

**ALL OUT
SEPT. 25-28!**

Stop the occupations 2

**UNITED
FRONT**

 Anti-war movement
builds Oct. 25 protest 10

TONY BLAIR

Lies ignite protest 11

PRO-PALESTINE

 Rutgers says:
No conference
Students say: No way! 9

COLOMBIA

 FARC, ELN
issue statement 11

ALABAMA

 Between a rock
and a hard place 5

Los Angeles

 Women's group
supports trans
worker 4

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WORKERS WORLD NEWSPAPER

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Revolt at world trade talks

Developing countries resist takeover by agribusiness giants

By Deirdre Griswold

The profit system of capitalism has done it again. It has expanded the means of production at such a tremendous rate that millions are suffering extreme want.

Wait a minute. Isn't that a contradiction? Oh yes, it certainly is. Capitalism is full of contradictions, and they are deadly.

They are most obvious at the moment in agriculture. More food being produced on a world scale means less food for millions of farmers, who are losing their lands and their livelihood. The situation is so acute that a leader of South Korean farmers just killed himself in protest at the Cancun meeting of the World Trade Organization, which broke up in disarray when the developing nations walked out of the conference.

Lee Kyung Hae stabbed himself in the abdomen on Sept. 10 as thousands demonstrated against the WTO's "free trade" rules that allow industrialized imperialist nations to spend about \$300 billion a year on agricultural subsidies.

In the United States, where small farmers are now almost a thing of the past, the lion's share of these subsidies goes to huge agribusiness corporations. These giant factory farms are exporting cheap grains and other foods, as well as cotton, to countries around the world, putting their farmers out of business. All at the taxpayers' expense.

In South Korea, farmers like Lee are going bankrupt at a frightening pace, even though they are very well organized.

Korean farmers have developed great skill at getting the most out of the land. Most farms have long rows of plastic greenhouses to lengthen the growing season, so that fresh melons, greens, squash and cucumbers are available most of the year in city mar-

kets. Farmers tend their crops by hand, coaxing plants to grow on every available square foot of earth. Yet when it comes to staples like rice, for example, they cannot compete with huge U.S. corporations that have established mechanized farms on vast tracts in Hawaii and Louisiana.

A similar situation exists in much of Central and South America, Africa and other parts of Asia. Where farmers were once the overwhelming majority of the population, they are being reduced to working as hired hands for big corporate growers or abandoning the land altogether.

Often the land of these ruined farmers is then bought up by foreign companies, which plant export crops to be sold in the richer nations. The poorer countries lose both land and indigenous farmers.

Everyone knows there has been a huge influx of people from rural areas of Central America and Mexico into the United States in recent years. In large cities from coast to coast, those who clean up in restaurant kitchens and stack produce in food markets for less than minimum wage were once farmers south of the border. Largely undocumented, they have been forced to leave their homes by the millions and risk everything crossing the border. This process became acute after the North American Free Trade Agreement flooded the area with cheap U.S. corn and other grains.

Years before NAFTA, the U.S. organized and paid for bloody counter-revolutions in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. The crushing of popular liberation movements was the precursor to "opening up" their economies to U.S. products.

The imperialists promised that "free trade" would bring devel-

Continued on page 8

 Rank-and-file
demonstrate:

The power of unity

—centerfold

 Yale strikers
and supporters
shut down
New Haven,
Sept. 13.

WW PHOTO



ALL OUT FOR SEPT. 25-28!

International days of protest against occupation and empire from Palestine to Iraq to the Philippines to Cuba and everywhere

The Arab progressive movement, the European peace movement and others issued a call for activities timed to coincide with the third anniversary of the second Palestinian Intifada, which began on Sept. 28, 2000.

Locally and nationally coordinated demonstrations will take place around the world between Sept. 25 and 28. At last count there were demonstrations expected in at least 40 countries on five continents. In the Arab world, most demonstrations will be on Sept. 26 and Sept. 28.

In Europe, the coordinated day of action will be Sept. 27 (see www.stopwar.org.uk), and in other areas it will be on Sept. 25. In the U.S., ANSWER chapters are involved in organizing some of the following events:

SAN FRANCISCO

Contact: ANSWER@actionsf.Org
415-821-6545

Date: Sun., Sept. 28
Event: 12 noon assemble at Dolores Park
1 p.m. March,
2 p.m. Rally at Civic Center

LOS ANGELES

Contact: ANSWER-la@action-mail.org
213-487-2368

Date: Sun., Sept. 28
Event: 12 noon Gathering at Hollywood & Vine

NEW YORK

Contact: nyc@internationalANSWER.org
212-633-6646

Date: Sun., Sept. 28
Event: Gather at Columbus Circle at 1p.m.
March down Broadway toward Times Square.

CHICAGO

Contact: chicagorally@internationalanswer.org
773-878-0166

Date: Fri., Sept. 26
Event: Indoor Rally at 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple. Featured speaker, Cynthia McKinney, former member of Congress from Georgia.

DETROIT

Contact: detroit@internationalANSWER.org
Date: Sat., Sept. 27
Event: Gather for demonstration at 12 noon at Woodward Avenue & W. Warren Avenue. March at 1 p.m. down Woodward to Grand Circus Park for 2-4 p.m. rally.

SAN DIEGO

Contact: sdiac@earthlink.net
619-692-4422

Date: Sat., Sept. 27
Event: 12 noon Gathering on the University Avenue bridge over I-15 in City Heights. At 1 pm, through City Heights to the park behind the City Heights Library. Rally to follow in the park.

BOSTON

Contact: answerboston@iacboston.org
617-522-6626
www.iacboston.org/ANSWER

Date: Sun., Sept. 28
Event: Gather 12:30 p.m. at Copley Sq. for a rally & march past the Israeli Consulate, recruiting stations, FBI, etc.

BALTIMORE

Contact: apcbaltimore@pipeline.com
410-235-7040.

Date: Thurs., Sept. 25
Event: Rally 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the All Peoples Congress Hall, 426 East 31st St., Baltimore, Md., near the corner of 31st & Greenmount Ave.

SEATTLE

Contact: seattle@internationalANSWER.org
206-325-0085

Date: Sun., Sept. 28
Event: Gather 12 noon at Occidental Square Park; March at 1 p.m. to Victor Steinbrueck Park for rally.

International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism)

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This week ...



★ National

All out for Sept. 25-28 2
Legal move for Leonard Peltier 3
Mumia Abu-Jamal's health remains alarming 3
Reparations rally: 'They owe us' 3
Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. 3
Los Angeles NOW supports trans struggle 4
New York LGBT 'town meeting'. 4
FCC rulings challenged by community radio. 4
What Alabama workers want 5
Jobs crisis creates dilemma for Bush. 6
Parent/teacher unity wins anti-racist victory. 6
NYC teachers' union protests 6
Support mushrooms for Yale strikers. 7
Verizon blinks in contract battle 7
Rutgers officials try to cancel pro-Palestine event. 9
Oct. 25 unity statement 10

★ International

Revolt at world trade talks 1
U.S. committee for Milosevic 9
Blair's Iraq lies spark protests 11
Chile 30 years after the coup 11
Colombia FARC-EP and ELN statement. 11

★ Editorials

Bring them home! 10

★ Noticias En Español

El discurso de Bush activa falso debate 12

WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Sun., Sept. 28
No to colonialism in Iraq, Palestine, and everywhere. Gather at noon Hollywood & Vine. March to Hollywood and Highland for 2 p.m. rally.

Every Friday
Workers World Party weekly meetings at 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 7. At 422 S. Western. Phone (213) 500-0529 for info.

NEW YORK

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

SAN FRANCISCO

Sun., Sept. 28
No to colonialism in Iraq, Palestine, and everywhere. At Dolores Park at noon, march to Civic Center for 2 p.m.

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.

SAN DIEGO

Sat., Sept. 27
No to colonialism in Iraq, Palestine, and everywhere. Gather at noon on the University Avenue bridge over I-15 in City Heights. March at 1 p.m.

Workers World

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If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

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Legal move aims to win Leonard Peltier's parole

By Moonanum James
Boston

On Sept. 19, oral arguments in Leonard Peltier's 1999 Habeas Corpus petition will be heard before the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver, Colo., the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee has announced.

This is the first time that Peltier's attorneys will have the opportunity to argue in a circuit other than the Eighth Circuit. It was in the Eighth Circuit that Peltier was convicted and where all subsequent appeals have been denied.

Using the Freedom of Information Act, Peltier's legal team has discovered a document that shows that the United States withheld exculpatory evidence in his case, including critical ballistics data. A memorandum dated Oct. 2, 1975, unequivocally rules out the weapon, a Wichita AR-15—purportedly used by Peltier on June 26, 1975—as the weapon used to kill two FBI agents that day in South Dakota.

The improperly suppressed evidence withheld by the FBI strikes at the heart of the government's case and later Parole Commission findings. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in Kansas has upheld the Parole Commission's findings.

In 1995 Peltier appeared for an interim parole hearing. The government's statements, especially those of Assistant U.S. Attorney Lynn Crooks, moved the examiner. Crooks acknowledged, "The government does not know, insofar as having the evidence to sustain a conviction in court, that Leonard Peltier fired the fatal bullets into the agents."

The examiner "concluded after a review of the additional exculpatory evidence that a preponderance finding that Peltier actually executed the agents cannot be made." And the examiner conceded that the 15-year parole reconsideration decision in 1993 was based on the mistaken belief that

Peltier's convictions had "included a specific or directed finding by the jury that Peltier had fired the fatal shots into the agents causing their deaths."

The examiner ruled in Peltier's favor. Not liking the first examiner's decision, the U.S. Parole Commission appointed a second examiner—who then ruled in the government's favor. The Commission reaffirmed that it would not reconsider Peltier for parole until December 2008.

Now the Peltier legal team will have an opportunity to argue before the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals that the Commission has once again failed to adequately consider the impact of the critical exculpatory evidence that was improperly withheld by the government at trial.

The legal team will strongly contend that the Commission erred. They will argue that its finding that Peltier had been involved in an "ambush" of the two FBI agents and executed them at point blank range after they had been incapacitated is undermined by the material exculpatory evidence the government improperly withheld during Peltier's trial.

The U.S. Parole Commission's denial of parole to Leonard Peltier constitutes a violation of law, and is also inconsistent with its own congressionally mandated guidelines.

Peltier's attorneys will request that the appellate court issue an order that Peltier be given fair consideration for parole immediately, under appropriate factors, which should lead to his immediate parole.

The legal team will present this and other arguments on Peltier's 1999 Habeas Corpus petition on Sept. 19, between 9 and 10 a.m., before the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver. The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee is asking all to come and show their support at a candlelight march, vigil and sunrise ceremony the day

of the court appearance.

The 10th Circuit sits at the Byron White U.S. Courthouse, located at 1823 Stout Street in downtown Denver. A news conference will follow the hearing.

Moonanum James is co-leader of the United American Indians of New England/Leonard Peltier Support Group. □



Leonard Peltier

ALERT:

Mumia Abu-Jamal's health remains alarming

The following is excerpted from a Sept. 10 statement by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal about the political prisoner's health condition.

Prison Health is a Human Rights Issue

Pam Africa and a delegation of French human rights activists visited Mumia at SCI Greene prison on Sept. 8 and saw Mumia's ankle, which is still very visibly swollen and darkened.

