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# Bush, Kerry stab Palestinians in back

## Endorse Israeli land grab, assassinations

By Deirdre Griswold

The people of not only the Middle East but of the world were shocked when President George W. Bush on April 14 came out flatly in support of the latest expansionist moves by Israel against the Palestinians—and when the so-called “opposition” party inside the U.S., the Democrats, endorsed them too. This bipartisan move means just one thing: more blood and suffering in the region.

As though to prove this, on April 18 Israel launched a missile into the Palestinian area of Gaza that killed Abdel Aziz Rantissi, the top leader of the militant organization Hamas, and two of his aides. Rantissi had only recently replaced Sheik Ahmed Yassin, who himself was assassinated by Israel in a similar missile strike.

Gaza was engulfed in huge demonstrations vowing retaliation for the assassination. When Israel sent in tanks two days later, five more Palestinians were killed—three of them teenagers who had resisted this invasion with nothing but stones.

For many years, and especially since the beginning of the Intifada, or uprising, of the Palestinian people to regain their land and national rights, the U.S. has pretended to be an “honest broker” trying to effect a compromise between the two sides.

At the same time, however, it was arming Israel to the teeth and bolstering its economy with billions in aid. Israel has been a strategic ally of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East, a nuclear-armed military power which has many times attacked Arab countries that in any way challenged U.S.-British domination of the region and its rich oil resources.

The pretense of neutrality was abandoned when Bush, with Israel's hawkish prime minister Ariel Sharon at his side, endorsed Sharon's plan to permanently hold onto large Jewish settlements in the West Bank, thus violating all United Nations resolutions on this subject. At the same time, the U.S. president rejected the Palestinians' right of return to their homeland.

All this was, in words at least, a big departure from the past, when U.S. presidents talked of “road maps” and “peace plans” that would supposedly bring about a negotiated settlement. So how did the Democrats respond to this shift? On April 18, the day that Rantissi was assassinated, soon-to-be-candidate John Kerry totally endorsed Bush's move on NBC-TV's “Meet the Press.” And former president Bill Clinton, speaking at the Waldorf-Astoria on April 19, called Sharon's plan “a good thing.”

The Israeli state calls itself democratic, but bars Palestinian immigration while allowing Jews from anywhere in the world to come and live there. Palestinians who

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### FROM WORKERS WORLD PARTY TO APRIL 25 MARCHERS

## It takes women to change the world

**W**e of Workers World Party—a revolutionary fightback organization made up of many nationalities, sexes, genders and sexualities—extend our warmest greetings to the April 25 march to defend women's lives.

The centerfold of this issue of our newspaper is devoted to the struggle of women to defend their rights to determine their own destinies—which is not possible without full reproductive rights—and to widening this fight to unite against racism and bigotry, repression and war for empire. And in this issue, you'll get more of a feel about why our Party members, and millions of people around the globe, are fighting with every breath and sinew for socialism.

We live in a society where the billionaire capitalist class rules. A huge propaganda machine exists to divert activists in movements demanding

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## WOMEN fight for reproductive rights

■ an end to war

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## At Boston meeting

# Campaign for same-sex marriage rights draws broad support

By Workers World Boston bureau

Over 90 people attended a solidarity forum here April 16 called by the May 17 Solidarity Coalition for Equal Marriage Rights and Against All Forms of Discrimination, Bigotry and Racism.

The forum featured Boston City Councilors Chuck Turner and Felix Arroyo. Imani Henry of the International Action Center and Frank Neisser of Boston Stonewall Warriors co-chaired the event.

Henry opened the rally by announcing that over 400 organizations and individuals from cities around the country and abroad have already endorsed the coalition's call for solidarity actions at city halls on May 17, the day equal marriage rights take effect in Massachusetts.

Endorsers include Massachusetts State Sen. Dianne Wilkerson, who played a leading role in opposing the legislature's proposed constitutional amendment banning equal marriage rights, citing her experiences growing up in segregated Arkansas; openly gay State Sen. Jarrett Barrios; comedian Margaret Cho; Boston City Councilors Turner and Arroyo; and labor and community leaders.

