

SHOCK & AWE IN WASHINGTON STATE

Boeing gets big handout, workers get pink slips

Workers need a second Battle of Seattle

By Kaz Susat
Seattle

The giant airplane and weapons corporation Boeing announced late this spring that it is considering developing a new airplane. If it goes ahead, the assembly plant for this plane will hire 800 to 1,200 people.

Boeing hasn't definitely decided to build the plane. The company has laid off over 20,000 people in the state of Washington over the past 18 months. The state has a budget deficit of \$2.65 billion. Nevertheless, the legislature is handing over billions of dollars to Boeing and other bosses.

Boeing recently claimed that 20 states were competing for the plant, vying for which would give away the most in order to win it. It demanded that Washington state make drastic changes in the "business climate" or it wouldn't even be considered.

Democratic Gov. Gary Locke immediately fell into line and called a second special legislative session, dubbed by even mainstream media as the Boeing Session. The legislature had just hammered out \$2.56 billion in draconian cuts in programs for the workers and the poor. That didn't stop them

from giving this corporate/military giant a \$3-billion-plus handout in the Boeing Session.

Cut unemployment insurance

State unemployment insurance is funded by taxing businesses. In reality, these taxes are a part of workers' wages that is diverted into a state-run insurance program. The program pays workers a fraction of their previous wages when they are laid off or the company they worked for folds.

A new law, written largely by business lobbyists, will cut payments from the 200,000 businesses whose workers contribute to the unemployment fund. The money not paid into the fund will go to increase profits. They are stealing from workers to the projected tune of \$167 million a year.

Since less is going into the fund, less is going to go out. Using creative accounting, this law changes the formula for determining the amount of an unemployment check. Instead of basing the benefit on the highest-paid two quarters of the previous year, it will be based on an average of all four quarters. Additionally, the length of benefits was cut from 30 weeks to 26 weeks.

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POLLUTING POWER PLANT SHOULD GO



Residents of the Bay View Hunters Point district of San Francisco call for the closing of the Pacific Gas & Electric power plant next to their community. Environmentalists say the plant has contributed to the degradation of the health of the predominately African American neighborhood.

WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

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The shape of things to come

The following is excerpted from an article by Leslie Feinberg, a transgender lesbian activist and author and a managing editor of Workers World who was one of several nationally known writers asked to describe what Pride 2025 might look like. The articles are appearing in several LGBT newspapers across the United States.



WW PHOTO: JULIA LA RIVA

Feinberg at book signing in Los Angeles after Pride meeting.

Right now, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans movement faces a crossroads.

Since the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, the most conservative political wing in the LGBT movement, which looks to the ruling establishment as its social and economic base, has increasingly urged that our demands focus on "gay issues" we can all agree on. Questions of war and racism, they say, are divisive because we don't all see eye to eye.

"We are everywhere," our movement declares. True: politicians in Congress and community organizers in grassroots coalitions, CEOs in board rooms and hamburger flippers, top brass in the war rooms and GIs on the front lines, FBI chiefs and street activists, robed judges and uniformed prisoners.

So who will define liberation? A white, Republican gay banker who is unjustly passed over for promotion because of his sexuality? Or a Latina transgender youth who has lived homeless on the streets since she was 10 years old? If we have to wait for unanimous agreement on a vision of which way forward, we may as well go home and make it a Blockbuster evening.

So Pride 2025 will be shaped, in part, by a broad and lively discussion: Can we move forward on issues without consensus?

There are struggles we agree on: uniting against bigotry, discrimination and violence based on sexuality, gender expression or sex.

But are racism and war LGBT issues?

The leaders of the early 20th century German Homosexual Emancipation Movement caved in and backed their own rulers in WWI—a wholly reactionary and racist war between imperial powers fighting each other to recarve up the world's markets into colonial possessions. This derailed the movement. The most conservative and reactionary currents became emboldened; the most progressive, left-wing elements became marginalized.

But decades later in the United States, after police repression ignited the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, the liberation wing of our young movement fought against the domestic counter-intelligence programs of the FBI and CIA. We were part of the battles to defend the Black Panther Party, Young Lords, Chicano and American Indian Movement. And we stood up with the Vietnamese people against the Pentagon war.

Our solidarity won significant popular support for the multi-national, young gay liberation struggle.

Today, LGBT activists have been part of protests totaling tens of millions here and around the world to stop the Pentagon war drive and the racist roundups of Arab, Muslim and South Asian people in this country. Openly gay, transgender, lesbian and transsexual activists have spoken at major mass rallies organized by International ANSWER—Act Now to Stop War & End Racism.

War is a defining moment. If a movement can't stand up to militarism of this character—recolonization of the oil-rich Middle East and Central Asia—what can it stand up for?

The spin-doctors of war appeal to our progressive movements to back the bombing of Afghanistan in order

to "liberate" women and gay people there. Then why did they earlier arm and back the counter-revolutionary forces that overturned women's rights and helped usher the Taliban to power?

Matthew Shepard was lashed to a fence and left to die in the cold night in this country. And countless other queer-identified people of all nationalities have been lynched in the U.S. Our love and identities are still illegal in many states. We are being bashed, denied domestic partner benefits, and are victims of police brutality and "don't ask, don't tell" witch hunts right here in the USA.

Our fight is here!

History has taught us that as the economic recession deepens, so will scapegoating and repression. And the war drive and its ascendant Rambo mentality is inextricably linked to every domestic issue, social and economic: money for AIDS and health care, the fight against budget cuts and police violence, domestic battering and rape, the struggle for rights of youth and elders, genuine accessibility for disabled and Deaf communities.

Will the most downtrodden and disenfranchised—including people of color, youth, trans people and immigrants—swell the ranks of all those struggles, and, more importantly, its leadership?

Or will our movement see its salvation in the wait for yet another election year?

Who will we look to for leadership? The Republicans and Democrats who vote, in virtual unanimity, for war funding? Those making the world safe for Unocal and Halliburton?

Or the people who do the work of the world everyday but have had nothing to say about how it is run. Those who have the least to lose and the most to gain from profound economic and social transformation.

Yes, we can and should come together in a united front on every issue that affects all LGBT people. But don't be surprised that a liberation current is reviving and growing that will not stop fighting until every battle is won.

And as "we" battle on both sides of the class barricades—captains of capital versus the anti-capitalist modern Abolitionist movement to replace capitalism with a consciously planned economy to meet human needs—let us not automatically assume that Pride 2025 will take place within this same dog-eat-dog economic and social system.

What we do today matters. This year—Pride 2003—activists across the United States will march in contingents that carry the banner: "No pride in war; no pride in occupation. Stop the racist roundups." □

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LOS ANGELES

Fri., June 27
Protest Bush. See ad page 10.

NEW YORK

Sun., June 22
Caribbean dinner to benefit the WW/PVN Youth Summer 2003 trip to Cuba. 5 to 9 p.m. Tasty dishes, music, short program. Suggested donation \$15 adults, \$8 youths. For location & tickets, phone (212)-633-6646 ext. 24

Mon., June 23
Protest Bush. See ad page 10.

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

SAN FRANCISCO

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.

Fri., June 27
Protest Bush. See ad page 3.

Every Sunday
Workers World Party weekly meetings. These educational meetings cover current events as well as struggles of peoples from all over the world. 5 p.m. At 2489 Mission St. room 28. For info (415) 826-4828.

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Got something to say to Bush?

Tell him in person: 'End the occupation!'

Protests at election fundraisers in NYC, SF and LA

By John Catalinotto
New York

George W. Bush will be getting two kinds of welcomes as he travels around the country to raise campaign funds, starting in Washington, D.C.

From the super rich and the ultra right, who will contribute funds to his election campaign in return for even lower taxes and more wartime contracts, he's expected to raise \$20 million for the 2004 primary campaign, including a record-setting \$5 million in New York alone on June 23.

But on that day in New York, many who protested the war on Iraq will be coming to the streets outside the Sheraton Hotel. They will say no to the ongoing U.S. occupation of Iraq and demand that U.S. troops be brought home to the United States.

There will also be protests in California on June 27—in the San Francisco Bay area at lunch time and the Los Angeles area at

dinner time—where Bush will be speaking to \$2,000-a-plate fundraisers.

The ANSWER Coalition in New York, in a June 14 release, invited all other anti-war forces to endorse the protest and participate under their own banners. By June 16, many other progressive and anti-war groups had either endorsed the ANSWER call or issued their own calls to demonstrate.

The release also asks "every activist to not only participate but to also work hard over the next nine days to spread the word." Local San Francisco and Los Angeles web sites also urge this rapid response.

The release referred to the increased media coverage given to the controversy over the Bush administration's unsubstantiated claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. It was the main reason given to justify U.S. aggression against Iraq.

"It is absolutely critical," it continued, "that we mobilize against this war crimi-

nal especially at this time, when all the lies he told the public to justify the war are coming back to haunt him, while resistance to the colonial occupation of Iraq grows daily."

In the days since the call, there have been even more reports from Iraq of a resumed U.S. offensive. The new attacks combine military strikes with population roundups in areas where there have been guerrilla hits against U.S. occupation forces.

There are also more and more reports that rank-and-file U.S. soldiers are unhappy with the new role they are forced to play in Iraq. Bush and the Pentagon generals had told the troops they would liberate Iraq, the Iraqis would welcome them, and they could soon come home.

Instead, the young U.S. soldiers have been turned into cops. They are policing a hostile population for an undetermined period. The troops are beginning to complain about this new assignment. There is reason to believe many soldiers would

welcome a demonstration demanding they be sent home.

The \$20 million Bush expects to raise on his tour will put him far ahead of any of the Democrats in the electoral contest between the two capitalist parties.

The street protests, however, will show grass-roots opposition from an independent anti-war movement confronting Bush and resisting his program.

So far demonstrations have been set for June 23 in New York City at the Sheraton Hotel at 7th Avenue and 52nd Street in Manhattan at 5 p.m.; at June 27 in the San Francisco Bay Area at the Airport Marriott in Burlingame at 11 a.m.; and at June 27 in the Century Plaza Hotel in Century City (Los Angeles) at 6 p.m.

For more information or to endorse call (212)633-6646 in New York, (415) 821-6545 in San Francisco or (213) 487-2368 in Los Angeles. Or look at the International ANSWER web site at www.internationalanswer.org for news and local links. □

July 4th in Philadelphia

'Stop U.S. wars—at home and abroad'

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

When the brand-new National Constitution Center opens its doors here on July 4th, thousands of protesters will be gathering in nearby Franklin Square. They will be demanding to know why George W. Bush, who lied about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and engaged the U.S. in an illegal and criminal war of occupation, was ever considered as a speaker for the dedication of a museum commemorating the collection of laws that govern the country.

The July 4th Mobilization, a coalition of hundreds of national and Philadelphia-area organizations, has issued a call for a national protest to Stop U.S. Wars at Home and Abroad. They are calling for an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, no endless wars for U.S. empire, and for the repeal of the USA Patriot Act. Their call reads in part: "We are determined to stop the never-ending series of wars in the various forms it is taking against people here and abroad. We stand with people everywhere struggling for a world which values people over profits. We stand in solidarity with people living under oppression and occupation who have nothing to celebrate on this day."