Although the swelling has gone down somewhat, the condition is still alarming in appearance and its cause is still a mystery and is an example of the inhumane conditions that prisoners are forced to endure, with little way to seek help, and with no international movement supporting them.

Doctors who have been consulted but who have not met with Mumia say that the condition could be anything from gout to a diabetic condition, but it is impossible to be certain without a personal visit, which has still not been okayed by the prison doctors. They caution that it could indeed be blood clotting.

We have also been hearing widespread

reports of similar swollen and painful ankles among other prisoners who are kept in dehumanizing solitary confinement conditions.

Once again, note that Mumia's condition should be considered very serious and we must take all actions to ensure that he gets proper medical attention.

The worldwide response to our previous calls for action has been an outpouring of phone calls and faxes which have hit the prison and elected officials. Penn. State Rep. Harold James reported receiving 200 faxes in a single day.

Please continue to call the prison and demand that their doctors give permission to allow Mumia visits by a doctor of his choice, and that he be able to receive raw garlic to help combat the swelling.

SCI Greene prison phone: (724) 852-2902. During the day, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ask for Superintendent Folino. During the night, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. ask for Captain Hall. If gone during late night, ask for current Shift Director.

Please also continue to send the garlic to the prison as a symbolic protest to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, SCI Greene, 169 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370. □

Reparations rally declares: 'They owe us'

By Monica Moorehead
New York City

Hundreds of activists, predominantly Black, from New York, along with out-of-town delegations from as far away as Milwaukee and Atlanta, converged on the United Nations Sept. 13. They rallied at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza to demand reparations from the U.S. government and transnational corporations for a debt accrued from the legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

At the five-hour rally, speakers explained how banks and corporations such as First Boston Fleet, Aetna, Chase and others made billions of dollars in profits off the blood and sweat of free African labor without paying any kind of restitution to former slaves and their ancestors after the Civil War.

Therefore, these activists said, "They owe us." And "Black power" was heard throughout the rally.

Class-action lawsuits have been filed in a number of civil courts from New York to California seeking billions of dollars in reparations. The money would go to help establish a collective fund to be used to provide long denied rights of health care and educational opportunities to millions of African Americans.

The rally was chaired by Bob Law, a radio personality, and Viola Plummer, a leader of the December 12 Movement, which co-sponsored the rally. Other speakers included Dr. Conrad Worrill, chairperson of the National Black United Front; Jacqueline Pitts, a Far Rockaway elected official; the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, national pastor of House of the Lord Churches; Larry Holmes, co-director of International Action Center and an International ANSWER coalition spokesperson; Al Patilla, representative of National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America; and spoken word artists Tylibah Washington, Louis Reyes Rivera and Welfare Poets. □



PHOTO: PEOPLES VIDEO NETWORK

Inspired by the Freedom Rides of the civil rights movement...

IMMIGRANT WORKERS FREEDOM RIDE

Wednesday & Thursday, Oct. 1-2,
Washington, D.C.

Friday, Oct. 3,
Liberty State Park, Jersey City, N.J.

Saturday, Oct. 4,
Flushing Meadow Park, Queens, N.Y.

Join the Freedom Riders and rally for:

- Legalization & a 'road to citizenship'
- Family reunification and ending the backlog of applications
- Protecting the rights of immigrants in the work place
- Protecting the civil rights & civil liberties of all

Thousands of organizations and individuals have endorsed this event, including the AFL-CIO, major international unions, national immigrant and civil rights groups, institutions, student and community organizations and prominent elected officials. To endorse, email iwfride@immigrantworkersfreedom.com call 212-492-2164 or visit www.iwfr.org

LOS ANGELES

NOW supports trans struggle

By Joe Delaplaine
Los Angeles

The San Fernando Valley chapter of the National Organization for Women sponsored a Sept. 2 protest at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to draw attention to the case of Jessica Langford. Langford is a transgender case worker for the California Department of Mental Health and a NOW member who has been subjected to harassment on the job.

In recent years NOW has passed resolutions, including one at the national level, that stress support for transgender and transsexual people as part of the broad fight against sex and gender oppression.

In a promising sign of unity, members of NOW, Transgender Task Force, the Act Now to Stop War & End Racism coalition, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities and their supporters marched together. Protesters held signs that read, "D.A. denies civil rights," "L.A. Dept. of Mental Hate," and "Remember trans victims of hate crimes—stop the war at home and around the world."

Jessica Langford has been a victim of on-the-job harassment, and has not received any support from her bosses to make it stop. That's the reason she brought a lawsuit against the county for harassment and for the retaliation she's experienced since filing charges of discrimination. Her case against the county is set for late September.

At Langford's news conference, San Fernando Valley NOW Co-President Jan Tucker said: "Jessica made numerous attempts to inform her bosses of the

harassment she faced, but they ignored her. After Jessica was outed at work, her co-workers would beat on her cubicle shouting, 'I'm glad I was born a woman!' When she rode the elevator, they would snicker at her, saying things like, 'Oh, that's really a guy!'"

Langford's situation escalated to the point where she was thrown out of her work place by a security guard after a fellow employee demanded, "Throw that faggot out of here!" She was handled so roughly in the exchange that her wristwatch was torn off her arm.

Yet the city attorney refused to press charges in the incident, claiming to NOW representatives that discrimination didn't apply in Langford's case because Jessica "wasn't a woman or a minority."

'Deeper societal problem'

Talia Betcher, a teacher and transgender activist, told Workers World that Langford's case is an example of a deeper societal problem. "One of the things underlying all of this is the fact that transgender people are not listened to when we say who and what we are. It always seems to be determined from without."

And, Betcher stressed, "transgender people are being murdered as a consequence. This year has been very bad in terms of transgender violence. Twelve transgender people have been murdered this year—and these are just the reported murders. There were three trans women in Washington, D.C., alone, shot to death in August.

"One of the biggest problems has to do with mainstream media representations of trans people. The way in which trans-



Los Angeles, Sept. 2.

WW PHOTO: JOE DELAPLAINE

gender murders are either reported or fail to be reported in the media."

The harassment and murder of transgender people is still grossly under-reported. But when organizations like NOW and

a wide range of working and oppressed people come out into the streets to support cases like Jessica Langford's, the mainstream media are forced to report the struggle of a courageous trans woman. □

PHILADELPHIA

FCC rulings challenged by community radio station

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

On Sept. 4, Clear Channel, Viacom, Fox and other media megaliths were dealt a temporary setback in their drive to totally monopolize the information industry when the community-based Prometheus Radio Project won a court-ordered stay against the Federal Communications Commission's push to deregulate media ownership.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia delayed the implementation of the FCC's pro-monopoly media-ownership rules, which had been issued on June 2. The court ruled in response to a petition filed by the Prometheus Radio Project, a West-Philadelphia-based group that promotes community-based low-power radio stations. Several organizations, including the Media Access Project, a Washington, D.C., advocacy group, backed the petition.

The FCC's move over the summer allowed media companies to own newspapers and broadcast properties in the same market. It also provided for a single company to own television stations reaching 45 percent of the country's viewers. The ruling would open the way for the television networks ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox to gobble up more stations and limit local control of programming.

Prometheus brought the motion to stay the rules on behalf of the over 750,000 people who faxed and e-mailed their opposition after FCC Chair Michael Powell asked the public to tell him what they thought about relaxing the media ownership rules. According to dissident FCC Commissioner Michael Copps, citizen input to the FCC ran 99.99 percent against the proposed rule changes.

The FCC's June ruling had come as no surprise, given the blatant support media conglomerates like Clear Channel, Fox and Viacom showed for the Bush administration's war against the people of Iraq.

Clear Channel, which held rallies promoting the war and targeted anti-war performers like the Dixie Chicks, owns over 1,200 radio stations and 37 television stations. It is in 248 of the top 250 radio markets, controlling 60 percent of all rock programming.

Former U.S. Rep. J.C. Watts Jr., who served on the Armed Services Committee and the Military Personnel and Procurement Subcommittee, is the newest appointee to the Clear Channel governing board. As a member of these committees, Watts was partially responsible for providing \$10 billion for the "war on terrorism" and supporting the Patriot Act. Clear Channel Vice Chair Tom Hicks is a member of the Bush Pioneer club for elite—and generous—donors.

Similar connections that shed light on the media-military-industrial complex exist with Viacom, Fox, NBC, and others. Michael Powell's father, Secretary of State Colin Powell, sat—from 1998 to January 2001—on the board of directors of AOL Time Warner, which owns CNN, HBO and is the biggest provider of cable modem service.

Before the FCC's June 2 ruling, Prometheus Radio Project, along with the Philadelphia Regional Anti-War Network, Philadelphia Act Now to Stop War and End Racism, and Media Tank, held public demonstrations in Philadelphia protesting the media's open support of the war.

"If ever there was a special interest, it's the giant media corporations," said Prometheus Technical Director Pete Tridish. "They manage America's perceptions of their activities using the very airwaves they control. These are the wrong sorts of groups to give so much power over what Americans see and hear about their world. This decision to stay the rules will give a chance to convince the powers that be that the consolidation that has already happened in radio should not happen in other media." □

New York LGBT 'town meeting'

Audience weighs in: Fight war & racism!

By Marsha Goldberg
New York

Is opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq important for the lesbian, gay, bi and trans movement? The answer was a resounding "yes" here on Sept. 9, at a town-hall-style meeting of 200 people at the Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Community Center.

It wasn't advertised as an anti-war meeting. It was billed as "Beyond Iraq: The impact of the war on terrorism on the LGBT communities." The event was sponsored by Queers for Economic Justice.

The panel of speakers included Pradeep Singla, former legal director of the Lesbian and Gay Immigration Rights Task Force; Trishala Deb from the Audre Lorde Project; Carmen Vazquez from the LGBT Community Center; Richard Goldstein, executive editor of the Village Voice; and Leslie Feinberg, transgender lesbian activist, managing editor of Workers World newspaper and member of Queers for Peace and Justice. The event was chaired by Richard Kim, a writer for the Nation.

The room was filled, standing-room-only, with lesbian, gay, bi and trans people of many nationalities and ages.

The decisive moment came halfway through the program when Leslie Feinberg asked the crowd: "Why is war such a defining moment? Because if a progres-

sive movement can't stand up to a war of such a clear racist and colonial character, what can it stand up to?"

The response was a burst of applause that didn't stop. The whole room came alive as people kept clapping. The audience had become active, leading participants in the evening's politics, affirming the call for a militant and inclusive mobilization of workers and oppressed people to stop the racist round-ups and the Pentagon aggression.

For the rest of the evening, the way most in the audience nodded their heads and applauded wholeheartedly made them as much a "speaker" as the panelists.

Trishala Deb held the audience rapt with her examination of the role of the police and other state weapons under capitalism as a boot heel on the necks of all who have the most to gain from transforming this profit-driven system. Her analysis was met with thunderous applause.

At the end of the meeting, almost everyone there made sure to take the literature for upcoming marches on Sept. 28 and Oct. 25 against military occupation and war. □

TRANS LIBERATION: Beyond Pink or Blue

by Leslie Feinberg
An inspiring collection of speeches and writings from Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues & Transgender Warriors* Available at Leftbooks.com

What Alabama workers want

'Thou shalt not raise our taxes'

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
Birmingham, Ala.

