocer como “Los Cinco Cubanos”.

Esta escritora visitó a Labañino el 30 de mayo en Beaumont, junto con Gloria Rubac, activista contra la pena de muerte.

Mientras él salía para encontrarnos vestido en su uniforme color café provisto a los prisioneros, uno no se podía imaginar que este hombre alto y robusto, con una gran sonrisa en sus labios, estuviera pasando por los horrores conocidos del sistema de justicia de los Estados Unidos.

Ramón y los otros cuatro llegaron a los Estados Unidos para observar las acciones de los terroristas derechistas quienes respaldados por los Estados Unidos regularmente llevan a cabo acciones peligrosas y provocadoras contra Cuba. Estos terroristas están basados en la Florida, pero sus orientaciones vienen de Washington. Y han causado grandes sufrimientos al pueblo de Cuba.

Ramón Labañino,  
 Fernando González,  
 Antonio Guerrero,  
 Gerardo Hernández  
 and René González.



Los Cinco fueron arrestados en 1998 y acusados de espionaje contra el gobierno de los Estados Unidos, lo cual ellos enfáticamente han negado. Vinieron a luchar contra el terrorismo, pero el gobierno de los Estados Unidos lanzó una campaña tan falsa, injusta y cruel contra ellos, que resultó en la adjudicación de las sentencias más fuertes posibles.

Todos los cinco fueron juzgados en Miami, Florida, donde es imposible para aquellos que defienden a Cuba tener un juicio justo.

Ramón hizo un gran sacrificio cuando él aceptó la misión y dejó a su querido país, al igual que a su esposa, Elisabeth y a sus tres hijas.

Pero él llegó a la Florida por la profunda devoción a su nación y su firme apoyo a la Revolución Cubana.

Durante la visita con Labañino el 30 de mayo, su amor por Cuba era evidente, pero también él expresó su gran compromiso con el mundo. Explicó que sus acciones para defender al pueblo cubano contra aquellos que les gustaría ver la destrucción de la revolución, también fueron para defender una idea—el progreso de la humanidad.

Ramón se encontraba indignado por las recientes críticas lanzadas contra Cuba por haber ejecutado a tres secuestradores y arrestado a agentes mercenarios, pagados por los Estados Unidos quienes trataban de llevar a cabo un “cambio de régimen” en la isla.

“Uno no puede juzgar a Cuba fuera de contexto”, dijo. El gobierno cubano tuvo que tomar estas acciones en un momento crítico para poder defender al país, el cual ha sido objeto de ataques por los Estados Unidos por más de 40 años, explicó Labañino. El movimiento progresista necesita unirse contra el imperialismo, el cual es el problema más importante en el mundo.

Dijo que los intelectuales deberían contribuir al progreso de la humanidad, actuar responsablemente sobre asuntos importantes y ver a Cuba históricamente, lo cual es en el contexto de su historia.

Ramón enfatizó la importancia del pueblo de los Estados Unidos y dijo que a veces sentía que le gustaría quedarse cuando fuera liberado y hacer trabajo político aquí.

El cree que el pueblo de aquí debe organizarse más y que el movimiento debería ser el más grande y poderoso por el papel que este gobierno juega en todo el mundo.

Es aquí, dijo él, “donde el pueblo debe ser más consciente.”

Ramón describió su vida en la prisión de Tejas. Las divisiones abundan, nos dijo. Las pandillas, las drogas y la violencia corren sin freno. Los prisioneros de alguna manera tienen acceso a pistolas y a drogas, lo cual contribuye a la atmósfera represiva y violenta. Este clima es promovido por el sistema y beneficia a los oficiales de la prisión. Las prisiones de los Estados Unidos sirven sólo para reprimir y no para rehabilitar.

Labañino nos dijo más de una vez que expresemos su profunda gratitud a todas aquellas personas que han laborado arduamente para defenderlo a él y a los otros prisioneros políticos.

Él recibe de 10 a 15 cartas al día y no puede responder a todas. Por eso él quiere asegurarse que todos aquellos que le escriben y trabajan en su caso sepan cuán agradecido está.

Está claro que el movimiento de solidaridad ha sido decisivo en el caso de Los Cinco. Cuando el Departamento de Justicia de John Ashcroft decidió, sin justificación alguna, poner a todos Los Cinco en la celda de los solitarios hace unos meses, fue la presión internacional la que ayudó a sacarlos.

Los abogados de Los Cinco han dicho que los próximos meses son de extrema importancia pues se espera que los argumentos orales ocurran pronto. Por esto se necesitan foros, cartas y campañas de todo tipo para dar a conocer el caso.

Decenas de miles de personas en los Estados Unidos han viajado a Cuba y conocen de primera mano que Cuba ha logrado una sociedad digna de luchar por ella.

Ramón Labañino, Gerardo Hernández, René González, Fernando González y Antonio Guerrero son inocentes y merecen su libertad.

Para más información sobre los Cinco Cubanos, sobre su caso y sobre cómo puede ayudar, puede ir al portal ‘www.freethefive.org’. □

## NUEVA YORK

# Las protestas continúan contra asesinatos policiales

Por Richard Wales  
 Nueva York

Desde el comienzo del año, la policía de Nueva York ha matado a un gran número de civiles desarmados y que no han estado involucrados en ninguna actividad criminal. Todos fueron gente de color. Los dos asesinatos más recientes sucedieron en menos de una semana del otro; los asesinatos policiales en esta ciudad, como las carreras en un juego de béisbol, parecen venir en grupo.

Alberta Spruill y Ousmane Zongo murieron el 16 y 22 de mayo respectivamente. Spruill estaba en su apartamento alistándose para ir a trabajar cuando un equipo ‘SWAT’ anti-narcóticos rompió la puerta de su apartamento e irrumpió con granadas de concusión. El “error” de haber irrumpido en el apartamento equivocado—le costó la vida a esta trabajadora de 57 años de edad produciéndole un



Alberta Spruill

ataque cardíaco.

Zongo fue disparado de muerte en su lugar de trabajo—un almacén donde él reparaba objetos culturales importados de África.

Ninguno tenía por qué creer que sus vidas serían terminadas por la misma gente a quienes se les paga para que supuestamente los proteja. El funeral de



Ousmane Zongo

Spruill fue el 24 de mayo después de los servicios en la Iglesia Bautista de Convent Avenue donde ella solía ir. El cuerpo de Zongo será transportado a su tierra natal, Burkina Faso.

Como siempre, se promete investigar estas muertes. ¿Ocurrirá el patrón usual de coberturas? ¿No encontrará la oficina de la fiscalía del distrito alguna razón para poner los cargos criminales menores contra los oficiales ofensores o sus jefes? ¿Anunciará el comisionado de la policía o el alcalde, después de un par de meses que

nadie tuvo la culpa? Ellos querrán dejar que todos queden libre de culpas si creen que pueden lograrlo. Para hacer esto tienen que acallar la ira del público y en eso tienen mucha práctica.

Sin embargo, ha habido numerosos mítines, marchas y ruedas de prensa protestando estos asesinatos. Grupos de la comunidad de Harlem se están reuniendo para discutir más acciones.

Todos los logros de nuestra clase históricamente se han ganado por medio de luchas. Y será solo por medio de luchas que lograremos extirpar a los policías asesinos de nuestras calles. El sistema no se hará justo voluntariamente. Para citar a Mumia Abu-Jamal, las cortes judiciales son amigables solo para los ricos. Nosotros tenemos que mantener nuestra indignación hasta que los asesinos sean castigados. Pero también tenemos que ser optimistas, porque cuando el pueblo se dé cuenta de su poder, el pueblo ganará. □