Bush had been expected to attend the ceremony. But in early June the White House announced that he would spend the July 4th holiday speaking to veterans and uniformed troops at a U.S. military base instead. Rally organizers immediately issued a press release claiming Bush's bailout as a victory, but vowing to continue with their protest.

Berta Joubert of Philadelphia ANSWER told Workers World, "Bush is persona non grata, but whether he comes or not, we'll be there to oppose his platform."

"Few presidents in recent memory have shown such disrespect for the civil rights embedded in the Constitution and Bill of Rights as George W. Bush," said Phoebe Schellenberg, from Crossroads Women's Center and a spokesperson for the protest. "It is quite understandable

he would prefer to speak to a controlled military audience, where First Amendment rights don't exist."

The march will pass by local and federal prisons, as well as the offices of the Philadelphia District Attorney, where it will raise opposition to the death penalty and support for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The Black journalist on death row has been systematically denied due process in his efforts to win his freedom, even though another person has confessed to the crime. Pam Africa of International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal told Workers World that a Free Mumia contingent is being organized to participate in the anti-war protest.

The July 4th rally and march will also raise demands for money for human needs, not the Pentagon war machine. The Pentagon's \$400-billion budget is over 30 times the combined military spending of all the countries targeted in Bush's endless war plans—including Iran, Syria, Cuba, North Korea, Lebanon, Zimbabwe and Palestine.

The Bush wars for empire require a massive transfer of wealth from social programs. The administration hands out lucrative contracts to Bechtel, Halliburton, Exxon and others, and has engineered over \$2 trillion in tax giveaways that primarily benefit the very rich.

The organizers of the march point out that this July 4th, the majority in the U.S. have less and less to celebrate with over 2.7 million unemployed and 2.2 million imprisoned. On July 1, Pennsylvania, like many other states across the country, will make draconian cuts in funding for education, public transportation, drug rehabilitation and other social programs because states by law must balance their budgets even when the federal government is running a huge deficit. It turns out that "states' rights" really means pushing responsibility for social programs onto the states, which have no way to raise the funds for them.

"The real dedication to freedom on July 4th lies with those who continue to resist Bush's policies," said Robert

Smith, staff coordinator of the Brandywine Peace Community. "Enough of cruise missiles at the expense of funding for human needs. Enough of legislation like the USA Patriot Act that puts a match to our civil liberties."

Rally organizers also point to the irony that a museum dedicated to the history of the U.S. Constitution was constructed on the graves of enslaved Africans, who were kept at the site by George Washington

when Philadelphia served as the country's first capital. "They're celebrating a Constitution that recognized the property rights of slave owners and corporations, but fails to guarantee rights to employment, education, housing, healthcare or a safe environment," said Joe Piette of the Philadelphia International Action Center, "We must demonstrate to demand inclusion of these human rights in the Constitution." □

George W. Bush — President of the Rich, Enemy of the People

PROTEST BUSH

at his Bay Area fundraiser: SFO Marriott in Burlingame

**Jobs & Education
NOT
War & Occupation!**

- End Colonial Occupation from Iraq to Palestine
- Money for Housing, Healthcare, Schools and Jobs, Not the Pentagon
- Stop Racist Attacks
- Defend Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- No Patriot Act II
- No New U.S. Wars in Iran, Korea, Philippines, Cuba, Colombia, Syria ...
- Start PRIDE weekend early — Protest Bush!

Fri. June 27

11:00 am

S.F. Airport Marriott

1800 Old Bayshore Hwy, Burlingame

US-101 to Millbrae Ave East. Turn right on Old Bayshore Hwy to Airport Marriott.

Initiated by International A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition (ACT NOW TO STOP WAR & END RACISM)

Endorsed by American Arab Anti-Discrimination Comm.-SF • California NOW (Nat'l Organization for Women) • South Bay Mobilization to Stop the War • Global Exchange • Al Awda-SF • Pat Gray for Congress Campaign • Peninsula Peace and Justice Center • Not in Our Name Project Call or email to endorse (415) 821-6545 • answer@actionsf.org

Get on the BUS! (415)821-6545 call to reserve a seat
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See ads for Los Angeles and New York demonstrations on pages 10 and 11.

The crimes of capitalism

Boeing gets huge handout at workers' expense

Continued from page 1

These cuts will affect over 300,000 workers who receive unemployment checks. The unemployment rate for the state is 7.3 percent.

Seasonal workers will suffer the most. According to the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, the average benefit of fishers will drop 23 percent, from \$358 a week to \$268. Fishing is listed by the Labor Department as the most dangerous occupation in the U.S. Agricultural workers will lose 17 percent, from \$237 to \$191. Both these jobs have lots of downtime.

Worker's compensation for hearing loss was cut as well. Now Boeing and other manufacturers can more easily and cheaply deafen workers with their machinery.

"This is significant, and unprecedented, that we are going after working people to solve the problems of business in a recession," said Robby Stern of the Washington State Labor Council. "Business is using the threat of Boeing leaving to accelerate the race to the bottom."

But Boeing wanted even more. So the Boeing Session leaped to comply. Another bill was hurriedly passed just for the company. It will cut the giant corporation's business and operations taxes by 40 percent, subsidize its research and development costs, and give it breaks on property taxes. While this is contingent on the new plane being assembled in the state, there are no requirements that any of the parts be manufactured locally. These tax cuts

are estimated to be worth \$3.2 billion over the next 20 years.

What capitalist democracy looks like

Meanwhile, for poor and working people, the budget axe cut deep. The state budget was cut by \$2.65 billion. No new revenue sources were considered. Schools, healthcare and basic services were all on the block. In 2000, voters of Washington State had passed Initiative 732, giving teachers a 2-percent annual raise and reducing class size by hiring more teachers. State workers were demanding parity.

Instead of a raise, teachers and state workers are facing wage freezes and layoffs. The state plans to get rid of 1,150 jobs over the next two years. Charles Hasse, president of the Washington Education Association, says most school districts in the state will lay off teachers, cut programs or both. The union says \$600 million was cut from K-12 education. Tuition for the state universities and colleges will rise 7 percent in each of the next two years.

In 2001, Initiative 775 was overwhelmingly passed. It gave 26,000 state home health care workers the right to unionize. Last year the Service Employees union led a successful organizing campaign and the workers got a contract.

These isolated workers take care of elderly and disabled people who wish to remain at home. For this physically, emotionally and psychologically demanding work, home healthcare workers earn

\$7.68 an hour. The contract won in 2002 would give them a two-step raise totalling \$2.02 an hour and make them eligible for worker's compensation coverage for on-the-job injuries. Some of the workers would have received state-subsidized health care coverage.

But now they are getting nothing except the possibility of a layoff notice, because health care to the poor is also being cut.

The state's Basic Health Plan provides bare bones insurance coverage to 122,000 low-income workers and their children. Yet another voter-approved initiative, this one hiked taxes on tobacco to raise the money to add another 50,000 families to the plan. Instead, the legislature took the tobacco tax money and will cut 22,000 families from healthcare coverage by capping the program at 100,000 people. In addition, it will start charging premiums of \$15 to \$25 a month per child. The legislature's own figures admit 20,000 of the state's poorest and most vulnerable children will be left with no health care at all.

Counties and municipalities are cutting back as well. King County, which includes Seattle, is laying off workers, closing parks, deferring maintenance on roads, even cutting back garbage collection in an effort to make up a \$52-million shortfall. Seattle School District just announced it is cutting yet another \$1 million from its budget. This is on top of discovering an "accounting error" that showed the district was \$35 million in the hole.

The day after the unemployment insur-

ance bill passed, Boeing announced it was firing another 270 workers and sending their jobs abroad. These are highly skilled, high-paid jobs writing technical manuals, maintenance manuals and service bulletins. "After careful study, we've decided to change the long-term business model for that work by transferring it to companies with a lower cost base," Boeing spokesperson Jill Langer arrogantly told the Seattle Times.

Will handouts keep Boeing home?

Bosses and politicians claim the answer to unemployment is to give the rich more. They claim looting the treasury and the pockets of poor and working people will create jobs. They say this stolen wealth will be invested.

Yet capital can fly faster and farther than any Boeing plane or missile. It is this export of capital that is accelerating the unemployment crisis at home and causing misery around the world.

Organized labor is vowing a fightback, but so far is looking to electoral changes in 2004.

It was Seattle that witnessed the birth of the anti-globalization movement on Nov. 30, 1999. The Millennial Round of the World Trade Organization ground to a halt and then collapsed under the weight of tremendous, militant street protests. As the pain of globalization comes home, those stunning days will be remembered. □

With the stroke of a pen

Students to get less financial aid

By G. Dunkel

Hundreds of millions of dollars are going to flow out of the pockets of the poorest students in this country because of a tweak in a table in a federal financial aid form. This sneaky change will affect those who qualify for Pell Grants.

Almost all students who want to apply for a portion of the \$90 billion of financial aid available from U.S. colleges have to fill out this form, even if they don't qualify for a Pell Grant. So this change is going to cost a majority of college students a significant amount of money.

The federal form is a complicated, multi-page equation that determines how much money a family has available to spend on education. The "tweak" lowers the amount of money students can keep to offset state, county and city taxes. The government is using tables based on what these local taxes were three years ago, when they were at historic lows. They have increased considerably since then and will increase more.

Because state and local taxes vary by where you live, how much you earn and what other deductions you have, it is impossible to give a figure for what a typical family will pay. Human Capital Research, a consulting firm that helps colleges set their aid policies, has come up with some estimates. In some states, families making \$50,000 a year will have to pay \$700 more; in states like Michigan, Delaware, South Carolina or Wisconsin, families earning around \$25,000 will be expected to pay an extra \$220. Families making \$80,000 will pay an extra \$1,500.

Families whose income is high enough to let them take out a private loan may manage to keep their students in school, but, for a family making \$25,000 a year, even an extra \$220 is going to increase the pressure to drop out. It certainly means students will spend more time working and less studying.

This increase came at the stroke of a federal official's pen, without comment, hearings or even much notice, unlike the tuition and fee increases that have been hitting public higher education all over the United States. The latter are clearly announced, passed by state legislatures and imposed by boards of trustees or governors.

The median increase in fees and tuition in state schools from the school year 2001-2 to 2002-3 was 10 percent. The increases ranged from 24 percent in Massachusetts to 2 percent in New York. (See accompanying graph.)