Alabama has been much in the news lately on issues as seemingly unconnected as the Ten Commandments and tax increases. What's been going on in this Southern state to put it in the spotlight of national media attention?

Alabama is in the grip of the same economic crisis as other states. Its budget has been gutted by the economic downturn. No help is in sight from the federal government, which instead is lavishing billions on war and on tax giveaways to the wealthy.

Alabama is in "the most severe financial crisis since the Great Depression," says its Republican governor, Bob Riley. (Mobile Register, May 21) It faces a budget shortfall of \$675 million for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1—more than 10 percent of its operating budget.

Riley proposed an unprecedented tax increase to meet this crisis. His plan was voted down two to one.

But the national media have been focusing on something else. CNN gave live coverage to Christian fundamentalists being dragged off as they protested the removal of a two-and-a-half ton monument of the Ten Commandments from the rotunda of the Alabama Supreme Court in Montgomery.

The monument was installed by Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore, who has built his career on defying the separation of church and state. Backed by far-right forces inside and outside the state—including the "Center for Reclaiming America," an anti-abortion, anti-gay organization in Florida—he was elected chief justice in 2000. Moore's popularity has been strongest among poor and working whites.

Alabama workers, Black and white, have more than symbolic reasons to be worried. In the last year, thousands of jobs have been lost in the state, mostly in manufacturing. The deadliest U.S. coal mining accident since 1984 killed 13 Alabama miners in September of 2001. At one large pipe manufacturer, 5,000 workers have suffered 4,600 injuries since 1995.

The U.S. Army has been incinerating the nerve gas sarin in heavily populated areas. Some 60 percent of air pollution in the Birmingham area comes from energy giant Alabama Power, whose environmental damage is ravaging rivers statewide.

Judge Moore was not the first choice of Alabama big business, although eventually big money put its weight behind him. But Moore is helpful to their strategy of dividing white from African American workers.

Moore's "trust in the Lord" brand of politics has been successful in deflecting the dissatisfaction and anger of white workers away from organizing, which could lead them to make common cause with Black workers.

But when a federal district court ordered a defiant Moore to remove his display of religion, the Alabama political establishment abandoned Moore. Though previously expressing sympathy for Moore's position, his fellow Republicans—other justices, the governor and even ultra-conservative Alabama Attorney General Bill Pryor—in the end stood against him. The Alabama Judicial Inquiry Commission has charged him with "violating ethical canons by disobeying a federal court order," and has suspended him.

What's made these officials suddenly act like they care about the Constitution?

The answer may lie in the seemingly unrelated tax reform plan proposed by Governor Riley—and the dire economic situation faced by the state. Riley needs money and doesn't need a brouhaha over religion at this time.

Unlike the federal government, the states are required to balance their budgets. Riley put forward a state-wide referendum for approval of a "tax and accountability plan" that would both cover Alabama's projected \$675-million shortfall and institute some "educational reforms" in a state that ranks at the bottom of the nation in per capita spending on schools.

This plan would have raised the earnings level of those exempt from state income taxes, giving the poor a break. It would also have raised the income tax on middle-class and wealthier individuals and families. It would also have increased state property tax revenues by assessing at 100 percent of value—a move opposed by large landowners such as timber companies and farms.

Some of the money raised by these new taxes would have gone to college scholarships for qualified Alabama high school students, and to set up a reading initiative for children in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Riley's tax plan was backed by a broad coalition of groups not usually ranged on the same side of an issue in Alabama, including the New South Coalition with roots in the Black community; organizations representing social services such as the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama; and the Business Council of Alabama, which acts as a statewide chamber of commerce.

It was opposed by small business owners, timber and farm interests, some banking interests, local right-wing Christian groups—and Governor Riley's own Alabama Republican Party.

That kind of opposition made the proposal seem even more like a mildly populist approach. In fact, Riley cloaked the plan in "Christian morality," saying: "We're supposed to love God, love each other and help take care of the poor. It is immoral to charge somebody making \$5,000 [a year] an income tax." (New York Times, Sept. 6)

On the surface, Riley's plan stood in sharp contrast to the tax cuts for the wealthy of his fellow Republican, President George W. Bush.

But in essence both are attempts by U.S. capital to manage an economic crisis that has regional, national and international dimensions.

Among the backers of Riley's tax reform was the chief executive of Alabama Power Co., Charles McCrary. He didn't cite concern over family service centers being closed, or overcrowding at state mental institutions. Instead, he based his support on the need to "make earnings and return

expectations to shareholders." (Birmingham News, June 18)

McCrary pointed out that Riley's tax plan would provide a more educated workforce. He saw this as a necessary incentive to recruit new business to the state. He pointed to the loss of 20 percent of Alabama Power's industrial sales in the last year and of 32,000 factory jobs over the last five years. Alabama Power found that 74 percent of its recent entry-level applicants couldn't pass a basic competency test.

Corporate income tax represented only \$45 million of the potential revenues of Riley's plan. Income tax on individuals would have brought in \$375 million, with the bulk of that coming from workers and the middle class.

However, the Republican Party in Alabama mobilized to defeat its own governor's tax proposal.

A crack in the 'solid South'?

This is the first crack in what has been a "solid South" since the Republicans consolidated their hold on white Southern voters with a racism camouflaged as states' rights. The stakes are high for the Republicans, with President Bush's popularity polls plummeting and workers being hit harder and harder by economic losses, exacerbated by the war.

To win the next election, and hang onto control of the state's coffers, the Republicans also have to hold onto white workers increasingly pummeled by the economy. The Riley tax plan seems to have been an attempt by some Republican economic interests to forge a more centrist position in the face of increasing disillusionment and anger from all workers.

But on Sept. 9, the Riley tax reform plan was defeated by voters across the spectrum of income, race and religion. Only the poorest—mostly African American voters from the Black Belt counties—voted solidly for tax reform.

Many Black and white workers were skeptical about the plan. Ben Huntley, in Tuskegee, said, "I wouldn't vote for nothing (Riley) put out." Why? Because, he said, Riley is a rich, white businessman. Small business owners and workers in the same county said, "The only ones who can afford the plan are 'big-money pockets.'" (Huntsville Times, Jul.13)

Their suspicion and skepticism is an accurate measure of what workers throughout the state are feeling. Where, they ask, is the plan that will better their lives—not big timber, big power or big banks?

The defeat of Riley's tax plan means an immediate, drastic cut in state government services. There will be no money this year for textbooks, classroom supplies for teachers or new technology. There will be no new enrollments permitted in the Child Health Insurance Program, now covering lower-income children. Half of the people in the state who have AIDS or are HIV positive, and who are now receiv-

Alabama's workers don't have to choose between a rock and a hard place. There's another solution.

ing funded medication, will no longer get their life-saving drugs. (Birmingham News, Sept. 12)

But the reactionary aspect of those proposing the tax reform was also revealed as the cuts were being announced. Attorney General Bill Pryor advised people to buy handguns to "protect their homes and families" as he announced that thousands of inmates jailed in the state prison system for non-violent crimes, such as theft or drug possession, would be released because of the budget crisis.

African Americans make up 26 percent of Alabama's population but 62 percent of those incarcerated. Pryor's comments were meant to inflame racism.

Alabama prisons are under a federal court order to reform because of horrific overcrowding. The jails hold from two to three times as many inmates as they were built for. One federal judge wrote in his ruling, "The sardine-can appearance of its cell units more nearly resembles the holding units of slave ships during the Middle Passage of the 18th century than anything in the 21st century." (New York Times, May 1, 2001)

Another solution

The eyes of the ruling class, nationally and in other states, have been on Alabama, to see how its Republican power structure navigated between two different approaches on how to handle the budget crisis. The governor's approach was rejected by most workers because, although it would have saved some social services, it would have forced them to pay more in regressive sales taxes at a time when their jobs are insecure and personal debt is high.

Alabama's workers don't have to choose between a rock and a hard place. If they shake off racism and forge a united, independent movement outside the capitalist political parties, they can fight for a program that truly represents their interests and not those of one wing or another of the rich ruling class.

There are precedents within Alabama's history.

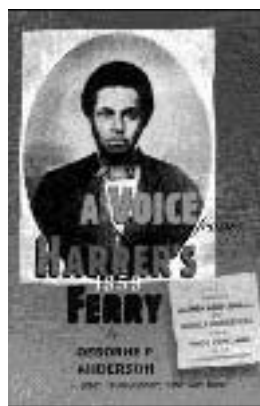
From the 1870s through the 1890s, militant interracial unionism among coal miners and lumber workers was led by the Knights of Labor.

The Sharecroppers Union, organized by the Communist Party in Alabama from 1929 through 1939, brought together thousands of farm workers across racial lines to battle exploitative landowners.

The Black civil rights movement, begun by a group of African American women in Montgomery with the bus boycott, is known throughout the entire world.

And, just last year, the death of white gay millworker Billy Jack Gaither at the hands of anti-gay white supremacists was protested by a coalition that included lesbian and gay groups, churches, synagogues and Muslims who refused to let religious demagoguery be used to scapegoat and divide.

With struggle, anything is possible. □



A Voice from Harper's Ferry

by Osborne P. Anderson A Black revolutionary who was there

Osborne P. Anderson was the only Black combatant to survive the raid on Harper's Ferry and to write about it. His account of this turning point in the struggle against slavery—an armed attack by Black and white volunteers on a citadel of the South—refutes those who try to minimize the role of African American people in fighting for their freedom.

Imprisoned Black journalist MUMIA ABU-JAMAL contributed one of the forwards. Contributors include Monica Moorehead and Vince Copeland.

List price is \$12.00 but at leftbooks.com it's \$10.20

Jobs crisis creates dilemma for Bush

By Greg Butterfield

The continuing destruction of jobs at an unprecedented level during an economic recovery is posing a big dilemma for George W. Bush as the 2004 presidential elections loom.

If unemployment remains at its current high level during the coming year—or grows worse, as some economists now predict—Bush's re-election prospects are sketchy, at best.

Like his father before him, Bush thought war in Iraq was a shoo-in for re-election. But in 1992, high unemployment cost Bush the First a second term.

But doing anything to relieve the growing poverty and desperation generated by job cuts conflicts with Bush's other priorities: all-out war to re-colonize the Middle East, Korea and other areas of the world while handing gobs of corporate welfare and tax cuts to the rich.

To keep up Bush's "endless war"—even to have any hopes of holding onto Iraq—the Pentagon needs a steady stream of new recruits. Economic desperation is the number-one tool the military has to gain this cannon fodder. Every year, tens of

thousands of youths from poor and working-class family are recruited by the armed forces with promises of steady paychecks and educational opportunities.

Now the chickens are coming home to roost for many of these young workers, like the National Reserve regiments in Iraq whose tour of duty was just extended from six months to a year, courtesy of war secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

As the colonial character of the U.S. occupation grows clearer to millions here, and as the body count of U.S. soldiers grows day by day, the economic terrorism of job losses is all that military recruiters have going for them.

Bush's only other option would be to reintroduce the draft—and likely bring a wholesale revolt by potential draftees, their parents and loved ones.

More bad news on jobs

Numerous government and independent reports released at the beginning of September highlighted the growing economic crisis for workers living in the United States.