City Councilor Turner decried those who invoke the "sanctity of marriage" to oppose equal marriage rights. He asked why these opponents make no effort to support day care, health insurance or other programs that would enable poor and working families to stay together. At-Large City Councilor Arroyo cited a 2003 resolution by the Boston City Council in favor of equal marriage rights that he sponsored, which passed with only two opposing votes.

Gary Daffin, co-chair of the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Task Force, spoke frankly of the difficulties he encountered discussing the issue as an African American gay man. He urged continued efforts to engage people throughout the community on the issue. He noted that May 17 is also the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Brown vs. Board of Education decision that declared school segregation unconstitutional.

Stacey Montgomery of Lesbian Avengers spoke of the need to broaden the issue of equal marriage rights. While poking fun at the dysfunctional character of heterosexual marriage, she pointed out how important it is not to let anyone deny people the right to marry or use the issue to push back all movements for equal rights.

David Ebony and Allen Barkley of Gay and Lesbian Labor Activists and Pride at Work spoke of the ongoing

struggle for lesbian, gay, bi and trans workers' rights and benefits.

Stephanie Simard spoke for the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition. Simard underlined the need for the equal marriage rights movement to stand with the transgender community. One key issue is the right to universal health care, regardless of marital status—health care that is safe and sensitive to the needs of the trans community. Another is the enforcement of Boston's ordinance against discrimination on the basis of gender expression.

Yves Alcindor of FANMI-Lavalas spoke of the need for solidarity with the struggle in Haiti against the U.S. coup regime and atrocities being carried out against the people there. Alcindor called for the restoration of elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and expressed his solidarity with the struggle for equal marriage rights.

Transgender author Leslie Feinberg related how in 1974 lesbians took the lead in fighting back against racist attacks in Boston during the school busing crisis. She received an ovation for declaring that as a revolutionary, the day after equal marriage rights are won she will still be out there fighting for health care, housing and against racism until every battle's won.

Gerry Scoppettuolo of Gay Men Fight AIDS of Portsmouth, N.H., and coordinator of HIV counseling of Cambridge Health Alliance, referred to his experiences as a student teacher in South Boston during desegregation. He called on everyone to unite against all forms of racism and bigotry.

Steven Gillis, president of Boston School Bus Drivers and Monitors, Steel Workers Local 8751, expressed labor's solidarity with the equal marriage rights struggle. Gillis said this is part of the struggle for union rights and benefits against a two-tiered wage and benefits system.

Dorothea Peacock of the Women's Fightback Network expressed her solidarity as someone who grew up in the South under Jim Crow.

Plans are under way for May 17 rallies in several cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco and Portland, Ore., as well as Boston. For an updated list of cities, visit [www.equalmarriagesolidarity.org](http://www.equalmarriagesolidarity.org).

The May 17 Boston demonstration will start with a rally at City Hall, then people will march to the State Capitol. The demonstration will oppose attacks on school desegregation being pushed by City Council leaders who also attack equal marriage rights. □

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Action in support of same-sex marriage. Meet 5 p.m. at Powell & Market, followed by march to City Hall and a rally. For info (415) 821-6545.

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# Detroit's children pay price for U.S. war drive

By Cheryl LaBash  
Detroit

Damaged by decades of racist disinvestment, Detroit now has the highest mortality rate of youths and children under the age of 18 in the United States. Even in the face of this shocking crisis, the city administration and school board propose to balance budget shortfalls with program cuts, contracting out city jobs and layoffs. As city workers organize to fight back, a key to funding human needs is cutting the U.S. federal budget for war.

In his April 12 budget address, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick explained: "Our nation is at war. The economy is sluggish. State funding cuts are deep. The cost of health care and pensions is staggering. These facts are universal. Every city is feeling the pain."

In March, the Detroit public schools announced layoffs of 3,200 workers, including 900 teachers. These proposals amount to a conveyor belt dumping the pain and cost of the war budget on the African American working-class majority, particularly the youth, in this city.