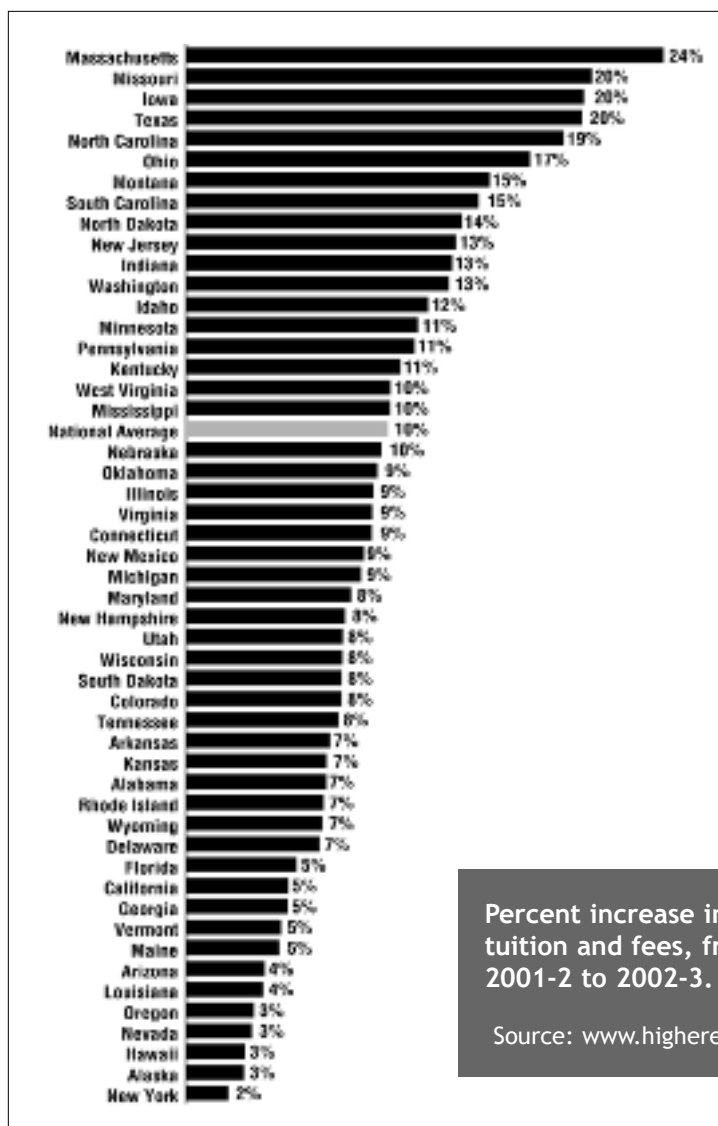
While these figures are accurate, they do not always reflect the real cost of higher education. For example, in New York and California some of the more prestigious state universities charge over \$1,000 in "fees" required for all students. Community colleges have the same general financial problems, but their statistics are harder to come by.

The coming fiscal year is going to be even worse for the states and their local governments. The Bush tax cuts on the federal level will cause deep service cuts

and produce large tax hikes on the state and local levels. As the current "jobless recovery" deepens, public higher education is going to become more and more costly.

As a college degree becomes more and more important in getting a decent job, it is becoming harder and harder for all but the wealthy to afford it. Even families with a so-called middle-class income are being squeezed.

There is a very simple solution to this problem of ever more expensive public universities—don't charge tuition at all. In every socialist revolution, one of the first measures taken has been to make education free. Even in capitalist countries where there is a strong working-class movement, it is possible to win free and universal education. The capitalist bosses need trained, skilled and educated workers. They should pay for producing them. □



Percent increase in public four-year tuition and fees, from school year 2001-2 to 2002-3.
Source: www.highereducation.org

'An Execution in the Family'

How a Rosenberg son survived the 50s

By Deirdre Griswold

"An Execution in the Family,"
by Robert Meeropol. St. Martin's Press,
New York, 2003. \$25.95, cloth.

Robert Meeropol, the younger son of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, has written a book about what it was like growing up with the secret knowledge that his biological parents had been executed by the U.S. government, allegedly for conspiring to pass atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.

The book is timely, not only because June 19 is the 50th anniversary of this brutal injustice, but also because there is great apprehension among many in the progressive movement over the repressive measures being taken by the Bush administration, and comparisons are being made to the McCarthy period.

Meeropol was only three years old when his parents were arrested, and six when they were executed as thousands of progressives held a vigil at the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. His earliest memories are of being sent back and forth between frightened, reluctant relatives and state institutions—until kind people in the left movement arranged for him and his brother, Michael, to be adopted by a

warm and loving couple, Abel and Anne Meeropol. Abel Meeropol was a writer of song lyrics—including the haunting anti-lynching ballad "Strange Fruit," popularized by Billie Holliday.



The book is a thoughtful and personally revealing antidote to the deliberate misconceptions that pervade this society about what it means to be a communist. Meeropol is concerned with setting the record straight in many ways, large and small. He mentions, for instance, that in a Paramount Pictures' film version of a book by E.L. Doctorow, "The Book of Daniel," the children of a couple supposed to be the Rosenbergs are exploited at a large rally, passed hand over hand over the heads of a tightly packed crowd to the stage as the crowd chants, "The children, the children!" Nothing remotely like that ever happened to the boys, says Meeropol. The film was sheer Hollywood.

"The people who sheltered us did everything in their power to protect us," he writes. "They would ultimately become my heroes and role models for how I wanted to live my life."

Until he was in his mid-twenties, and was already a very active militant in SDS and the rising anti-war movement,

New York City demonstration to
free the Rosenbergs

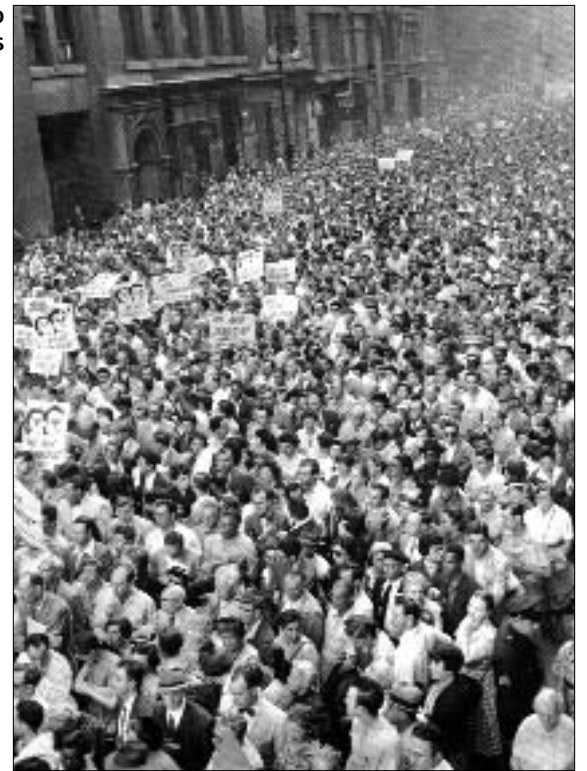
Meeropol always had the dilemma of whether or not to tell his friends who he really was. His adoptive parents had changed the boys' last name to Meeropol to protect them from the frenzied anti-communism of those days. He grew up knowing that "they"—the FBI, HUAC, the commercial media—were hounding people out of their jobs and even sending them to jail because they fought for a better society. He learned early on not to let anyone know. When he finally told his wife-to-be, he was relieved to find out that she had actually known who he was for some time.

Meeropol has an engaging writing style, very honest about himself, quite the opposite of the closed and cautious young boy he describes in the first part of the book.

This book is about a journey from the fragmented images a young child has of what is going on around him to a growing curiosity and awareness of social struggles, impelled partly by the need to understand what happened to his parents, but also in response to the winds of struggle that began with the civil rights movement and took on hurricane force with the horrors of the Vietnam War.

A section toward the end deals with the author's attempts to understand his parents' great loyalty to the Soviet Union, which had defeated the Nazi fascists in World War II while the "democratic" imperialists were dragging their feet, allowing Hitler to inflict enormous damage on the USSR.

This is not a scary book. Quite the opposite. The children take strength from the wonderful people who come to their aid,



just as the children of the South African struggle did. Robert Meeropol overcomes the worst thing that could happen to a small child—the state murder of his parents—and develops into a feisty 1960s radical with all the energy of that period, channeled by his basic anti-capitalist outlook.

Meeropol today runs the Rosenberg Fund for Children, which, as the book jacket explains, provides for "the education and emotional needs of both targeted activist youth and children in this country whose parents have been harassed, injured, jailed, lost jobs, or died in the course of their progressive activities."

On June 19, at New York's City Center, the fund will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the execution of the Rosenbergs with Celebrate the Children of Resistance, a program of dramatic reading, music and song. □

Alice Arts Center wins partial victory

By LeiLani Dowell
Oakland, Calif.

After tremendous public pressure from artists, community supporters and those taking classes at the Alice Arts Center, representatives of Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown announced on June 12 that the Alice has been taken "off the table" as a possible site for the expansion of a charter arts school favored by the mayor.

The Alice is world renowned for its African and African-American dance classes and performances. It is also a community center for the growth and development of members of the predominantly African-American community of Oakland. The complex also houses 50 tenants in single occupancy rooms, the majority of whom are artists and participants in the Alice's many arts programs.

At lively rallies held in support of the Alice on May 27 and June 10, speakers young and old described the possibilities that the Alice had opened up for them in life, and the avenues they were able to avoid simply by having a space to call their own.

However, victory is not complete for the Alice. Although the public announcement has been made, the ARTS Coalition (Artists and Residents Survive Together) that came together at the beginning of the struggle will not rest until its demands are met in writing. The demands include a written guarantee from the mayor that the tenants and organizations will not be evicted, as well as the creation of a board



WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

of members from the Alice Arts community to serve as decision makers for the Alice. Until these goals are met, the ARTS Coalition will continue to protest.

The next protest, scheduled for June 24, will be a march from the Alice to City Hall in downtown Oakland.

On June 15, the Alice community suffered a great loss when Malonga Casquelord was killed in an auto accident. Casquelord was a world-renowned Congolese dancer and drummer who created the Fua Dia Congo dance troupe at the Alice. He was at every event that involved the Alice, including the protests on May 27 and June 10, and will be greatly missed in that community. □



PHOTO: PVN

Fellow crafts artists attend funeral of Ousmane Zongo.

Harlem mourns African immigrant

The body of Ousmane Zongo was returned to Africa on June 7. The 35-year-old Burkina Faso immigrant had been executed without trial May 22 by New York City undercover police officer Bryan Conroy. His "crime"—being in a building where counterfeit CDs were allegedly being sold. He was working in the large warehouse, repairing African crafts and drums. He used his earnings to buy books and medicine for his village back home.

Like fellow West African immigrant Amadou Diallo, who was gunned down by police on Feb. 4, 1999, Zongo was unarmed and had no police record. Police admit he

was not involved in any illegal activity.

Zongo's funeral on June 6 was preceded by a militant procession through the streets of Harlem from the Francisco Funeraria to Al Aqsa mosque. The sermon was given in Arabic, Mandingo, French and English. At the funeral home African-American community leader and 2004 presidential candidate Rev. Al Sharpton pointed out that the cops "who came with guns drawn were not looking for guns or drugs but for counterfeit CDs. They are sending the message that our lives are worth less than property."

—Bill Cecil

Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row:

CUBA, rights & wrongs



Once again the Bush administration, speaking through a complacent media, is launching verbal bombs at a foreign country. This time it's Cuba.