Chief among them: a Census Bureau study confirming that 1.3 million more

people fell into poverty last year.

The Economic Policy Institute, which studies economic trends for the labor movement, says 3.3 million jobs have been permanently lost since 2001—the bulk since the "jobless recovery" began.

The bad news keeps coming. A Labor Department report on the number of first-time unemployment insurance claims for the first week of September rose to 422,000, up by 3,000 from the week before.

And on Sept. 13, the New York Times reported, "A wide range of data suggests that the economy will probably grow at an annual rate of nearly 5 percent in the final months of this year and nearly 4 percent next year... But in a disparity with no real parallels in the last half-century, most economists predict that unemployment will remain almost unchanged at nearly 6 percent through the elections in November 2004."

Much of the predicted economic growth for the bosses is attributed to the aftermath of Bush's massive tax cuts and military contracts for mammoth monopolies. But, says Edward McKelvey, an economist for Goldman Sachs, the growth would likely "fade significantly" over the course of next year and that unemployment would rise at an even faster rate by the end of 2004.

Cheney: Money for war, not for jobs

Recent polls show Bush's popularity slipping, mainly because of the economic pain of the masses. Other polls show most people are far more fearful of losing their health insurance and jobs than they are of terrorist attacks.

Democratic Party presidential candidates are attacking Bush's economic poli-

cies, hoping to gain the electoral boon of the jobs crisis. But the leading Democratic candidates are all just as committed to the profit system and the occupation of Iraq as Bush is.

The jobs crisis, while exacerbated by the administration's unabashedly pro-rich policies, is rooted in the deepest inner workings of capitalism. The current "jobless recovery" is an intensification of the more-than-25-year restructuring of Corporate America impelled by the high-tech revolution. It has continued unabated under both Republican and Democratic regimes.

Even so, there is a lot the president and Congress could do to alleviate the suffering of millions of long-term unemployed workers. For example, Bush could issue an executive order putting a moratorium on layoffs and forcing the corporations to rehire those laid off. Congress could create a public works program to rebuild crumbling urban and rural communities, or pass a law enacting a six-hour workday for eight hours' pay.

But that won't happen without an independent, militant movement of organized and unorganized workers, together with the unemployed, to force Bush and the Democratic and Republican leaders to act.

In fact, the administration is planning to increase war spending at the expense of human services even as living conditions deteriorate for millions. On Sept. 7, in a nationally televised speech, Bush demanded an extra \$87 billion for the occupation of Iraq in the coming year—more than doubling the price tag.

And a week later, on the Sept. 14 edition of NBC's "Meet the Press," Vice President Dick Cheney hinted that the cost would probably go still higher. □

SOMERVILLE, MASS.

Parent/teacher unity wins anti-racist victory

By Phebe Eckfeldt
Somerville, Mass.

Multinational unity can be a potent force against the bosses' destructive, anti-working-class weapon: racism. This is what a group of Somerville Latin, Black and white parents and teachers from the Unidos Program, a Spanish bilingual program, found when they joined together to defend one of their teachers, Sonia Huevo.

Huevo and hundreds of other bilingual teachers across the state, including five in Somerville, were fired in June as a result of failing an "English proficiency" test they were forced to take.

This racist, illegal test was administered with little forewarning, over the phone, by an out-of-state company staffed by temporary workers. Many teachers who "failed" had anywhere from six to 15 years of teaching experience, but were fired for having an accent.

This test was required under Question 2, a Massachusetts law passed last year that bans bilingual education in the public schools. Ron Unz sponsored Question 2; he is a California multi-millionaire who succeeded in getting a similar law, Proposition 227, passed there.

Question 2 requires newly arrived immigrant children to be placed in a one-year, multi-grade, English-language-only immersion class with no other subjects for study. Then the students enter regular classes with no support, regardless of their English proficiency.

Using intimidation, racism and sexism—and with the Somerville Teachers' Association as an ally, at least temporarily—Somerville School Department officials apparently thought it would be an easy task to fire the five immigrant teachers, four women and one man.

But the fact that Sonia Huevo would stand up and say "no" to this injustice was missing from their plans.

Meeting around a kitchen table in the heat of summer, Huevo's supporters

decided to turn on the pressure. They contacted the media, got signatures on a petition, forced a meeting with a hostile school superintendent, made phone calls and wrote letters to lawyers, politicians, STA and School Committee members. Huevo refused to take the second test offered by the Department.

Only days before school was to reopen, pressure from the parent-teacher group resulted in the reinstatement of Huevo and another fired teacher, Maria Diaz.

The turning point came when the STA, as a result of pressure from the parent-teacher group, decided to do the right thing and file a grievance on behalf of Huevo and Diaz, leaving the School Department isolated.

Neither teacher, by law and also union contract, should have been required to take the test.

A statement issued by the group read in part: "In these times of severe budget cuts in education, bilingual teachers are being sacrificed in disproportionate numbers. In an effort to divide and conquer, white teachers and teachers of color are being pitted against each other to make them fight for the few positions left. We need all our teachers!

"The so-called 'English proficiency' test is racist, illegal and invalid. It was used to wipe out hundreds of bilingual teachers across the state. It is our children who will suffer the most as a result of Question 2.

"As parents, we need to unite and fight alongside our bilingual teachers. They not only teach but provide a critical service to the youth of their communities (Haitian, Latin, South East Asian, etc.) as mentors, confidantes and role models—sharing a common culture, background, experience and language."

Public education is in the Bush administration's crosshairs, with billions of dollars being stolen to pay for military aggression and occupation in Iraq and elsewhere. But as this small Somerville group showed, unity is the force that can turn attacks around. □

NEW YORK CITY

Teachers' union protests overcrowded classes

By G. Dunkel
New York

AFT Local 2 of the United Federation of Teachers, the union that represents about 80,000 teachers and school personnel in New York City, has begun filing over 9,000 grievances about overcrowded classrooms. It says overcrowding is causing chaos for more than 300,000 students.

The new school administration for the city replied that the union's statement was "just P.R.," but it did not dispute the union's figures.

Last year, the UFT filed only 25 grievances about overcrowding.

Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg tried to shift the blame to the Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind" Act, which allows parents to move their children from schools deemed to be failing to schools

where test results are better. They also say that Gov. George Pataki has shortchanged the city's schools.

They may be right about Pataki. He lost a court case over the issue of the state underfunding New York City schools, and is now trying to avoid having to pay up by appealing the decision and appointing a commission.

Klein and Bloomberg found enough money to buy 8 million books for classroom libraries. But they couldn't find the staff to count the number of transfer requests and estimate changes in school population.

They didn't even manage to get new teachers hired onto the payroll during the summer. On Sept. 16, 5,000 new teachers had to get "emergency" paychecks because the paperwork is still not done. A significant number of additional teachers will need to be hired to fix the grievances the UFT is filing. □

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'Blue bloods vs. blue collar'

Support mushrooms for Yale strikers

By Heather Cottin

In a demonstration of the power of unity, 10,000 Yale University workers, students and unionists from across the Northeast shut down the center of downtown New Haven, Conn., on Sept. 13. The rally was organized in solidarity with workers at Yale who walked off their jobs on Aug. 27.

The arrogance and intransigence of Yale's top administration provoked this current struggle.

Yale is one of the richest educational institutions in the United States, endowed with billions of dollars. It is a citadel of class privilege, a training ground for the U.S. government and the capitalist class. Bill Clinton and the George Bushes—father and son—are graduates. Among its alumni are directors and cadre of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Some 20,000 Yale undergraduates have to find a way to pay tuition and board set at more than \$35,000 a year. Yale has also earned the reputation of having the worst labor relations of any university in the country. (Steven Greenhouse, New York Times, Sept. 4)

"New Haven is a company town and Yale is the company," said Emma Wright, a food services associate at the Yale-New Haven Hospital. She stressed: "One out of four jobs in this city is a Yale job. Yale sets the standard for the whole community and that standard is too low to live in dignity and security." (yaleunions.org)

The three-week-long strike brings together four significant struggles in an unprecedented show of power and unity. They formed the Federation of Hospital and University Employees (FHUE), made up of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Locals 34 and 35, which represent Yale's clerical and technical workers.

University heads have refused to meet the demands of Locals 34 and 35 for fair wages, decent pensions and job security. Working without a contract since January 2002, Yale's secretaries, food service workers, maintenance employees, researchers and registrars went out on strike on Aug. 27.

The membership of Local 34 is mostly women who have struggled against Yale's sexist, racist and anti-worker benefits. Key demands are increased opportunities for hiring and promotions for African American and Latino workers.

The other two unions who are part of the FHUE-coordinated struggle are District 1199 Service Employees International Union, representing 150 dietary workers, and the Graduate Employees and Students Organization (GESO), representing graduate students in their drive for union recognition and fair wages. Yale's union-busting administration narrowly defeated the GESO last spring when the union attempted to organize Yale's 2,200 graduate students who teach 40 percent of the undergraduate courses.

In turn, FHUE—in an exceptional show of unity—is conducting a joint drive at Yale-New Haven Hospital to organize the 1,800 additional service, maintenance and patient-care workers.

The conflict has been characterized as the "blue bloods versus the blue collars." And on Sept. 13, the blue collars flexed their muscles.

'We believe in the fight'

Union members converged on New Haven for the massive Sept. 13 solidarity rally from Boston, New York and all over Connecticut. Douglas McCarron, national president of the Carpenters union,

brought 700 members, "because we believe in the fight."

Striking Yale workers were joined by students from some 30 colleges and universities, including Yale, Wesleyan College, Harvard and Columbia.

Yale student Marissa Levendis, a member of the Undergraduate Organizing Committee (UOC) that organizes student support for the strike, told Workers World, "We even had students from Virginia Commonwealth University and Florida State. It was truly incredible to be a part of it."

More than 100 rank-and-file unionists were among the 152 people arrested during the four-hour protest. It took seven police buses to take the arrestees to the gymnasium at police headquarters for processing.

Presidents of five major unions were arrested: John Sweeney, national president of the AFL-CIO; John Wilhelm, president of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union; Bruce Raynor, president of UNITE, the country's largest apparel union; Douglas McCarron, president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters; and Andy Stern, president of SEIU.

Steve Gillis, president of Steel Workers Local 8751, the Boston school bus drivers' union, came on one of three buses from his city. When the buses drove into New Haven, he said, "The city we saw coming in looked like immigrants from around the world and very working-class housing. Then you got to the middle of the city where the university is and there's expensive shops, fancy buildings, top of the line hospital."

"The ivy-league university looks just like what you picture—it's covered in ivy. Every building was guarded by riot police, trying to keep the community of New Haven out. It just seemed like the Yale workers were taking this on for the whole city of New Haven."

In-plant strategy saves 78,000 jobs

Verizon blinks in contract battle

By Milt Neidenberg

Chalk this one up as saving 78,000 jobs.

On Sept. 4, the Communication Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers reached a tentative five-year agreement with Verizon, the largest telecommunications corporation in the country. Verizon had been determined to wipe job security language off the books. It didn't happen.

Over 78,000 members of both unions remained strong and united to protect their jobs. The agreement, covering telephone operators and technicians in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions, has yet to be ratified by members of both unions.