Only four days before the mayor's speech, a local newspaper published its analysis of federal health records for the years 1999 to 2001. This revealed that Detroit's youth are "less likely to survive childhood than youngsters in any of the nation's other major cities."

The death rate of 116.4 per 100,000 children is nearly twice the national rate of 69.2.

Out of 1,032 youth deaths, 320 were newborns. Thirty-three died in house fires, usually the result of utility shut-offs.

Where is the program to enforce the City Charter?

The City Charter mandates: "The city

shall provide for health and safety of persons. The people have a right to expect aggressive action by the city's officers in seeking to advance, conserve, maintain and protect the integrity of the human, physical and natural resources of this city from encroachment and dismantlement. The people have a right to expect city government to provide excellence in education."

UAW Local 2334 President Dave Sole put forth an aggressive action proposal at an April 12 protest against the cutbacks. He called on the city administration to fill every city bus with Detroit residents and city workers and take them to Washington to say no to the war budget.

An immediate action is possible, too. The city can take an emergency no-interest loan from the federal and state governments—by not forwarding the income tax withheld from the \$828 million city payroll. At a 25-percent withholding rate that is \$207 million, or 62 percent of the deficit. An equivalent amount could be withheld by the Detroit public schools, the biggest employer in the city.

Detroit's share of the Pentagon's war chest can erase the city and school deficits and expand services to address the emergency health and safety crisis killing the young.

The declared budget shortfall for Detroit is \$333 million; adding the \$178 million for the School Board the total is only \$511 million. According to Lansing-based Employment Research Associates, Detroit's prorated share of the \$200 billion Iraq occupation based on population is \$429 million. Add the entire Pentagon budget to the cost of war in Iraq and Afghanistan and Detroit's prorated cost rises to an astounding \$1.18 billion. This amounts to one-third of Detroit's total current annual city budget. □

# Int'l grad students protest racist 'fee'

By Bryan G. Pfeifer  
Amherst, Mass.

"No doubt in our minds this fee is totally discriminatory. We want diversity on this campus, not deportation."

Mini Kurian's words received a roar of approval from the over 300 people protesting the racist international student "fee" at the University of Massachusetts' Whitmore Administration Building April 15.

Kurian, an international student from India and organizer of the Graduate Employee Organization, the protest's sponsor, kicked off the rally amidst a backdrop of tents. Graduate students had just completed a 48-hour hunger strike during rainy and windy weather, drawing attention to and opposing the \$65 "fee" that only international graduate students must pay.

The \$65 fee was charged as a means to fund a federally mandated computer tracking system established as part of the Patriot Act. The system is known as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System or SEVIS. Through an electronic database that colleges and universities are required to update, SEVIS monitors the actions of foreign students in the United States.

Earlier, after massive campus protests, the University of Wisconsin-Madison repealed its decision to charge an international student fee. That administration found the money to fund SEVIS out of its general fund.

In what has become an international struggle here, over 200 graduate students have refused to pay the "fee." University officials threatened them with administrative withdrawal if they don't pay by the April 20 deadline.

There are 1,600 international students here, out of a graduate student body of some 6,000.

Protesters held placards reading, "Alumni say no money for a xenophobic UMass," "UMass works because we do," "I was told we're equal here, now I get deported 'cause I want equality," "Diversity not deportation," and "Geez, I am hungry but I'm not going to pay that stupid fee."

After the rally the crowd, chanting, "We won't pay," and, "Hey hey ho ho, this racist fee has got to go," marched into Whitmore, eventually packing into Chancellor John Lombardi's office. Throughout the march the hallways were packed shoulder-to-shoulder.

To support the besieged but courageous international students, readers can call and email Chancellor Lombardi at (413) 545-2211 and lombardi@umass.edu to demand a repeal of the "fee." Also, a petition to Repeal the UMass Surveillance Fee can be signed at: [www.geouaw.org](http://www.geouaw.org).