In this age of media megamergers and sole superpower status, the media sometimes is a safe signal of underlying public policy. In other words, word wars sometimes become shooting wars. The media attack on Cuba is just the latest of the corporate media's disservice to its consumers. Therefore, while the media is most often used as a megaphone to amplify and project the voices of the wealthy and politically powerful, rarely does this same media honestly inform Americans of contemporary history.

Because of this, millions of Americans lack the context through which to analyze and understand the basis for confrontations between states. They're conditioned by the press to look at complex political and social issues through the lens of simplistic personalities. Therefore we speak of "Castro's Cuba" in the same breath as "Saddam's Iraq."

This is silliness. Conflicts between states are not personal, they're economic. The U.S. supported a brutal Batista dictatorship there for almost a decade before Cuban rebels drove the regime out. The U.S., which loves to boast about its "human rights campaign," has supported the most brutal butchers and dictators in the world.

Why? Because dictators use their police and armed forces to oppress their own people, to insure that the U.S. had free reign of the nation's natural resources. Is there any other reason why the U.S. would support butchers like Batista? Did they give a damn about human rights then?

In Africa, the first Bush administration didn't support Nelson Mandela. It was General Mobutu, who named himself Zairian president for life, whom papa Bush called, "Our best friend in Africa." Human rights?

What is a human right? The right to an education? In the United States over 20 million people are functionally illiterate. Higher education is available for those who can afford it, but for millions of people college is far too expensive. In Cuba, the right to an education is free, from kindergarten to a doctoral degree.

Education for millions of children in American inner cities is a scandal, as reported by Jonathan Kozel in his book, "Amazing Grace." Buildings are literally falling down. Windows are broken. Teachers are ill paid and badly prepared. For millions of children in the wealthiest nation on earth, education is an unobtainable illusion.

What about the human right to health care? In the U.S., you can obtain excellent health care if you can afford it. Cuba, meanwhile, boasts the largest number of doctors per capita on earth. They provide medical care to people all around the world. Indeed, there are more Cuban doctors working in other countries than the UN's World Health Organization. Millions of men, women and children in this country have no medical insurance and no real prospect for decent medical care.

And what about the human right of freedom? When the racist regime in South Africa was waging terrorist attacks on the so-called front-line states in the region, Namibia suffered numerous incursions and cross-border attacks. Cuba sent her soldiers thousands of miles to fight the South Africans and stop them at Cuito Cuanavale. That battle proved a turning point, and paved the way for the demise of the apartheid government, the unbanning of the African National Congress, and the freedom of Dr. Nelson Mandela.

Whom did the U.S. support during this conflict? The racist government in South Africa. Where was American concern for the human rights of millions of Africans, both inside and outside of South Africa?

That said, this commentator opposes the use of the death penalty. It is barbaric and oppressive. But there is a world of difference between how the Americans have used it, as a legalized form of lynching, and how Cuba has had to resist U.S. economic, political and media terrorism. The U.S. uses it to repress, Cuba uses it in self defense. The U.S. uses it to preserve white privilege, Cuba to survive as a state against U.S. aggression. □

Berkeley City Council supports Cuban Five

By Alicia Jrapko
Berkeley, Calif.

On June 10, the City Council of Berkeley unanimously passed a resolution in support of the Cuban Five. Nine members of the council, including Mayor Tom Bates, were present for the vote.

The resolution directed the Berkeley City Council to send letters to President George W. Bush, members of the Bay Area congressional delegation, Attorney General John Ashcroft, the Congressional Working Group on Cuba, and the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. The letters call for a "new and fair trail in a neutral venue outside of Miami-Dade County; and for the same family visitation rights, humanitarian concerns and equal treatment under the law for the Cuban Five as any other prisoner in the United States."

Berkeley is the first city in the United States to have passed a resolution on behalf of the Cuban Five, who are in U.S. prisons for having monitored the activities of terrorist groups

in the Miami area. The U.S. government called this "espionage." Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González and Fernando González were convicted on June 8, 2001, and sentenced by a federal court in Miami to sentences ranging from 17 years to double life.

The resolution was first introduced in March of this year, but one member of the City Council recommended that it be brought up to the Peace and Justice Committee. This is a common procedure when there is some disagreement about an issue or it needs further clarification.

The Peace and Justice Committee gave strong support to the resolution. Before the vote, Roya Arasthe from the Peace and Justice Committee told the council: "The issue of the five is about political prisoners unjustly imprisoned in the United States." She briefly explained to the council that, without evidence, the five were convicted and sentenced to long terms in prison, reflecting the bias of the court in Miami.

Rebecca Davis from the U.S.-Cuba

Sister City Association that links Berkeley with Palma Soriano, Cuba, read a message from Livio Di Celmo in support of the Cuban Five and against U.S.-sponsored terrorism. His brother, Fabio Di Celmo, was an Italian tourist who was killed in 1997 by a bomb planted in Havana's Hotel Copacabana. The terrorist who planted the bomb was paid by the Miami-based right-wing Cuban American National Foundation.

Two members of the National Committee to Free the Five—Gloria la Riva and the writer of this article—attended the meeting. The committee was actively involved in supporting the adoption of the resolution. Other individual and group supporters were present with signs that read, "Free the Cuban Five."

The Berkeley City Council resolution is a step forward in this struggle and hopefully will encourage other city councils around the country to do the same.

For more information about the Cuban Five, visit www.freethethefive.org or www.antiterroristas.cu. □

San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Meeting spreads the word about imprisoned Cubans

By LeiLani Dowell
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

An educational event on the history and situation of the Cuban 5 was held on June 6 in San Luis Obispo. It was hosted by HopeDance, a group that provides progressive film screenings and discussions to this small college town near Santa Barbara.

Speakers included Delvis Fernandez and Jorge Milanés of the Cuban American Alliance, and Gloria La Riva and Alicia Jrapko of the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five.

Fernandez and Milanés are Cuban-Americans. They spoke of the media-fed misconception that Cubans living in the United States do not support the sovereignty of Cuba. Fernandez described what it was like to grow up in Cuba before the revolution. He was one of only 11 students in a class of 600 to actually graduate.

The high level of education and literacy now attained by everyone in Cuba—not to mention the advancements and achievements in healthcare and other social services—once seemed an impossible task, said Fernandez, yet have been won since

the revolution led by Fidel Castro. These leaps and bounds would be enviable to any government that cares about the welfare of its people. Why wouldn't the U.S. administration want to learn from the example of Cuba, he wondered aloud.

Gloria La Riva spoke about the situation of the Cuban Five. She said that in this post-9/11 era, one would think that people who prevented terrorist acts from happening would be praised as heroes. But the U.S. government supports terrorist acts directed at Cuba.

La Riva explained that, given the uphill battle in the appeals due to this government's hostility toward Cuba, the freedom of the Five will be won by a political struggle and the people's support. A video of appeals attorney Leonard Weinglass speaking to the National Lawyers Guild conference made a strong impression on the audience.

Alicia Jrapko spoke of her visits to Gerardo Hernández, who is in nearby Lompoc prison, and announced a new campaign to demand the right of two of the Cubans' wives to visit their husbands. The two, Olga Salanueva and Adriana Perez, have been denied entry visas three times by the U.S. government.

Rosa Peñate of the Free the Five committee read a poem by Antonio Guerrero, one of the five, who began

writing poetry soon after his arrest. The San Luis Obispo group will take part in the town's upcoming Caribbean festival, with a literature table on Cuba and the Cuban Five. They hope to reach thousands of people about the case. □

200,000

By John Catalinotto

Some 200,000 people demonstrated June 13 in Seoul and 60 other South Korean cities against the occupation of their country by U.S. troops for the last 50 years. The date was the first anniversary of the death of two 13-year-old Korean girls who were killed on a country lane when a U.S. armored vehicle ran over them during military exercises last year.

Anger over the death of the girls, Shim Mi-son and Shin Hyo-sun, grew last November when a military court acquitted the U.S. sergeants driving the vehicle of negligent homicide. To most Koreans, the acquittal added insult to a grave injury.

U.S. troops entered Korea in large numbers at the beginning of the 1950-1953 Korean War, in which millions of Koreans died, along with over 50,000 U.S. troops. The U.S. forces have remained since. Some 37,000 U.S. troops are still in South Korea.

Even Koreans who don't oppose the U.S. presence resent the privileged, colonial-type position of the U.S. troops conferred by the Status of Forces Agreement. For example, U.S. troops who commit crimes are



Wear a button to show support for the Cuban 5

Order from
National Committee to Free the Five
2489 Mission Street, #24
San Francisco, CA 94110

As imperialists re-carve world markets

Pentagon quietly sends troops to Africa

By Monica Moorehead

The Bush administration continues to threaten the globe with its dangerous perspective of endless war. One of its lesser known yet important strategic targets is Africa, the most underdeveloped continent.

George W. Bush is scheming with his close ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, to overthrow the legitimate government of Robert Mugabe in the southern African country of Zimbabwe. But this is just one piece in the U.S. government's overall plan to transform huge sections of Africa into a gigantic U.S. military base. Washington is carrying out a general campaign of recolonization in order for the U.S. ruling class to overtake other international corporate competitors for control of the world's capitalist markets, which are wracked with a deepening crisis.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, the U.S. has stepped up its military presence in Africa in the name of fighting terrorism.

It was reported on June 17 that the USS Kearsarge, with 1,800 Marines, 1,200 sailors and attack helicopters, has been diverted from Iraq to sail to Liberia.

At least 1,500 U.S. troops are stationed in the small African country of Djibouti, located on the Horn of Africa on the Red Sea. This region is a gateway to the oil-rich Middle East, where the U.S. is presently focused on the colonial occupation of Iraq and the Palestinian people are continuing their heroic resistance against the U.S.-backed Zionist state of Israel.

NATO's Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, Gen. James Jones, spoke at a Defense Writers Group breakfast last month in Washington, D.C. The DWG organizes journalists who cover Pentagon developments. Jones emphasized that the future of NATO, a post-World War II anti-communist military alliance made up of

the U.S., Canada and capitalist Europe, could rest on establishing "forward operating locations."

The objective of these "locations" will be to carry out rapid training and deployments in times of "crisis." By this October, NATO plans to debut prototype quick reaction forces comprised of ground, sea and air forces numbering between 2,000 and 3,000 troops.

Jones stated, "The carrier battle groups of the future and the expeditionary strike groups of the future may not spend six months in the Mediterranean Sea but I'll bet they'll spend half the time down the West Coast of Africa." (allAfrica.com, May 2, 2003)

At the present time, the USS Mount Whitney is stationed in the Red Sea. It is a highly sophisticated ship that uses helicopters and electronics to counter so-called terrorist groups within the area covering Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Kenya, along with Djibouti.

The Horn of Africa is not the only African region the Pentagon is interested in. According to an article entitled, "Pentagon Moving Swiftly to Become 'Globocop,'" published on the June 11 internet edition of Ghana News, the U.S. also plans to use the West African country of Ghana as a military base, initially sending 1,000 troops. The article states that while U.S. military think tanks are planning to scale back their military presence in Germany, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, they are setting their sights on establishing semi-permanent, "forward" bases in Algeria, Morocco and perhaps Tunisia in northern Africa.