Verizon had been poised to eliminate thousands of jobs and move telephone technicians and operators out of their work areas and communities. The company had to admit that with the new contract "the current job security protections will remain in place. Existing rules related to Verizon's ability to move work will remain unchanged." (Wall Street Journal, Sept. 5)

This was confirmed by Morton Bahr, president of the CWA, the largest union at Verizon: "This settlement achieves our major goals of protecting our members'



New Haven, Conn., Sept. 13.

WW PHOTO

Gillis was impressed. "Besides sheer numbers, there was a lot of chanting, a lot of combativeness. It seems like people have been wanting and waiting to do something like this and this was the first opportunity to get into the streets and take on one of these wealthy corporations which is a symbol to all of us—whether we work as teachers or cooks or janitors or bus drivers. Yale is a symbol of the problems all of us are having with the bosses in our industries."

The giant unity rally brought traffic to a standstill. Strikers and their supporters chanted, waved banners and blocked major intersections.

Labor clenches its fist

This strike struggle began as early as March 3 when the unions coordinated a one-week strike. The strike brought together all the unions that later became FHUE. It was calculated to put pressure on Yale to begin bargaining in good faith.

Months later, on Sept. 1, the presidents of Yale unions and dozens of their supporters—including Jesse Jackson—were arrested at a militant Labor Day parade by New Haven police.

job security and the health care benefits of both active and retired employees." (New York Times Sept. 5)

The struggle to save jobs is critical. The day following the tentative Verizon agreement, the Labor Department announced that 93,000 jobs were lost in August—nearly half in manufacturing. It was the largest decline in four months, and the 38th consecutive month of job losses.

The national payroll has shrunk by nearly 3 million jobs since March 2001, the start of the recession. Those who have stopped looking for work have more than doubled, to over half a million, and over 9 million have suffered job losses at one time or another during this period—a devastating loss of income.

In a tragic irony for laid-off workers, they are daily being reminded of strong economic growth. "Rapid Growth Seen for U.S. Economy," was a New York Times headline on Sept. 13. "The American economy finally seems poised to roar ahead at rates not seen since the late 1990s," read the article. Yet it confesses that "unemployment in the range of 6 percent is likely to stay through the 2004 election." Others are predicting unemployment could go higher.

Corporate bosses like Verizon, on the other hand, are enjoying the fruits of the

On Sept. 5, Yale workers banging pots and chanting "We're not gonna take it" marched to Yale-New Haven Hospital in solidarity with the 150 dietary workers of 1199 SEIU who are also on strike.

At the massive Sept. 13 solidarity rally, Sweeney and Wilhelm told reporters that this demonstration was just the beginning of a larger campaign that will also target Yale trustees where they live and work. Wilhelm vowed that union members would take their protests to country clubs where trustees are members. (New Haven Register online, Sept. 14)

The struggle by Yale workers is a class struggle of monumental importance. The power, unity and sacrifices of the workers and students in the four unions, and the support of the Black and Latino communities, shows that the strike is a formidable working-class weapon. It has brought this bastion of capitalist academia back to the negotiating table.

The support for this strike must be sustained in order to get from the negotiating table to decent contracts and recognition for the unorganized rank-and-file multinational workers who are on the front lines of this critical class battle. □

growing economy while trying to get their workers to accept rule changes that would eventually add them to the swelling unemployment lines.

Verizon's origins are in the 1997 merger of NYNEX and Bell Atlantic, which allowed them to corner the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic telephone market. In 1998, they added GTE, the fourth-largest global telecommunications company in the world. The merged company was named Verizon.

This powerful corporation began the attack as far back as mid-June, long before the contract expired. In addition to wanting to eliminate job security language, it demanded more flexibility in forcing overtime, reducing absenteeism, eliminating premium pay and threatening health and pension benefits. It laid off 3,200 disabled union members. However, it suffered a setback when an arbitrator ruled it was in violation of the contract clause that barred layoffs tied to cost cutting. The record showed booming profits.

As the Aug. 2 expiration date approached, the CWA and the IBEW voted overwhelmingly to strike. The company lined up 30,000 managers and scabs, many of them flown in from around the country, to break the strike. The bat-

Continued on page 8

Developing countries resist takeover by agribusiness giants

Continued from page 1

opment to countries mired in poverty and underdevelopment, the legacy of colonialism. Yes, there are now glitzy resorts like Cancun in Mexico—but this tourist enclave has its own seaport and airport so visitors can come and go without having to pass through the sea of poverty that surrounds it and is growing worse.

With the breakdown of the Cancun meeting, the imperialist bankers who control world trade are put out. “Long-term it is bad for world growth. Only if developing countries grow can they import more from us,” commented John Llewellyn, global chief economist at the investment bank Lehman Brothers in London. (New York Times, Sept. 15) A telling statement. Growth is for one reason only. Not so the hungry can eat. Not so the homeless can be housed. No, growth is so other countries can import more from the imperialists and fill their banks with money.

Havana was like Cancun—an island of privilege catering to affluent U.S. tourists—before the Cuban Revolution. The first priority of that great social transformation was to bring literacy teachers, doctors, decent housing, clean water and sanitation, and an end to the plantation

system to the countryside.

The capitalist era began in the world with the breaking up of large landed estates in Europe as the bourgeoisie seized political power and cut down its rivals, the nobility. Today, large estates are back, but they are organized like factories and employ wage labor instead of serfs. As with manufacturing, the capitalist monopolies that control U.S. agriculture today—giants like ConAgra, Archer Daniels Midland and Cargill—gain efficiency through applying the scientific-technological revolution to agriculture, as well as through economies of scale and the division of labor.

However, their overriding motivation is profit, and this poisons all that they touch. The never-ending quest of capital for greater profit drives them to adopt new technologies—like dangerous pesticides and genetically modified foods—before their impact on health and the environment can be adequately assessed.

It drives them to capture and dominate markets all over the world, in the same way that industrial and financial capital do.

It drives them to plant acres and acres of flowers in Central America—where

ruined farmers are begging for food—because flowers can quickly be shipped from there year-round to upscale markets in North America.

It has driven the destruction of rain forests in Honduras because U.S. fast food chains found it cheaper to chop down the trees and grow cattle there, even though the grazing lands created lasted only a few years before seasonal downpours washed the fragile topsoil away, creating a desert where there was once rich biological diversity.

Small-scale agriculture is going the way of backyard forges and mom and pop stores. Food production does need to be put on a scientific basis, with machines doing as much of the backbreaking work as possible. The life of an agricultural worker is hard and hazardous, and small, indebted farmers never know if their next harvest will pull them through.

What is needed is a socialized solution tailored to the needs of the people—as food consumers—and of the farm workers.

Every socialist revolution so far has had to carry out land reform that wasn't completed under bourgeois rule. Workers' governments took the land away from

semi-feudal landlords—in Russia and China—or from foreign agribusinesses—in Cuba—and gave it to the peasants. But the next step was to make farming more efficient and productive.

In the Soviet Union, the collectivization of agriculture took place in the late 1920s when there was great material backwardness and political turmoil that led to resistance by many peasants. It is therefore even more significant that today, when much of the state-owned industry there has been chopped up and sold off to capitalist buyers, the collective farms have remained intact in many areas of the former Soviet Union. Even though laws were passed offering incentives to farmers to leave the collectives—and some did—small-scale farming proved so difficult and unproductive that the attempt to break up the collectives has stalled.

The question before humanity today is not whether it is possible to produce enough food to feed the world's population. That can be done already—despite the dire predictions of Malthus. The problem is how to get rid of capitalism and create a just social order, so that everyone can afford to eat nutritious food and no one is exploited for the profits of a few. □

Verizon blinks in contract battle

Continued from page 7

tle lines were drawn.

On the eve of the expiration date, Verizon began to soften up. It appealed to the unions, saying it was in a life-and-death competitive struggle with other telecommunications companies like IBM, AT&T and others. In a crowded and shrinking telecommunications market here and around the world, it tried to persuade the unions that management and labor were one big happy family and had common cause in a bitter war to beat back Verizon's rivals.

Verizon blinked

The expiration date passed, the unions didn't strike, and Verizon didn't lock out the workers. But it continued to badger the unions about needing concessions. Both parties agreed to a federal mediator, who immediately moved the negotiations to Washington, D.C., and ordered them to be censored—in order to isolate and confuse the rank and file, who had been prepared to strike.

The union leadership refused to give in to the concessions. Verizon blinked first.

Then, on Sept. 2, came a parallel breakthrough. Verizon/Vodaphone Wireless—

the result of another merger completed in 1999—agreed to a five-year contract protecting seniority rights on layoffs and transfers for 51 CWA technicians. CWA efforts to organize 20,000 Verizon/Vodaphone workers have been forcefully opposed.

On Sept. 4, Verizon gave in. It agreed to maintain job security language for 78,000 CWA and IBEW members. The tentative settlement included a 3-percent cash bonus—around \$1,600—and a 2-percent annual raise, including cost of living increases. Pensions will increase by 11 percent, as will annual profit-sharing bonuses. Most important, health care premiums remain fully paid for active workers and retirees.

Employees still face increases in prescription drug and health insurance deductibles and co-payments. Unfortunately, the company was able to eliminate the job security language for newly-hired employees over the five-year contract.

The company has stated that as workers who are now protected under the job language retire, they can be replaced by workers who are not covered under this job security guarantee.

In-plant organizing

How did the unions do it? Without using the strike weapon, Verizon workers were able to wring out benefits with minor concessions.

On Aug. 2, Verizon workers had cleared their desks and lockers in preparation for a strike. They got rid of anything that might have made it easy for 30,000 managers and scabs to do union work. They began a campaign to pressure management through an in-plant strategy. While it was costing management \$1 million a day to house 30,000 potential scabs, the two unions combined pre-work and lunch-time rallies.

Workers wearing red—the union color—lined up each morning and marched into the plant and offices in large disciplined numbers. They chanted slo-

gans, carried their picket signs inside and kept them at their work places, in case negotiations broke down.

They set up picket lines during lunch-time rallies and took their picket signs home to repeat the tactics the following day. Verizon was never sure if the in-plant strategy would lead to a walkout. CWA Local 1101 shop steward Pam Galpern reported on this in-plant strategy in Labor Notes of September 2003.

With the help of the AFL-CIO, the rank and file collected signatures from customers who promised to drop Verizon until a fair contract was won. The CWA, the larger of the two unions, with 60,000 members, put out a web-based newsletter, “Unity at Verizon,” with almost daily updates of activities.

Verizon had declared a state of emergency in many areas, eliminating the limits on forced overtime and working the rank and file 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The company monitored the in-plant activities and threatened reprisals. Without a contract, the grievance procedure was not in effect.

It was clear that the in-plant strategy was a defensive struggle.

Significantly, the rank and file carried out the in-plant campaign for over a month—a most difficult assignment, as management monitored them and made them account for every second of their time.

The contract has yet to be voted on by many local unions in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. But one thing is certain. The CWA and IBEW rank and file outlasted this powerful telecommunications monopoly. They set a splendid example of how to wage difficult and sustained in-plant organizing. They have revived and resurrected this vital strategy.

Armed with the strike weapon and other forms of creative resistance, the multinational organized and unorganized sectors of labor need to be ready for stormy days ahead, as wars abroad and an economic crisis at home eat away at their wages and conditions. □



Remembering 9/11 Wall Street style

Stand up for Palestine!

Rutgers says: No conference. Students say: No way!

By Leslie Feinberg

On Sept. 12, Rutgers University officials imperiously announced that they had cancelled the Third National Student Conference on the Palestine Solidarity Movement, scheduled for Oct. 10-12 at that New Jersey campus.

But Rutgers students vow they will not be daunted or deterred. The conference is going to happen.

"These attacks on the organizers of the Palestine conference and the movement have mirrored the escalating assault on the Palestinian people, and have intersected with the attacks against our civil liberties and constitutional rights," charged a Sept. 12 statement from conference organizers.

"But the university administration has gone much farther, and has taken a shameful overt political stand in favor of Israeli Apartheid. As the university cancels the Palestine conference, it is simultaneously supporting an overarching pro-Israel program called 'Israel Inspires,'" the media release continued. The pro-Israeli event is slated for the same weekend as the conference in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

On Sept. 12, the very day the university announced to students that it was officially shutting down the Oct. 10-12 conference, Rutgers University President Robert McCormick was scheduled to keynote at a dinner sponsored by Rutgers Hillel, a campus-based Zionist group.

And according to the official website of "Israel Inspires," McCormick "pledged his support for Israel Inspires, and asked to be personally involved in Hillel's positive pro-active initiative."

Featured participants at the "Inspires" event include neo-conservative ideologue Richard Perle, chairperson of the Defense Policy Board—an advisory panel to the Pentagon; James Woolsey, former CIA director; Herbert London from the right-wing Hudson Institute; and Tome Rose, publisher and CEO of the Jerusalem Post.

On Sept. 18, right-wing Israeli government minister without portfolio Natan Sharansky will be the opening speaker of a year-long anti-Palestinian program targeting campuses.

'We refuse to be silenced!'

"We refuse to be silenced," declared Charlotte Kates, a conference organizer and second year student at Rutgers School of Law. "We will hold our conference wherever we must—in a hotel, in a park, whatever. The Palestinian people have continued to resist despite incredible and overwhelming force displayed against them—and we owe them nothing less than to refuse to be silenced."

Kates is one of the people working on organizing the national event. She is an activist with New Jersey Solidarity, the local host organization for the conference. This event, she told Workers World, is bringing together "activists and organizers across the continent and internationally in solidarity with the Palestinian people and calling for divestment from the apartheid state of Israel."

She described the event as a weekend of plenaries, discussions, workshops, activist training, and a large demonstration on the Rutgers campus to demand freedom of expression and solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

In addition to prominent Palestinian and other Arab activists, Kates said, speakers will represent the spectrum of voices who were involved in support for the Palestinian movement: "African American and other people of color, labor, women, queer, voices from other international struggles, and pro-Palestinian Jewish activists.

"We'll have organizing sessions and decision-making sessions to really strategize about how we as a movement can go forward in building solidarity with Palestine and in building the divestment movement and really creating continental coordination among activists to carry forward this work."

This is the third conference of its kind. The first was held in Berkeley, Calif. It was postponed after Sept. 11, 2001, and rescheduled for February 2002. Kates said it drew 450-500 people, "More than anyone expected."

Kates noted that the Berkeley conference coincided with the brutal Israeli military re-occupation and assault on the Palestinian population of the West Bank. "Especially because of the situation developing in Palestine, it set the tone for growth of the divestment movement for campuses across the country and really signified that there was a strong movement in solidarity with Palestinians growing in the United States."

The all-out siege by the Israelis against the uprising of Palestinians in the Intifada, the massacre of Palestinians in the Jenin refugee camp, plans by the Tel Aviv government to "transfer"—to literally force out the population—and most of all the resistance of the people of Palestine inspired the movement here in the U.S.

Kates recalls, "I think also the renewed anti-war movement that came out of the whole period against the attacks on Afghanistan really were part of building the Palestine solidarity movement as well. More and more and more people recognized the urgent imperative need for people in the United State to stand in solidar-

ity with the Palestinian people and their struggle for liberation, and against occupation and oppression."

The second conference was held in October 2002 at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. "It was also very widely attended," she said, "and representative of the growth of the divestment campaign. As in the case of apartheid South Africa in the 1980s, we're calling on universities and corporations to pull out all their investments and all their economic participation in the Israeli economy."

She explained that the movement was initiated by a call from the Palestine Solidarity Committee of South Africa after the 2001 World Conference Against Racism held in Durban. Today the divestment campaign has spread to some 70 to 75 college and university campuses, Kates pointed out.

Kates characterized the move by the Rutgers administration to cancel the current conference as "an official action on the part of Rutgers University in support of apartheid.

"But it will take place!" she concluded. "It's going to be a major event. It's going to bring together hundreds of activists and it's going to be the site of a demonstration that makes it clear that 'Israel terrorizes, Palestine inspires.' We will make sure that our voices are heard very loudly and very clearly on the campus of Rutgers University."

'Rutgers is a showdown'

Workers World spoke to Elias Rashmawi, a coordinator of the Free Palestine Alliance and part of the International ANSWER coalition's steering committee. Rashmawi, born in Gaza, Palestine, was issued a permanent deportation order by the Israeli High Court because of his involvement in Palestinian organizing while a student in the U.S.

Rashmawi said, "I think Rutgers is a showdown on multiple fronts. First, it's a showdown between the Palestinian movement for liberation and all those who want to maintain it in servitude—partial or total.

"Second, it's a showdown between all peoples thinking in terms of justice and those who would like to hijack people in the United States, and around the world, to a certain political point of view where they have hegemony of thought, a hegemony over the model of the society we want to live in and hegemony on our future.

"It's a showdown with those who want to take the Arab, Palestinian, Muslim, South Asian and all communities of color—and all oppressed communities, including labor, women, the gay community—and place them on the margin of society and when need be criminalize them and not allow them to be part of the making of civil society where all have input."

Rashmawi stressed: "Rutgers symbolizes the interests of the emerging empire, intersects with the interests of a client state, with the interests of policing thought. It symbolizes those who want to literally cater to a specific sector of the social struggle, the companies who are heavily invested in military economics, rejecting divestment—all these vile, anti-social forces.

"On the other hand are the Rutgers students, driven by nothing but their sense of dignity, their sense of justice, paying from their own pocket, standing up to big, mighty forces just to say that we have to have some sense of justice—not only for Palestinians, but all those who struggle for justice in the world.

"Because of that," he concluded, "no matter what happens we are going to Rutgers. 'Israel Inspires' or not, neo-cons or not, Rutgers president or not. We will continue to organize for Palestine and for justice for everyone."

To support the conference please register, endorse and promote the event and encourage other individuals and organizations to do likewise. Financial help is appreciated now more than ever, since a change of venue adds additional expense. For more information, visit www.divestmentconference.com. □

U.S. committee to defend Milosevic

By John Catalinotto

As the so-called trial of the former Yugoslav president in NATO's court in The Hague, Netherlands, nears its midpoint, Slobodan Milosevic received some new support. On Sept. 13 some two dozen writers, human rights and anti-war activists, academics and attorneys joined to form the U.S. section of the International Committee to Defend Slobodan Milosevic (ICDSM).

Most of the members distinguished themselves during the time of NATO's war on Yugoslavia by publicly opposing U.S. and NATO intervention against the former socialist country in the Balkans. Dr. Michael Parenti of the University of California-Berkeley has agreed to chair the U.S. section of the ICDSM.

This group in its founding statement said that "the U.S. National Committee [of the ICDSM] rejects the legitimacy of the trial of Milosevic and we view this trial as an act of political warfare against the people of Serbia and against the basic democratic rights of the whole of humanity that cannot be allowed to succeed."

The committee demands an adjournment of the trial to allow Milosevic to receive proper medical care and to have up to two years to prepare his defense. Milosevic has been defending himself during the entire prosecution case, which has now lasted over 18 months. It also demands an end to the forced isolation of the former Yugoslav president from his family.

The U.S. and NATO leaders originally planned to make Milosevic's case a show trial. His capable political and legal

defense, waged almost single-handedly against the court's apparatus, has exposed NATO aggression and the weakness of the prosecution case.

Many of the U.S. committee members believe that the current questioning of U.S. foreign policy following the disastrous aggression in Iraq gives a new opportunity to re-raise all the questions raised by the earlier U.S. aggression in the Balkans.

For more information, contact the committee at (212) 726-1260 or mail: icdsm_us@yahoo.com. □

HIDDEN AGENDA: U.S./NATO takeover of Yugoslavia

Confused about why the U.S. bombed Yugoslavia? That's because you never heard about the hidden agenda—the dismemberment of this multiethnic country.

Washington and NATO strategists invoked humanitarian principles to justify their war. But they practiced the tactics used by empires since the days of Imperial Rome.

This book presents evidence, gathered by dozens of nongovernmental hearings, that NATO countries engaged in a decade-long conspiracy to foment war in Yugoslavia in order to split it up. Now NATO has military bases all over the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia. They are the Roman legions for Western transnational corporations and Big Oil.

Leading anti-war activists and analysts from many countries take up media lies, war crimes and the illegality of NATO aggression. Ramsey Clark writes on "Blaming the victim." Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, demonized in the Western press, stands up to the NATO tribunal.

At leftbooks.com it's 20% off, only \$15.95





Bring them home!

U.S. soldiers in Iraq are clamoring to come home. And for good reason. It's not just the stifling body armor or the military meals or the long separation from their families—all good reasons to complain. It's not even the level of casualties, which mount day after day. In many wars, losing two or even 10 soldiers a day would be considered "acceptable"—certainly by the commanders, and even resignedly by the troops.

But this is not a war. The war was won after a stunning, high-tech blitzkrieg. This is an occupation, and as it grinds on the troops are realizing that the whole rationale for the war, with its horrendous destruction, was a lie. They patrol streets and know that the people hate them. The reason is obvious. They are occupiers. They are doing the work of billionaires who want to exploit the hell out of Iraq but need these soldiers to make it safe for their plunder.

The troops didn't know this before. They were told they were going to liberate an oppressed people. Now the people are telling them in no uncertain terms that we don't need this kind of "liberation," thank you, and you should leave.

Ambushes, angry protests and the tears of desperate families get the point across, even to GIs who don't speak the language. Politicians back in the United States are scrambling to come up with formulas that would rescue what they consider the basic aims of the war and occupation, which boil down to robbing Iraq of its independence and keeping its oil riches under the control of U.S. and British imperialist interests. On the longer-term, broader world view of the White House neocons formulated by Cheney, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld and Rice—the prospect of an endless war to establish the U.S. as the world power par excellence, brooking no challenges from its imperialist allies, let alone from oppressed countries—the political establishment, both Republicans and Democrats, may sympathize, but are beginning to think that maybe Iraq isn't the right place to make that point.

So Colin Powell now has the unenviable job of courting the very countries the administration was so happy to disrespect when the Pentagon generals and their civilian overseers were still so puffed up with the power of their technology. The administration now wants to get the United Nations to bless the occupation of Iraq and get other countries to pay for a good deal of it. But France, Germany and other imperialists know when their allies/rivals are in a weak position and are driving a hard bargain.

The politicians woke up to the growing popular resentment at home over the cost of this huge military venture when Bush asked Congress for another \$87 billion on top of the vast fortune already spent. With budgets being slashed and times getting tougher for millions in this country, it's not easy even for the flag-waving crowd in Washington to rationalize away a price tag that big.