The Pentagon is also planning to establish smaller facilities in Senegal, Mali and Ghana in order to further dominate the oil-rich West African countries, especially Nigeria.

Just recently, Deputy Defense Secretary

Paul Wolfowitz met with military representatives from the East Asia region about U.S. global strategy. This is the same Wolfowitz who originally drafted the infamous "Defense Planning Guidance" doctrine in 1992, one year following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. The DPG, which was first leaked by the New York Times, outlined the U.S. military strategists' plans to become the pre-eminent world police force and warned other imperialist allies, especially in Europe, not to dare challenge U.S. world hegemony.

Even before the so-called war on terrorism, the DPG was declaring that the U.S. military would become a "constant fixture" in the New World Order brought about by the demise of the Soviet Union. The Pentagon uses phrases like "the arc of instability" to describe underdeveloped countries in Africa, the Caribbean Basin, South and Central Asia. In their view, these countries are too weak to resist the U.S. turning them into military enclaves.

The brass use racist codewords to justify their military build-up in Africa and elsewhere. Admiral Arthur K. Cebrowski, chief of the Pentagon's Office of Force Transformation, spoke last month at a meeting of the Heritage Foundation. "Disconnectedness is one of the great danger signs around the world," he said. He went on to talk about "gap" regions characterized by "politically repressive regimes, widespread poverty and disease, routine mass murder, and—most important—the chronic conflicts that incubate the next generation of terrorists."

Thomas Barnett, a representative of the Naval War College, wrote in the March edition of Esquire magazine, "If we map out U.S. military responses since the end of the Cold War, we find an overwhelming concentration of activity in the regions of the world that are excluded from globali-



sation's growing Core—namely the Caribbean Rim, virtually all of Africa, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and much of Southeast Asia."

The U.S. is not the only imperialist power in Africa. Thousands of French troops are occupying Ivory Coast, a former French colony, wearing the uniform of the United Nations. They could not have gotten UN cover for this mission without the blessing of the U.S. Hundreds of French troops have also poured into war-torn Congo, considered to be the most mineral-rich country in Africa and one of the poorest worldwide. Along with British and German troops, they are part of a so-called peacekeeping team sanctioned by the UN and the European Union.

The British also have a military base near Mount Kenya. Hundreds of women, mainly from the Masai nation, have registered formal complaints to the British government against troops who raped them in the 1980s and 1990s. (The Observer, Oct. 20, 2002) These women and their lawyers are demanding compensation for these violent assaults. Where is the outcry in the big business media over these heinous crimes against African women?

The legacy of centuries-old super-exploitation and unspeakable atrocities in Africa by the imperialists is still being carried out today under the guise of humanitarianism. A new wave of anti-imperialist, organized fightback by the African masses is on the horizon. Our sisters and brothers will be counting on political solidarity from the multinational working class in the imperialist countries, who face deepening cutbacks in social programs and general decline in living standards at home. □

South Koreans demand, 'U.S. out!'

tried in U.S. courts.

The largest of the June 13 demonstrations was in Seoul, where 30,000 came out against the U.S. military presence, according to organizers. Many held candles as they gathered at a plaza near the U.S. Embassy. They chanted, "Punish the murderous GIs!" and "Withdraw U.S. troops!"

Hundreds of demonstrators, apparently students, some wearing masks and carrying plastic poles, charged toward the embassy. At the same time, thousands of other demonstrators set fire to paper U.S. flags. Riot police sprayed fire extinguishers at the protesters.

The night before, student activists had climbed over the wall of the Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, the main U.S. military base in South Korea. They demanded the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea and denounced the U.S. soldiers' crimes.

Demonstrators held smaller candlelight vigils in other major South Korean cities. The protesters are demanding an apology from U.S. President George W. Bush for the killing of the girls and a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement.

Reflecting the seriousness with which the U.S. authorities take the growing protests, the commander of the U.S.

forces, Gen. Leon J. LaPorte, has issued a public apology and even organized a memorial with U.S. soldiers participating. But U.S. officials say there will be no immediate revision of the agreement, and Bush himself has not apologized.

U.S. war threats increase

At the beginning of June, the Pentagon said the U.S. would move its troops south, away from the Demilitarized Zone—the border area with North Korea—and would also leave the Yongsan Garrison base in Seoul, where there are frequent confrontations with Koreans living around the base.

This move away from the border, while it appears peaceful in nature, in reality makes U.S. aggression in the form of an air or missile strike even more likely. The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has made it clear it would consider such an attack—as well as attempts to blockade the country—an act of war and would respond.

If U.S. troops were to remain in the DMZ, any response by the DPRK to a U.S. air strike could immediately lead to U.S. casualties. Koreans on both sides of the border believe that under those conditions, Washington would be less likely to start a conflict.

That's why on both sides of the border Koreans consider the announced U.S. troop moves away from the DMZ as a danger to people all over the peninsula. They know that Washington is considering strikes at alleged DPRK nuclear facilities. And they have just observed the furious and unjustified U.S. assault on Iraq.

Three years ago the first inter-Korean summit took place with a meeting between DPRK leader Kim Jong-Il and then-South Korean President Kim Dae-

jung, who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for this event. Increased trade and discussions have followed.

Bush's declaration that the DPRK was part of an "axis of evil" directly challenged the attempt by the South Korean government to negotiate with the North and finally end the state of war on the peninsula. Since then, popular sentiment in South Korea opposing the U.S. occupation has grown tremendously, joining the already massive anti-U.S. sentiment in the North. □

Memorial for Korean schoolgirls in L.A.

In Los Angeles on June 13, over 100 people attended a memorial for Shim Mi-son and Shin Hyo-sun, two South Korean schoolgirls crushed to death a year ago by a U.S. armored vehicle. The event was sponsored by One Korea L.A. Forum. Representatives from Mindullae, Korean Immigrant Workers Advocate, and International Action Center were there.

Those assembled pledged to keep up

the international heat on the U.S. until it moves to radically alter the Status of Forces Agreement.

Ian Thompson of the International Action Center spoke briefly on the IAC's long-standing solidarity with the people of Korea and abiding commitment to bringing the U.S. troops home so the Korean people can finally enjoy peace, justice and reunification.

—John Beacham

Sharon formula: Provocation disguised as 'retaliation'

By Richard Becker

Why would the Israeli government led by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon attempt to assassinate a leader of a major Palestinian resistance movement just days after the start of a new U.S.-sponsored "peace process?" After all, wouldn't such a move guarantee a new round of attacks inside Israel? And together, couldn't these developments signal the end of Bush's "road map" before the journey had even gotten underway?

Funny how the obvious often seems to be lost on the corporate media here.

On June 4, President George W. Bush had flown to Aqaba, Jordan, to meet with Sharon and the new Palestinian National Authority (PNA) prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas. The meeting was heralded as the beginning of a new day for the Middle East.

Bush's "road map" was unveiled in the aftermath of the U.S. military victory and occupation of Iraq. In the first two-and-a-half years of his presidency, Bush had refused to speak to any PNA leaders, while meeting on eight occasions with Sharon.

The U.S. decision to open new negotiations now was based on two factors. On the one hand the Palestinian resistance has not been broken, despite overwhelming Israeli repression backed by the U.S. On the other, the defeat of Iraq has weakened the Arab world as a whole and further isolated the Palestinians, as well as the Arab states which are resisting U.S. domination of the region.

The "road map" offers very little to the Palestinians while demanding that they make enormous concessions, concessions viewed by many Palestinians as constituting the termination of their national cause.

The Palestinian "state" supposedly agreed to by Sharon and Bush would emerge in 2005. But Sharon's office has leaked maps of the "state" that it envisions to the Israeli media. It is comprised of four pieces of disconnected territory, comprising about half of the West Bank and Gaza. The West Bank and Gaza were conquered by Israel in the 1967 war, and together make up only 22 percent of historic Palestine.

Sharon stands for Israeli domination of all of historic Palestine. His positions remain unchanged from those expressed in a July 21, 2000, interview with the Jerusalem Post, several months before he became prime minister. In the interview, Sharon called for Israel to "retain greater Jerusalem, united and undivided ... under full Israeli sovereignty." This refers to the Palestinian Old City and all of the surrounding areas that Israel illegally annexed after the 1967 war.

"Israel will retain under its full control sufficiently wide security zones—in both the East and West. The Jordan Valley, in its broadest sense, as defined by the Allon Plan, will be the eastern security zone of Israel."

In July 2000, Sharon called for large areas of the illegally occupied West Bank to be annexed. Today, his government is building a 200-mile-long militarized wall through the West Bank, surrounding the main Palestinian populated areas.

"Jewish towns, villages and communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, as well as access roads leading to them ... will remain under full Israeli control," Sharon continued in the 2000 interview. "Judea and Samaria" is the Israeli settler name for the West Bank.

"Israel does not accept under any circumstances the Palestinian demand for the right to return. Israel bears no moral responsibility for the refugees' predicament."

"As a vital existential need, Israel must continue to control the underground fresh water aquifers in western Samaria [the West Bank]... The Palestinians are obligated to prevent contamination of Israel's water resources."

Under Sharon's plan, the broken-up and scattered pieces of Palestinian territory would bear little resemblance to a real state: "All the territories under control of the Palestinian Authority will be demilitarized. The Palestinians will not have an army, only a police force. Israel will maintain complete control of the whole air space over Judea, Samaria and Gaza."

With only 6.5 million people, Israel possesses the world's fourth or fifth most powerful military, thanks to the unparalleled support it receives from the Pentagon.

Why Sharon agreed to the 'road map'

The only change in Sharon's position since his July 2000 interview is that now he is willing to say the words "Palestinian state." Even this came as a big shock to many in his extreme right-wing government and its popular base. A heated exchange took place inside the Israeli government before acceptance of the "road map" was narrowly approved.

Why would Sharon now agree to even a truncated Palestinian state? First, there was heavy pressure from Washington. The Bush administration is seeking to use the conquest of Iraq as a springboard for the reorganization of the entire Middle East.

The dismantling of the Palestinian Resistance is seen as a necessary pre-condition for the extension of Washington's hegemony over the Middle East. The "road map" is conceived of by the administration as a means to liquidate the Palestinian struggle. Sharon, like all Israeli leaders, knows that directly defying Washington is not advisable, particularly given the immense and indispensable aid that flows to Israel every year from the U.S.

Secondly, if the "road map" process goes forward, Sharon intends to annex half of the West Bank and to relegate the Palestinians to disconnected chunks of land, surrounded by Israeli military power. Under such circumstances, the

Palestinians would in reality become "self-governing" labor colonies for Israeli big business.

Sharon sheds Israeli blood to stop negotiations

Sharon has long been practiced in the art of derailing peace negotiations, while making it appear that the other side is to blame. Or, at least in making it appear that way to the U.S. public, the only foreign opinion that really matters to Israeli leaders.

Just days after the Aqaba summit, the Israeli military carried out an attempted assassination by missile of Dr. Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, leader of the political wing of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement. The attack on Rantisi was supposedly "retaliation" for an attack on Israeli occupation troops at the Erez Crossing in Gaza. In the battle that followed, five Israeli troops and five Palestinian fighters had been killed. Resisting occupation forces by armed means is legal under international law.

Rantisi was badly wounded, narrowly escaping death by jumping out of his car in Gaza City when the first missile fired from a U.S.-supplied helicopter missed its mark. Several other people were killed or badly wounded in the daytime attack on a busy Gaza street.

Rantisi has long been the primary political spokesperson for Hamas, and has lived openly in Gaza. This was the first known targeting of Rantisi by the Israeli military and secret police, who have assassinated hundreds of Palestinians in the past three years.

The timing of the hit on Rantisi, which had to have been approved by Sharon, is more than suspect.

The assassinations of Palestinian leaders in the past have invariably been followed by retaliation attacks in the streets of Israeli cities. Killing or attempting to kill a Hamas leader of Rantisi's stature, Sharon knew, would quickly be followed by an attack inside Israel, and the wait was not a long one.

The next day, June 11, a bus bomb in Jerusalem killed 17 Israelis and wounded more than 70. The following days saw several more deadly Israeli missile attacks in Gaza. In the 10 days after the June 4 summit, more than 60 people were killed and hundreds wounded, the majority Palestinian.

Why would Sharon want to see Israeli blood shed? Because he well knows that Palestinian casualties by themselves are

never sufficient for racist U.S. officials and media to declare that the peace process has been aborted. "Derailing the peace process" requires Israeli casualties, and Sharon was only too glad to accommodate.

Sharon and other Israeli leaders have been carrying out similar maneuvers for more than a half-century. Israeli historians such as Avi Shlaim, Benny Morris and others have shown this, utilizing de-classified documents from the early 1950s. Then, the Israeli leadership was bent on a "Second Round," a new war that would allow the Israeli state to further expand its territory.

A main Israeli tactic was called "retaliation." In response to recently expelled Palestinians coming across the borders back into their homeland, the Israeli army (IDF) would carry out large-scale attacks and massacres. "Retaliation" was really provocation; the intent was to get Jordan or Egypt to react militarily to the massacres, which could then be used by Israel as a pretext for a new war of conquest.

"Major Ariel ('Arik') Sharon, the Israeli officer who came to embody the 'retaliatory policy,' was placed in charge of the new Unit 101, designed especially for such actions. On Oct. 14, 1953, Unit 101 attacked Qibya, a small border village, and wiped out its population of more than 60 people. Many of the villagers were burned alive inside their homes. There were no IDF casualties." (From "Righteous Victims," Benny Morris, Knopf Publishers, 1999, New York, pp. 277-8)

Sharon was then the "favorite officer" of Israeli Gen. Moshe Dayan, later defense minister, who was a major proponent of the "retaliation" policy.

The Qibya massacre brought world condemnation and not a new war. But the Israeli government continued with the policy leading up to the 1956 Suez war, when, in alliance with the British and French imperialists, they temporarily conquered the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula.

Bush, the Democrats and Sharon

The motivation for the attempted assassination of Rantisi was so transparent that even Bush issued a mild criticism of the Israeli action as "troubling."

Leading Democrats, including House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, issued a criticism, too—not of Sharon, but of Bush. Positioning themselves to the right of the administration, 34 Democrats signed a letter to the president dated June 13 saying that they were "deeply disturbed" by his criticism of Israel.

By that time, the White House had changed its tune, as well, and issued calls for the wiping out of Hamas and the entire Palestinian Resistance, whom it labels "terrorists."

Virtually the entire spectrum of the Palestinian Resistance—including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Al-Aksa Martyrs Brigade, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Front and other organizations—have joined together in rejecting the "road map" and pledge to continue the struggle.

Elias Rashmawi, a spokesperson for the Free Palestine Alliance-U.S., said of the plan: "The road map is the ultimate formulation by the U.S. to fully end all forms of resistance and fragment the Palestinian national unity."

"In reality, this is a 'security plan' designed to destroy resistance on all fronts." □



Palestinian children help their father salvage a window frame for a house destroyed by Israeli troops in the West Bank City of Hebron.

While Bush raises \$\$ from corporate backers

Pentagon forces weary troops into colonial role

By Fred Goldstein

President George W. Bush, fresh from passing out hundreds of billions of dollars to the rich in tax cuts, is now on the circuit to collect his payoff in the form of campaign contributions. He began June 17 with a \$3.5-million fundraiser at the Washington Hilton, where the crowd paid \$2,000 each for a hamburger, nachos, a patriotic speech and influence. His next stop is New York on June 23, then on to Los Angeles and San Francisco on June 27.

Washington is pursuing its policy of “endless war” on behalf of these same corporations. But it is not the corporate fat cats who are on the front lines. It is the workers of the U.S., who are there under the orders of the Pentagon. And they are not attending \$2,000-a-plate dinners in fancy hotels. They are being press-ganged into waging a brutal house-to-house war of counter-insurgency against Iraqi men, women, and children in an attempt to wipe out resistance to Washington’s colonial occupation.

Following the Pentagon’s rapid victory in a “conventional” war of smart bombs, cruise missiles, high-tech tanks, killer attack planes and helicopters, launched by the mightiest military on earth, the struggle has rapidly transitioned into a guerrilla conflict in which the U.S. troops are being pitted against the Iraqi people by the high command.

The U.S. high command has ordered an ascending series of military operations—Operation Peninsula Strike, Operation Spartan Strike, Operation Desert Scorpion. Thousands of troops have been sent in to raid homes, drag people out for interrogation, terrorize and intimidate the population. It is all an attempt to crush the resistance, which is taking an increasing toll in killed and wounded U.S. soldiers.

The overall effect of these operations is to fan the flames of hatred by the Iraqis for the U.S. and to guarantee that more and more U.S. soldiers will be forced to kill or be killed in Iraq.

Morale of U.S. troops sinks

This development is beginning to take a significant toll on the morale of the troops. In a major report on the morale of the First Brigade of the Third Infantry Division, the New York Times quoted one infantry soldier as saying, “You call Donald Rumsfeld and tell him our sorry asses are ready to go home. ... Tell him to come spend a night in our building.”

The report further revealed that, “Two months after surging into Baghdad, the First Brigade’s soldiers have found themselves enmeshed in yet another war—less intense, perhaps, but still exhausting, still perilous and, at times, still psychologically taxing. Some are haunted by the deaths they caused—and suffered—and have sought counseling. All are tired and hot and increasingly bitter. Morale has plummeted as sharply as the temperature has risen.”

In the latest incident, as reported by Reuters on June 18, two Iraqis were shot dead outside the U.S. headquarters in Baghdad when up to 2,000 former Iraqi soldiers were demonstrating to get their pay. Paul Bremer, U.S. administrator of the occupation, recently issued dictatorial decrees disbanding the Iraqi military, banning the Baath party and excluding its members from public service.



The “pockets of resistance” are growing, not shrinking. Above, Iraqis confront U.S. troops in Baghdad on June 18.

The decrees left at least 500,000 people, or 10 percent of the estimated work force, immediately without jobs or a paycheck. Unemployment was estimated at 20 percent before Bremer’s draconian decrees. Altogether, 1.5 million people had been employed by the government, or 30 percent of the work force. (Los Angeles Times, June 3) Their fate is uncertain, given the political witch-hunt ordered by Bremer and in light of the Bush administration’s goal of privatization and the shrinking of government and social services in Iraq.

U.S. troops are being ordered to enforce economic hardship on the Iraqi people. At the same time, the Pentagon and White House must concoct new forms of political repression as their dreams of rapid “regime change” and stabilization of a new, pro-U.S. government go up in smoke.

Casualties keep rising

The Washington Post of June 17 reported that a soldier from the First Brigade of the First Armored Division became the 42nd U.S. soldier to be killed in Iraq since the war supposedly ended. He was shot by a sniper in Baghdad on June 16. “As the soldier was killed,” reported the Post, “dozens of members of the same brigade raided a café and a religious school in the same neighborhood.”

One of the raids was described by the San Francisco Chronicle of June 17. “U.S. forces raided an outdoor café in Baghdad’s Azamiyah neighborhood where two dozen men were playing backgammon and drinking tea. All were lined up against a fence, blindfolded, forced to kneel and carted away on trucks. They were released later. None turned out to be suspects.”

The U.S. military sweeps have failed so far to eliminate the resistance. “Days after the U.S. military said it had completed a successful operation to quell an insurgency in a region north of Baghdad,” reported the Seattle Intelligencer of June 17, “at least 10 U.S. soldiers were wounded in two incidents near the same area.” The military “played down the severity of the fighting, but the number of wounded is among the highest for a single day since the official end to the war.”

A unit of the Third Infantry division in a convoy of trucks and armored vehicles “came under fire from rocket-propelled grenades in Mushaheda as the group traveled on the main highway,” reported the Intelligencer. “Another unit of U.S. sol-

diers met grenade fire in the village of Dujayl, six miles [from Mushaheda] on the same road.” The military had denied the attacks occurred, but was then forced to reverse itself.

“The attacks followed the U.S. military’s biggest combat operation since the war last week,” the report continued. Some 4,000 troops were deployed in Operation Peninsula Strike around the town of Balad, where they arrested some 400 Iraqis.

Roundups, interrogation and death

According to the Wall Street Journal of June 16, “The U.S. military described Peninsula Strike as a ‘textbook-like’ success. Yet, villagers interviewed in and near Dhuluiya, where at least 11 Iraqis were killed last week, paint a different picture of a punitive action that failed to capture Baath Party leaders while alienating two proud tribes, one Sunni and one Shiite, known for opposing Saddam Hussein’s regime. ...

“Khalidoun Jassem Rmayedh, an ice cream vendor, said the Americans arrived shortly after midnight last Monday and cordoned off the village. Women were cuffed and herded into one courtyard; men and boys as young as six were put in another. Mr. Rmayedh said his father, who had a heart ailment, quickly passed out. He said he told the Americans that his father needed to take urgent medication and must be taken to a hospital.” The family, along with many others, was then carted to detention cells in Sustainer Air Field, “a vast American base nearby.”

“When they came home,” continued the Journal, “they discovered that their father wasn’t taken to the hospital or given his medication; he died in a nearby courtyard on the night of the raid. Next to him was the body of their uncle, teacher Medhi Ali Jassem, who villagers said was rifle-butted to death during the assault.”

In Al Hir, a town 36 miles north of Baghdad, U.S. soldiers killed seven Iraqis. According to the New York Times of June 13, villagers heard firing during the evening as an armored convoy from the Seventh Armored Cavalry was approaching. Two Iraqis had been shot dead. Then warning cries in Arabic were heard, “The Americans are coming! Get out of your houses!”

One family ran to a field of sheep and cows. The villagers told their story to the



Don Rumsfeld: Trying to think up more lies?

Times. “Then came the rumble of the diesel engine armored personnel carrier and the clatter of its machine gun, they said. In a flash of tracer bullets and screams, the armored vehicle did its work, spraying the field...and then roaring away.” A 70-year-old farmer, three of his sons and a grandson died in the assault on the village. The farmer was the elder of the Shiite village.