All this makes for plenty of demagoguery from the lengthening line of potential candidates for the presidency. So many Johnny-come-latelys are talking like doves. It should be remembered that a little less than a year ago, Congress gave Bush the go-ahead for the war. Leading Democratic liberals like senators Hillary

Clinton, Thomas Dodd, Tom Daschle, John Kerry and Dianne Feinstein joined Republicans in the pro-war vote.

The politicians had spoken. Next it was the people's turn. Two weeks later, on Oct. 26, the Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) coalition organized the largest anti-war rallies in over a decade in Washington and San Francisco.

It's the people's time again. No one else will stop this occupation. On Oct. 25—almost exactly one year after the first big protest—ANSWER and other groups will be in Washington again to demand that the troops be brought home—immediately, no ifs, ands or buts.

And earlier, on Sept. 25-28, many groups will be protesting the occupation of both Iraq and Palestine.

United front for Oct. 25

Last winter, the anti-war movement grew around the globe as people on every continent—even Antarctica!—rejected the lies of the U.S. and British governments.

Demonstrations inside the U.S. began to be coordinated with those of anti-war groups in scores of other countries. New local groups and national coalitions sprang up here. The protests in January and February, just before the assault on Iraq began, brought out millions of people around the world.

Now the unity of action required to build the strongest resistance possible to the criminal occupation of Iraq has taken another step forward. United for Peace & Justice has agreed to co-sponsor the Oct. 25 demonstration with ANSWER. Both coalitions have issued a joint unity statement around the slogans "End the Occupation of Iraq, Bring the Troops Home Now" that also addresses the economic attacks on the workers at home and the repressive atmosphere caused by the war policies of the administration, including the Patriot Act.

This is a welcome development. It is one that the ranks of the burgeoning anti-war movement heartily endorse, and shows once again that they have rejected the fierce red-baiting of ANSWER that began last year and was intended to isolate the anti-imperialists from other anti-war forces. It will stimulate constructive political debate among diverse points of view in the progressive population while at the same time uniting in action all who agree on the basic demands.

On Oct. 25, a mighty cry will go up all over the world to bring the troops home. In Baghdad and Tikrit and Basra, the Iraqi people and the reluctant U.S. and British troops will hear it and be glad. □

UNITY STATEMENT

OCT. 25 March for an end to the occupation of Iraq!

From ANSWER

— Act Now to Stop War & End Racism— and
United for Peace and Justice

The groups Act Now to Stop War & End Racism—ANSWER—and United for Peace and Justice—UFPJ—are joining forces to call on all those who oppose the war, invasion and occupation of Iraq, to unite on Saturday, Oct. 25 in Washington, D.C., for a truly massive outpouring reflecting the growing popular opposition to the Bush administration's foreign and domestic program.

It was the peace and anti-war movement in the 1960s and 1970s that proved to be one of the decisive factors ending the U.S. war in Vietnam. The Oct. 25 demonstration will be a powerful repudiation by the people of the United States of Bush's criminal war and occupation of Iraq and will be a signal of the new anti-war movement's potent political force countering the Bush administration.

UFPJ and ANSWER have both organized anti-war demonstrations numbering in the hundreds of thousands in the last year and have now agreed to join forces for the purpose of organizing the Oct. 25 National March

on Washington, D.C., under the banner: End the occupation of Iraq, bring the troops home now!

The protest will also condemn the vast cuts in vital domestic social and economic programs and demand: Money for jobs, education and health care, not war and occupation.

As the Oct. 25-26 weekend is also the second anniversary of the passage of the so-called Patriot Act authorizing political arrests, indefinite detentions, domestic spying, and religious and racial profiling, the demonstration will also be a call to fight back against the Patriot Act.

By working together we are optimistic that this mobilization will be an expression of the widespread opposition to the ongoing occupation of Iraq. We urge you to do everything possible to help bring massive numbers of people to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 25!

Statement issued by ANSWER and UFPJ, Sept. 5.

For more information:
www.internationalanswer.org
www.unitedforpeace.org

BRING the TROOPS HOME NOW

SATURDAY
OCT 25
MASS MARCH ON
WASHINGTON



"Are more people going to be killed?
You bet."
— DONALD RUMSFELD
July 14, 2003

The U.S. is spending \$4 billion a month to occupy Iraq—more than \$130 million a day, that's \$5 million every hour. Remember these numbers when they say there is no money for education and healthcare or libraries, firehouses, childcare or other vital social services

Money for jobs, education & health care—NOT WAR!
Defend civil rights & civil liberties
Fightback against the Patriot Act

END THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ

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Mass action set for Sept. 27

Blair's Iraq lies spark protests

By John Catalinotto

All summer in Britain, political debate and news coverage have been full of challenges to Prime Minister Tony Blair's official brew of lies and exaggerations to justify the U.S.-British assault on Iraq, a sovereign country. This has helped spark support for the British anti-war movement's plans for a major demonstration on Sept. 27.

The struggle sharpened after the mid-July death, allegedly a suicide, of intelligence scientist Dr. David Kelly. The BBC had named Kelly as the official who said the Blair government had "sexed up" an intelligence report when it declared in February that Iraq could launch biological weapons against Britain in 45 minutes.

On Sept. 14, the Observer again reported that "dramatic new evidence from the intelligence services casts fresh doubts over Tony Blair's central claim that Iraq continued to produce chemical and biological weapons until the outbreak of war."

The Sept. 27 anti-war call was issued by the Stop the War Coalition, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Muslim Association of Britain. The leaflet calls for "No more war, no more lies, end the occupation of Iraq" and "Freedom for

Palestine."

On Sept. 12 Workers World spoke about these developments with Lindsey German, a key organizer of the Stop the War Coalition.

German confirmed that the controversy is definitely still big news. "In fact," she added, "Blair was given intelligence that terrorism would get worse if Britain goes to war. The whole basis of going to war was a lie."

Asked if the Blair government might fall, Lindsey said: "Blair's Communication Director Alistair Campbell already was forced to resign. People are saying that Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon will go. Headlines in the Daily Mirror say that Hoon must go. But he is still hanging on."

"The big question is Blair," said German. "The Enquirer reports he may step down in a month. Our demonstration on Sept. 27, right before the Labor Party convention, could make a difference. One important development is that the union leaders are turning against Blair."

The anti-war leader continued: "Last year a vote to stop the war in the large Trade Unions Congress lost, getting 40 percent of the vote. This year even the more right-leaning unions voted for a resolution condemning occupation and the government."

CHILE

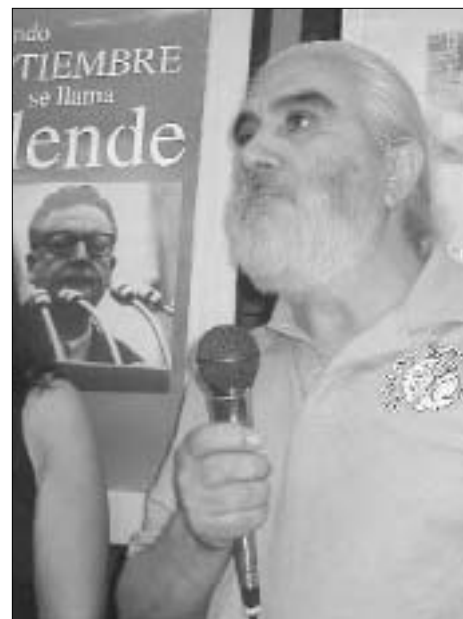
30 years after the coup

People filled the meeting room and spilled out into the hallway of the International Action Center office in New York on Sept. 13. The event was held to commemorate and discuss the lessons of the government of Salvador Allende in Chile and the bloody military coup of Sept. 11, 1973, led by Gen. Augusto Pinochet, and backed and planned by the U.S. government.

A substantial number of those in the audience were political activists originally from South America or the Caribbean. Most presentations were in Spanish and then translated into English.

The discussion condemned the role of U.S. imperialism in Chile and all of Latin America, and expressed solidarity with the Allende government and the tens of thousands of Chilean victims. Speakers also stressed the need for any government attempting to move toward socialism to have its own armed force, loyal to the new system, and not to rely on the old pro-capitalist military and police to remain neutral.

IAC founder Ramsey Clark told of his visit to Chile a few weeks after the coup. He described the plight of asylum seekers piled into embassies at that time.



Victor Toro

Other speakers included Victor Toro, a representative of Chile's Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR); Willam Camarero, speaking for those Venezuelans in the U.S. who support President Hugo Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution there; Nieves Ayres—who chaired—and Teresa Gutierrez of the IAC. Maria Elena of Chile led the audience in revolutionary songs, and others from Latin America read poems of struggle.

Gutierrez invited everyone to support upcoming events in New York and Washington, including the New York Sept. 26 meeting for President Chavez in Riverside Church, a meeting Sept. 27 for Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque in New York and two anti-occupation demonstrations in New York on Sept. 28 and in Washington Oct. 25. (For more information about these events, go to www.InternationalANSWER.org.)

Gutierrez's article about the coup in Chile appeared in English in the Sept. 11 issue of Workers World and in Spanish in the Sept. 18 issue of Mundo Obrero. (www.workers.org)

—Story & photo by John Catalinotto



Teresa Gutierrez

Tony Woodley, of the Transport and General Workers' Union and a leader of the TUC, said at the TUC's annual congress, "It's outrageous that a Labor government should not stand up and say: 'I was wrong and what I did was illegal, it was unjustified and I apologize and I resign.'"

German said: "Now everyone knows that Bush wants \$87 billion from the U.S. Congress to finance the occupation. It's in all the newspapers here. The papers vary in how they treat the news. Some remain pro-war but they have no effective argument."

Now they also report that \$4 billion is needed from Britain. This is all helping

to build support for the demonstration, German said.

Over 1 million people marched in demonstrations held in the buildup to the war last winter. German discussed some obstacles to such a huge turnout this time: "Our biggest obstacle has been the feeling of many who demonstrated for their first time last year that if all that protest was unable to stop the war, then 'what's the point?'"

"But there are still two weeks to reach the colleges and the streets and show people we can still make a difference. In any case, there will still be a demonstration of at least 100,000." □

COLOMBIA

Joint communiqué of the FARC-EP & ELN

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) and the National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN) inform the Colombian and Latin American people that:

We, the leadership of both organizations, met recently in the mountains of Colombia in an atmosphere of camaraderie, fraternity and mutual respect, fully agreeing in:

1. Characterizing the current regime of Uribe Velez as the enemy of peace, a warmonger by conviction, the generator of misery for the broad majority of the people, and a comprador carrying out imperialist policy for our peoples and nations.

2. Because of this character, we confirm that while the illegitimate government of Alvaro Uribe Velez persists with its fascist and militarist policies, we will not proceed with any process of political rapprochement and national dialogue.

3. Nevertheless, we reiterate our commitment to peace and the pursuit of political solutions to the social and armed conflict that is bleeding our Colombia, and for this aim we will persist in:

- Pushing forward all the political processes that favour peace with social justice and the pursuit of political alternatives in opposition to Plan Colombia and the FTAA.

- Confirming the policy of an exchange of the prisoners of war and political detainees being held by the sides.

- Supporting the struggles of the Colombian people against the disastrous privatizations, the repression of all just social protest, the cutting of pension rights, the fiscal adjustment program, and in defense of the public wealth and national sovereignty.