When the U.S. Central Command reported the incident, they described it as a fire-fight which killed 27. Later they reduced the number to 7 killed. When asked about the change in numbers, the command’s spokesperson in Tampa said that counting up Iraqi casualties is “just not significant information,” according to the Times.

There are numerous other reports of U.S. troops rampaging through civilian areas in a desperate but unsuccessful struggle to crush the resistance—in Fullajah, Kirkuk, Mosul, Khaliyzad, Balad, Ramadi and all throughout central and northern Iraq. With each raid they make more enemies. Each operation is the “largest so far” and is aimed to “wipe out pockets of resistance.” But each raid creates more hatred and suspicion. The “pockets of resistance” are growing, not shrinking.

The question of the morale of the U.S. troops who have been converted into an anti-guerrilla force is becoming a growing issue in the military—as they are increasingly becoming targets and as they are ordered to escalate the brutality of the repression.

The futility of trying to “win the hearts and minds” of the Iraqi masses while trying to impose a colonial-style military occupation, preparatory to imposing a puppet government, was summed up by a remark, cited in the New York Times of June 16, by Carleigh McCrory, a 20-year-old Army reserve engineer from Louisiana, whose unit was painting walls.

“It’s kind of contradictory for them,” she said. “You bomb them, and three roads over you’re fixing the school.”

According to the San Francisco Chronicle of June 17, the U.S. carried out 69 raids in three days in Baghdad and northern Iraq and arrested 412 people during Operation Desert Scorpion. The Chronicle tried to get a political assessment of the operation from tribal leaders in Ramadi, 60 miles west of Baghdad.

“For every action they should expect a reaction,” said Sheik Saad Nayef al-Hardan, the chief of Iraq’s largest Arab tribe, the Dulaim. “Those attacks are a sign that the tolerance to the humiliation is running out.”

And another senior tribal leader in Ramadi, Abu Adel, said the guerrilla attacks on U.S. forces were acts of self-defense committed by an “underground operation.”

“We are a proud people and we will not accept this humiliation,” he said. The Americans “should beware the wrath of the Iraqi people.” □



Another occupation force

Uniformed forces who come from a different nationality than the local population chase a civilian they consider "suspicious." Pressed by the high-speed chase, this unarmed civilian crashes to his death.

The local people arise in anger, demanding justice. More uniformed forces are sent in, armed with bigger weapons than before. They turn the weapons on the crowd. They shoot one civilian, wound him, arrest others.

Finally, parts of the angry population shoot back, driving a car through a barricade and firing. Four houses are on fire, plus five cars. None of the uniformed forces are hit. Yet.

The rulers activate heavily armed assault units.

Iraq? No. Benton Harbor, Mich.

The almost entirely African American population of this small city on Lake Michigan 100 miles from Chicago has been in open rebellion against the arbitrary brutality of the police since June 16. Those rebelling may number only in hundreds, compared to hundreds of thousands in Iraq, but the Michigan governor has plans to call in the National Guard, along with state police and the mostly white Benton Harbor police.

It is far from the first time that a specific act of racist police brutality has set off a rebellion in a Black community in the United States. In the 1960s, when the community in general was in active struggle for civil rights, an unwarranted assault by a police officer—seen by the community as part of an occupation force—was often the one injury too many that provoked a full-scale rebellion. And there are many police abuses that are unanswered or which lead to organized protest actions.

In more recent years, major rebellions

have taken place in Miami, Los Angeles and Cincinnati, also set off by police racism and ending in the death of community members.

No different from these rebellions, the Benton Harbor uprising deserves the solidarity and support of all progressive forces. It comes after the accumulation of long years of grievances. It is justified, as are all rebellions of the oppressed against their oppressors. It is as justified as the resistance of the Iraqi people to U.S. occupation.

But coming at this time, it raises another question. Does the Benton Harbor revolt—like the rebellions of the 1960s—also reflect a deeper and broader development? Currently there is a ruling-class assault underway on all working people in the U.S. and their families, an assault which disproportionately harms people of color.

Jobs are scarce and growing scarcer. The federal government has an economic policy of robbing from the poor to give to the rich. Social benefits are disappearing. Atop this assault is Bush's endless war. The Pentagon threatens to keep sending the youth from these communities to police the world, where they become the targets of justified worldwide rebellion.

Up to now there has been no organized fight against these new, worsening conditions in the United States. A deep malaise has been kept in control by the most powerful propaganda machine in the history of humanity, which aims at convincing the U.S. population that their enemies are not the rich on Wall Street or the powerful in Washington but poor workers and farmers abroad.

Under these conditions it is not hard to imagine that Benton Harbor may be more than a justified but isolated anti-racist revolt. It may be a harbinger of a long overdue mass resistance to come. □

Colombia unions resist privatization of Telecom

By Andy McInerney

Colombia's state workers are preparing to challenge the government's economic program with strikes and protests. These new protests come at a time of increasing battles between the government and Marxist insurgencies and threats of greater U.S. military intervention.

The focus of union workers' anger is the decision by President Alvaro Uribe to reorganize the country's state-owned telecommunications industry, Telecom. On June 13, the government took the first step in implementing the plan by announcing that the company would be "liquidated" and shutting down the company headquarters in the capital city of Bogotá.

Of course, the company did not go out of business. For 80 percent of Colombia's over 1,000 departments, Telecom is the sole provider of phone service.

The "liquidation" was a legal maneuver that allows the government to lay off the telecommunications workers. The government announced that the reorganized company, which would have the same name and same president, would lay off 5,000 of its 10,000 workers, entirely from the permanent workforce. Three thousand Telecom workers are—and would remain—"contractors" without permanent jobs.

Previous governments have tried to privatize Telecom, each time facing fierce resistance from the Telecom workers' union and from the labor movement overall. This reorganization is the most serious effort yet to carry out the privatization.

The United Workers Federation (CUT), which represents Telecom workers, issued a statement on June 13 protesting the government move. "The government measures in this case are nothing more than the carrying out of promises made to the U.S. government in order to include Colombia in the ATPA [Andean Trade Preference Act]," said the statement, issued by Miguel Antonio Caro Pineda, CUT's Director of State Workers. "It is once again the complete submission of the Colombian government to the dictates of that

imperialist power."

The CUT is calling for state workers to carry out strikes and protests on June 19. "It will be a protest against the economic, social and labor policies the government is imposing to comply with agreements with the International Monetary Fund," Caro told the Associated Press.

The new labor struggle comes just days after the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions declared Colombia the most dangerous nation in the world for trade unionists. Of the 213 trade unionists that the labor body documented were killed in 2002, 184 were from Colombia. The vast majority of those were killed by the Colombian military or its paramilitary death squads.

This struggle also comes amid increasing clashes between the Colombian military and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC-EP). While Uribe came to power in 2002 promising to defeat the FARC-EP and the other leftist insurgencies, it has increasingly been the government military forces that are on the defensive.

A June 3 report by the New Colombia News Agency ANNCOL reports, for example, that joint actions by the FARC-EP and the National Liberation Army (ELN) have forced government troops and death squads out of southern Bolivar department—an area that government troops had wrested away from ELN control several years ago.

With labor struggles and the insurgencies widening, the specter of U.S. intervention looms large. The Pentagon admits to having 400 Special Forces and other combat troops in Colombia—double the number from two years ago.

And on May 31, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez warned on his weekly radio program that the idea of a U.S.-backed Latin American intervention force for Colombia had been put back on the table at a May meeting of the Rio Group in Peru.

With such acute class conflict, the prospects for Colombian workers are increasingly twofold: either neoliberal austerity and poverty enforced by fascist-like terror, or revolutionary struggle. □

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Un-elected President George W Bush has carried out a war to takeover Iraq for oil profits. That war has killed thousands of innocent Iraqis. U.S. troops now occupy Iraq in colonial style in spite of mounting anger and resistance from the Iraqi people. Iran, Syria, North Korea, and Cuba are being threatened. At home, affirmative action, civil liberties and immigrant rights are under assault, joblessness is rising, and Bush is handing over hundreds of billions of dollars to the already super-rich in the form of a tax cut. On June 27th, Bush will breeze into town and rub elbows with a group of hand-picked politicians, and local millionaires so he can rake in millions of dollars for the Republican Party. The thousands of people in Los Angeles who protested the war against Iraq, will be out there in the streets to say no to the Bush program of war, occupation, racism and tax give-aways to the rich!



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WW editor to Iranian people:

'U.S. propaganda is candy-coated poison'

Workers World Editor Deirdre Griswold was asked by Hossein Mirshaki of the Iranian daily Resalat to comment on U.S.-Iranian relations. She wrote the following remarks on June 13.

I have seen news reports here in the last day that indicate some people in Iran were incited by a satellite television program originating in Los Angeles, U.S.A., to demonstrate against the regime. The news we get, and I don't know if it is true, says that some young people who have grievances against the Iranian government look to the United States as an ally in their struggle.

I have no way of knowing if these people are merely naive or if there is a more sinister explanation for what has happened. But, as someone born in the United States and having lived here all my life, I welcome the opportunity to say a few words to the Iranian people about the role of the U.S. government in the world today.

First, it should be understood that while the U.S. holds regular elections, this political process does not produce a government representing the majority of the people. U.S. "democracy" is thoroughly corrupted by a relatively small class of super-wealthy people who literally buy political power. Their vast fortunes come from exploiting people and resources not just in the United States but around the world. This class of plutocrats spends hundreds of billions of dollars on the elections and also finances the many foundations, think tanks and other unofficial bodies that train political leaders to act in its interests.

George W. Bush became president through extraordinary manipulation of the voter rolls. His party made a systematic effort to eliminate African Americans, Haitian Americans and older voters in Florida. He lost the popular vote but was declared the victor by the Supreme Court in a 5 to 4 decision.

Political, diplomatic and military leaders move back and forth between top corporate/banking positions and the government.

The present Bush administration is especially packed with representatives of the oil industry and the military-industrial complex. It came into office determined to promote a broad agenda of intensifying U.S. domination over the post-Cold War world, and especially in the oil-rich countries of the Middle East, including both Iraq and Iran.

Two important documents spell out this orientation: (1) the "Defense Planning Guide" written in March 1992 by Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz, who are today Vice President of the U.S. and Assistant Secretary of Defense, respectively, and (2) the "National Security Strategy" document issued on Sept. 20, 2002, by the present Bush administration. This second document also laid out a doctrine of "preemption," that is, that the U.S. has the right to attack other countries not because they have done anything but because they MIGHT commit hostile acts sometime in the future. This doctrine, which became the official policy of the United States, is a violation of all international law with respect to war and peace.

Now the U.S. government has carried out an unprovoked war of aggression against Iraq, killing thousands of civil-

ians, destroying museums and libraries containing irreplaceable artifacts from thousands of years of history, and leaving much of the country without a functioning water supply, electricity, hospitals, schools or places of work. Before the war, the Bush administration said it would help the Iraqi people set up a "democratic" regime. This has not happened in even the smallest way. At present, U.S. troops are bogged down in a brutal, colonial-style occupation of Iraq. They are killing people every day, invading their homes, neighborhoods and mosques. And every day there is more proof that the Iraqi people, of all political persuasions and faiths, want the U.S. out and are determined to resist the occupation. This bloody war was not waged to liberate the Iraqi people, but to take their oil and impose a regime completely controlled from Washington.

The Bush administration is in the process of deporting thousands of Muslims and Arab people from the U.S., and has grossly violated the civil liberties of many more by rounding them up and detaining them for many months without charges and without access to families or attorneys.

It is holding nearly 700 people captured in Afghanistan and other countries, some as young as 13 years of age, in barbaric cages at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo, where it denies them any legal rights and refuses to abide by the Geneva conventions regarding prisoners of war.

Yet it dares speak to the world in the name of "freedom" and "democracy"!

President Bush in his infamous "Axis of Evil" speech in January 2002 singled out Iraq, Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as enemies of the U.S. Anyone who lives in any of these countries should take this threat very seriously. It was telling the world that the U.S. government reserved the right to attack them at any time.

Are there any restraints on the aggressive plans of this administration? Yes, there are. Millions of people worldwide have demonstrated their opposition to the war plans of the U.S. and Britain. That includes the largest anti-war demonstrations in the United States since the era of the Vietnam War.

The demonstrations did not stop the war from happening, but they helped change the political climate. Both the Bush and Blair administrations are now on the defensive over having lied to the people about Iraq's alleged "weapons of mass destruction." The heroic resistance inside Iraq is tying down U.S. troops so that they cannot be sent elsewhere. There is even a struggle within the Pentagon over whether or not they have sufficient

troops to be able to maintain the occupation of Iraq and project their military power in other parts of the world.

The U.S. rulers also have to worry about the economy and the war. This year the government deficit (the difference between income and expenditures) is expected to rise to over four hundred billion dollars (\$400,000,000,000). [In the United States, unlike much of the rest of the world, the word "billion" equals a thousand million.] President Bush recently raised the legal limit on the accumulated government debt by one trillion dollars (that's a million times a million). The total U.S. government debt now (June 13, 2003) stands at \$6,602,706,000,000 and is rising every second. [See www.publicdebt.treas.gov/opd/opdpenny.htm] This averages out to a debt of nearly \$100,000 for a family of four! This criminal debt has been imposed on the working people of the United States by the billionaires who control our corrupt government.

This extraordinary figure reflects the huge costs of military spending as well as a decline in revenues, because at the same time as this military buildup, the politicians have been cutting taxes on their wealthy backers. There can be only one result: further slashing of social services needed by the people. It also means that interest payments to the banks to service the national debt will skyrocket, requiring a painfully higher level of taxes on working people in the future. This is a recipe for a social explosion.

It boils down to this: A war cannot be

Millions of people in the U.S. and around the world are rejecting U.S. empire and neocolonialism, are rejecting 'regime change' imposed from without by war, subversion or economic sanctions.

won with weapons alone, no matter how powerful they are. It requires the surrender of the target population, and the support of the people inside the would-be conquering nation. The people of Iraq are not surrendering, they are fighting back. Millions of people in the U.S. and around the world who value national sovereignty and peaceful development are rejecting U.S. empire and neocolonialism, are rejecting "regime change" imposed from without by war, subversion or economic sanctions.

U.S. propaganda directed to the youth of the Third World is nothing but candy-coated poison. Young and old, all over the globe, need to come together to resist those in Washington who dream of dominating the Middle East and the world. Solidarity with the people of Iraq, Iran, North Korea and any other country threatened by the Pentagon must be at the top of our agenda. □

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Detrás de la guerra racista de EE.UU. contra el terrorismo 13.000 musulmanes enfrentan deportación

Por Greg Butterfield

Más de 13.000 hombres árabes y musulmanes quienes voluntariamente se habían reportado al gobierno de los Estados Unidos desde diciembre hasta el pasado abril enfrentan deportación en la expulsión más grande nunca antes planificada desde el ataque a las Torres Gemelas del 11 de septiembre.

Solo 11 individuos, de los más de 82.000 que han cooperado con las demandas del Departamento de Seguridad Interna, se dice que tenían conexión con organizaciones que el régimen de Bush considera "terroristas." Pero el gobierno afirma que el 16% de los registrados estaban comprometiendo su estado migratorio al romper ciertos reglamentos de inmigración y por lo tanto serán deportados.

"Muchos esperaron obtener indulgencia al demostrar su cooperación con la campaña antiterrorista," reportó el New York Times, el cual publicó este artículo el 7 de junio. "Sin embargo no se les prometió ningún tratamiento especial, y algunos oficiales creen que la mayor parte serán deportados."

Los activistas por los derechos de los inmigrantes dicen que muchos de estos hombres llamados "ilegales" tienen visas caducas solo porque el gobierno se ha retrasado en sus procesos, y no por culpa de ellos. Algunos han acusado a la administración de Bush de retrasar deliberadamente el proceso de renovación de los permisos de trabajo, los permisos para estudiantes y el proceso de solicitud para residencia y ciudadanía.

Otros son víctimas de la recesión capitalista que ha dejado a millones de personas sin empleos. A los inmigrantes con permiso de trabajo les es permitido permanecer en el país sólo si tienen un empleo. Con la situación actual en el Medio Oriente, los inmigrantes de estas regiones son frecuentemente los primeros que pierden sus empleos.

Al igual que sus hermanos y hermanas de América Latina y de otras partes del mundo, estos trabajadores han sido forzados a venir a los Estados Unidos en busca del trabajo y condiciones decentes de vida, salud y otras necesidades básicas que se



FOTO: "SUFFERING UNDER A GREAT INJUSTICE: ANSEL ADAMS'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF JAPANESE-AMERICAN INTERNMENT AT MANZANAR"

Campamento de detención por los ciudadanos japoneses de los EE.UU. durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

les niega por la súper explotación imperialista de los Estados Unidos en sus tierras patrias.

La campaña de registro de Washington, junto con la guerra y la ocupación de Irak y el clima racista contra los árabes y musulmanes, está teniendo un efecto secundario en las comunidades obreras en todos los Estados Unidos.

"Calladamente, el tejido de los barrios se está deshilvanando," notó el Times. "Familias enteras están empacando; otras se están separando. En vez de presentarse y arriesgar deportación, un sinnúmero de inmigrantes se han clandestinizado. Otros simplemente se han ido para Canadá o para su patria."

Más de 600 árabes y musulmanes fueron deportados en la primera ola de expulsiones después del 11 de septiembre. Cuando la cifra de detenidos alcanzó los 1.200, el Departamento de Justicia cesó la publicación de ellas. Una segunda ola más grande de expulsión tomó lugar el año pasado, aunque los oficiales se rehúsan a dar cifras.

Las deportaciones de inmigrantes de Asia y África han aumentado en un 27% en los dos últimos años. Las expulsiones de pakistaníes, jordanos, libaneses y marroquíes se han doblado y las de egipcios se han triplicado.

En Brooklyn, Nueva York, el Centro de Apoyo para Familias Árabe-Americanas dice que 500 de sus clientes están disputando las órdenes de deportación.

Informe expone abusos racistas

El Fiscal General John Ashcroft testificó el 6 de junio ante un comité del Congreso defendiendo el Acta Patriótica de los Estados Unidos de América, las detenciones y expulsiones, pidiendo más poderes para espiar, arrestar y detener indefinidamente sin cargos a cualquiera que se sospeche de tener lazos con organizaciones "terroristas". (Prensa Asociada, 6 de junio)

Mientras los congresistas le hacían preguntas, él descaradamente mostró su indiferencia total por los derechos civiles. Ni él ni su equipo podían contestar preguntas sencillas sobre qué clase de datos personales pueden ser o no confiscados bajo las reglas de la Ley Patriótica.

Unos días antes, el 2 de junio, una revisión oficial interna del Departamento de Justicia encontró que "muchos inmigrantes detenidos en redadas después de los ataques del 11 de septiembre fueron encadenados, maltratados físicamente e insultados, encarcelados sin fianzas y denegado el acceso a abogados". (Agencia de Prensa Francesa)

El reporte confirmó las acusaciones hechas por casi dos años por organizaciones defensoras de los derechos civiles, libertades civiles y derechos de los inmigrantes.

"Descubrimos problemas importantes en la manera que los detenidos fueron tratados", admitió el Inspector General del Departamento de Justicia, Glenn Fine. Su informe trató solamente con la primera ola de detenciones. La mayoría de los hombres fueron paquistaníes y no

tuvieron conexión alguna con los supuestos grupos terroristas.

El informe mencionó en particular la sucursal del FBI en Nueva York y el Centro de Detención Metropolitano (MDC por las siglas en inglés) en Brooklyn, lugar donde se llevaron a cabo muchas protestas en solidaridad con los ilegalmente detenidos.

"El FBI debió haber hecho más esfuerzo para intentar distinguir entre ellos [los inmigrantes] que, aunque posiblemente violaron alguna ley federal de migración, no tenían conexión alguna al terrorismo, pero fueron encontrados culpables solamente quizás por un rumor".

Además, "la evidencia indica la repetición frecuente de abusos físicos e insultos por parte de algunos de los carceleros".

Todas las 762 personas detenidas en ese momento se encontraron culpables de violar la ley de inmigración, dice el Departamento de Justicia. Pero según el informe del inspector general, 130 de éstos no tenían ningún abogado, y por lo menos 54 se mantuvieron encerrados para más de los 90 días en violación de las leyes "antiterroristas."

A los detenidos en el MDC les fueron dadas erróneamente la etiqueta de "testigos de seguridad". Esta designación frustró los esfuerzos de los abogados, los familiares, y hasta de los agentes policiales, de determinar adónde fueron ubicados..

"Descubrimos que el personal del MDC frecuente y erróneamente le decía a la gente que buscaba información sobre un detenido en particular que el detenido no estaba en el lugar cuando, de hecho, lo contrario era la verdad".

Se puede leer el informe en el portal: www.usdoj.gov/oig/lgwhnew1.htm.

El gobierno capitalista está intentando arrasar las libertades ganadas durante décadas de luchas y volver a los días cuando los trabajadores inmigrantes tenían solo escasos derechos. Es una amenaza que necesita ser contestada con la vieja consigna sindical: "una lesión a uno es una lesión a todos" □

LA INDIA

40 millones responden con huelga general

Según estimaciones, 40 millones de trabajadores en la India mantuvieron un paro general de 14 horas el 21 de mayo para protestar contra los planes de privatizar activos estatales y reformar las leyes laborales. Una marcha enorme paralizó a Calcuta.

Bancos, empresas de seguros, de telecomunicaciones y el correo, el sistema de transporte público y varios departamentos gubernamentales fueron afectados al los trabajadores y empleados no presentarse en respuesta al llamado de huelga.

Talleres y mercados cerraron en los estados que respondieron al llamado y las carreteras parecían abandonadas. En una rueda de prensa organizada para analizar la huelga, el Secretario General del Congreso Sindical de Toda la India, Gurudas Dasgupta criticó severamente al gobierno por reducir el número de empleados, por la reestructuración, la privatización temeraria de empresas estatales y por los despidos".

—G. Dunkel