4. We call upon the Colombian people and international public opinion to mobilize and denounce the anti-democratic policies of the current government that aims to cut the few civil, citizen, democratic and political freedoms, through application of the anti-terrorist statute, the policy of "Democratic Security," and the embroiling of the civilian population in the war.

5. We reject the Referendum, called by the regime for the coming days in order to use it to strengthen state terrorism, militarist authoritarianism and the surrender of our national sovereignty. In the face of the present social and political crisis we Colombians are suffering, we reaffirm that all the democratic, patriotic, revolutionary and guerrilla forces are compelled to work for the formation and construction of a new democratic and patriotic government to once and for all face the process of national reconstruction and unity within a framework of defense of our sovereignty and of the dignity of the majority of the people. Committed as we are to make of Colombia a nation that is just for all; we of the FARC-EP and the ELN will persist with renewed strength and revolutionary enthusiasm on the roads blazed during our 39 years of existence, holding high the banners of unity, patriotism and anti-imperialism.

Against imperialism, for the nation, against the oligarchy, for the people until final victory.

Colombia for the workers,
Not one step back. Liberation or death.
For the FARC-EP
The Secretariat of the General Staff
For the ELN
Central Command
Mountains of Colombia,
July 13, 2003 □

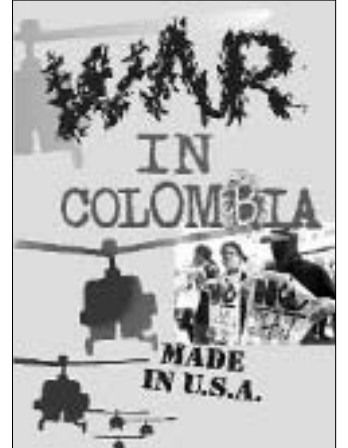
WAR IN COLOMBIA MADE IN U.S.A.

A new book from the International Action Center covers the struggle in Colombia from the perspective of trade unionists, human rights activists, and the FARC and ELN insurgencies.

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El discurso de bush activa falso debate: **Los críticos del establecimiento buscan sostener la ocupación**

Por Fred Goldstein

El Presidente George W. Bush anunció el 7 de septiembre que su gobierno sometería una resolución al Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU que pide autorización de una fuerza multinacional en Irak bajo el control estadounidense. Era una confesión ignominiosa de la incapacidad del imperialismo EE.UU. para aplastar la resistencia del pueblo iraquí a la toma colonial. Esto debe dar un nuevo ímpetu al movimiento anti-guerra.

En su discurso, Bush presentó suavemente este cambio total como casi una materia rutinaria en que “nuestros comandantes han pedido una tercera división multinacional,” además de las británicas y polacas, “para compartir la carga más ampliamente.” Y así como descuidadamente, dejó caer la bomba de los \$87-mil millones. Eso es cuánto él pedirá al Congreso extra para la guerra en el próximo año fiscal, sobre los \$79 mil-millones ya pedidos.

La verdad detrás de ese cambio total se describió en detalle por la edición del 4 de septiembre del Washington Post el cual citó a un diplomático anónimo de la ONU involucrado en las negociaciones: “Los EE.UU. se habían pasado golpeando en cuanta puerta posible buscando dinero y tropas, y encontraron la misma respuesta por todas partes: Nosotros necesitamos alguna nueva resolución.” El diplomático, refiriéndose a los retrocesos militares combinados a las negativas de ayuda, dijo: “Todas estas cuerdas se juntaron y alcanzaron una masa crítica.... La autoridad de la coalición está rota. Ellos necesitan cuerpos.”

Temiendo el enojo de soldados, Rumsfeld cancela discurso

La tremenda dificultad de Washington fue subrayada cuando el Secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld, en su última visita a Irak, tuvo que cancelar un discurso que iba a dar a los soldados de EE.UU. en su base en un palacio de Tikrit. Ya se había erigido el escenario y colocadas las sillas pero la atmósfera no era buena.

“Me importa un pito Rumsfeld. Lo único que me importa es irme a casa”, dijo el Esp. Rue Gretton. El sargento Green cuyo primer nombre se omitió por el miedo a represalia, dijo: “Si yo consiguiera hablar con Rumsfeld le diría que nos diera una “fecha de retorno.

(Reuters, 5 de sept.) Según el Pentágono, Rumsfeld canceló por tener “un horario” lleno.

El mismo día en que Rumsfeld estaba en Tikrit, el Pentágono dio la orden para extender la estancia en Irak y Kuwait de seis meses a un año para 20,000 tropas de la Guardia Nacional y Reservistas del Ejército. El anuncio se pospuso hasta que Rumsfeld saliera del país.

Dos debates falsos

El discurso de Bush con su demanda de más fondos ha generado un torrente de comentarios y debates en los medios de comunicación comerciales y en el establecimiento político. Todo ello diverge del punto de vista de los intereses del pueblo iraquí, así como de la clase obrera y de la inmensa mayoría en este país. Está todo basado en la posición común que, sea o no la situación en Irak la culpa de Bush y Rumsfeld, el imperialismo EEUU no puede permitirse el lujo de “perder.”

La clase gobernante se ha herido de verdad por la resistencia determinada en Irak y el fracaso de la administración Bush y el Pentágono de anticiparse o terminarla. Esa política actual está recibiendo golpes por todos lados, izquierda y derecha.

Pero incluso con toda la crítica, ninguno de los mayores políticos gobernantes de la clase regente, redes mediáticas o periódicos capitalistas han llamado a que el Congreso vote “no” a la demanda de los fondos o está instando a que los EE.UU. salga de Irak.

El debate se reduce a dos demandas: primero, que antes de que los políticos voten por los fondos, la administración debe demostrar que va buscar genuinamente una coalición con sus rivales y hacer bastantes concesiones para ganar su apoyo para la ocupación; segundo, que Bush abandone su tarea de hacer permanentes los recortes temporales de impuesto para los ricos—un obsequio de \$1.1 billón—para que la deuda nacional no aumente demasiado y la carga entera de los \$87-mil millones adicionales, más lo venidero, no caiga completamente en las espaldas de los obreros y de la clase media.

Pero éste es estrictamente un debate de la clase gobernante. Los obreros deben tener su propia posición independiente y no deben caer en tener que tomar partido con una u otra agrupación

en la clase capitalista.

Por ejemplo, el New York Times, que está fuertemente opuesto a la política “unilateralista” declaró en comentario editorial el 8 de septiembre sobre el discurso de Bush que “hay todavía buenas razones para mantener el compromiso de América en Irak”. Pero los EE.UU. “tienen que negociar realísticamente con Francia, Alemania y Rusia sobre la extensión de las fuerzas para el mantenimiento de la paz y obtener ayuda económica con los enormes gastos de reconstrucción”. El New York Times también pidió a Bush abandonar los recortes presupuestarios futuros. Este sentimiento, con algunas variaciones, fue repetido a través del espectro de los medios de comunicación mayores y entre los líderes de los partidos Demócrata y Republicano.

No a la internacionalización del colonialismo

El argumento de que Washington ahora tiene que forjar una coalición para evitar que falle es básicamente un argumento para fortalecer la ocupación colonial de Irak por medio de su “internacionalización”. El Times y otros están diciendo que el imperialismo de los EE.UU. tiene que hacer concesiones a sus rivales para fortalecer la posición militar del imperialismo en general en Irak y para salvaguardar el sistema financiero en los EE.UU. del colapso por el peso de una costosa ocupación militar.

El sobornar las clases dominantes de Francia y Alemania con tratos de petróleo iraquí, contratos de construcción e influencia política para obtener sus votos a favor de una resolución en la ONU—así disminuyendo la presión contra el Pentágono y Wall Street—es nada más que un negocio crudo a costas del pueblo de Irak. Es en el interés de las masas de Irak que estos gángsteres se queden divididos y en conflicto entre ellos. Las demandas para que mejoren sus relaciones para así poder combatir mejor la resistencia iraquí son completamente reaccionarias.

De importancia particular en este contexto es la posición de Howard Dean, el supuesto candidato “contra la guerra” para la presidencia de los EE.UU., quien le dijo a Paula Zahn de la cadena noticiosa de televisión CNN el 8 de septiembre que reduciría de inmediato el número de tropas a la mitad y las reemplazaría con tropas de otros países. Ahí habló como un verdadero imperialista. Él asume que la ocupación de Irak tiene que ser exitosa y también asume que él pudiera mandar tropas de otros países para que ellas ayudaran a Washington con la tarea de imponer su dominación imperialista sobre Irak.

El argumento sobre la suspensión de los recortes de impuestos que benefician los ricos para pagar los gastos de la ocupación es otro argumento imperialista. Por supuesto que los recortes de impuestos para los ricos deben ser cancelados. No deben haber sido promulga-

dos en primer lugar. Estos recortes deben ser cancelados para poder utilizar los fondos para viviendas, cuidado de salud, educación, trabajos y todos los beneficios que están siendo cancelados—no para pagar una guerra de conquista.

Gastar los fondos públicos equitativamente para costear la guerra y las necesidades domésticas en el nombre de “justicia” es una trampa que empuja a la clase trabajadora tras una ocupación depredadora que está forzando a soldados de los EE.UU. a jugar el papel opresivo y asesino de ocupadores negando al pueblo iraquí el derecho a buscar su propio destino.

La demanda correcta es la de votar no a los gastos de guerra, no a la ocupación, y sí a la transferencia del presupuesto militar al presupuesto para necesidades sociales.

Recordando la “Doctrina de Bush”

El discurso de Bush fue un intento de pintar la guerra en Irak y la ocupación como parte de la “guerra contra el terrorismo” y para “defender a la civilización”. Pero la invasión de Irak fue planeada mucho antes del 11 de septiembre de 2001.

Toda la destrucción masiva, la matanza y las heridas de decenas de miles de iraquíes, soldados y civiles, en una guerra completamente sin provocación y lanzada como una “guerra electiva”, fue un asunto basado en el robo de las segundas reservas petroleras en el mundo para el beneficio y las ganancias de las empresas petroleras. Fue un asunto basado en establecer un asentamiento brutal sobre este recurso estratégico, que contiene la clave de la dominación económica sobre Europa, Japón y el mundo industrializado entero.

También fue una guerra por bases militares y la primera etapa de un plan para recolonizar no solo a Irak sino también a Irán, Siria, Libia y el Medio Oriente—y últimamente al mundo entero. Esta región de la tierra es el “motor de la economía mundial”. La guerra contra Irak iba a ser una manifestación de la estrategia poco mencionada últimamente: la llamada “Doctrina de Bush”. Esta afirma el derecho absoluto de Washington a iniciar guerras “preventivas” e implementar “cambios de régimen”—quiere decir el derecho de Washington a derrocar cualquier gobierno del mundo que intenta mantener su independencia y obstaculiza la dominación de los EE.UU. y su afán de imperio, ya sea Corea del Norte, Cuba, Zimbabwe o, últimamente China.

Esto es lo que significa la guerra contra Irak. Esto es lo que significa la ocupación. La única respuesta a Bush y a la clase dominante es una movilización masiva para acabar con la ocupación y regresar las tropas a casa. La protesta del 25 de octubre en Washington, D.C. será un gran paso adelante en este proceso. □

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