For more information on the SEVIS fee and the Patriot Act, see: [www.bordc.org](http://www.bordc.org), [www.ccr-ny.org](http://www.ccr-ny.org), [www.justiceonline.org](http://www.justiceonline.org), [www.nlg.org](http://www.nlg.org) and [www.visareform.net](http://www.visareform.net). □



April 12 protest in Detroit.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

# Students tell Schwarzenegger: 'Meet demands or we'll be back'

By Tahnee Stair  
Sacramento, Calif.

On April 16, some 50 students, parents and teachers from San Pablo, Calif., in the West Contra Costa Unified School District completed a 70-mile, eight-day march from the Bay area to the State Capitol in Sacramento. The youngest participants were 10 years old.

Marchers had three demands: equalize school funding across the state, the state must fully fund Proposition 98, and cancel West Contra Costa School District's debt, which it spends \$1.8 million repaying each year.

Proposition 98, passed by voters, prohibits cutting K-14 educational funding; if cuts take place under special circumstances, this restores the cuts the following year. The West Contra Costa School district is \$16.8 million in debt, and has voted to entirely cut school libraries, athletic programs, counselors, and elementary music programs.

On the way to Sacramento, the marchers had gone by Vacaville State Prison and rallied nearby. Two hundred supporters rallied outside the Capitol when the grassroots-organized march reached Sacramento.

To show solidarity, the anti-war ANSWER Coalition participated in the

rally and mobilized support. Many rally participants enthusiastically waved signs that read, "Send kids to school, not war" and "Money for education, not occupation."

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger refused to meet with the young marchers, their voices now hoarse from chanting, bodies aching and feet blistered. He did manage to take time to step outside his office and shake hands with students whose schools could afford field trips to the Capitol in school buses while those who marched 70 miles were outside.

When a march organizer called for all those who could to go inside the Capitol, police shut the doors. In a brief but militant stand-off, students pounded on the doors chanting, "No education, no peace" and, "Let us in." After negotiations, demonstrators eventually formed a single-file line to enter the Capitol.

One hundred chanting protesters crowded the hallway outside Schwarzenegger's office. Neither Schwarzenegger nor any other elected official in the Capitol met with them.

Eventually one representative was let in to the governor's office to deliver the protesters' demands to the governor's director of constituent affairs. Students said that if their demands are not met, "We'll be back." □



Students pound on Capitol doors in Sacramento.

WW PHOTO: RON HOLLIDAY

# Supreme Court rejects Peltier appeal

By John Catalinotto

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review the 10th Circuit's denial of Leonard Peltier's request to be considered for parole. The court did so even though the 10th Circuit recognized that the government indisputably engaged in misconduct in the prosecution of the American Indian Movement leader. Peltier's attorney, Barry Bachrach, called the decision "another pitiful failure of our justice system to correct undisputed government wrongs."

On March 2, Peltier, who is both a political prisoner and a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, won the Peace & Freedom Party primary in California with nearly 58 percent of the vote. If the party's August convention follows through on this advisory vote, Peltier will be the PFP's presidential candidate in California.

Peltier has been in prison for over 28 years, since an incident on June 26, 1975, when two FBI agents were killed in a shootout at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, most likely in their own crossfire. Leonard Peltier and other members of the American Indian Movement

had been invited by residents to come to the reservation to provide security. FBI agents and SWAT teams encircled the reservation and reportedly unleashed a firefight that also claimed the life of a Native man, Joe Stuntz Killright.

Tens of millions of people, here and around the world, have signed petitions, marched, rallied and protested to demand Peltier's freedom. The courts and FBI officials now admit they have no idea who killed the agents. Yet Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier is still behind bars, convicted in their deaths, serving two consecutive life sentences.

Peltier has called for April 16-24 to be U.S. Political Prisoners Week and encourages people across the country to continue the struggle for human rights, including gathering in Philadelphia on April 24 to demand freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Peltier describes himself as a political prisoner who "was convicted without any credible evidence of guilt. I wasn't the first. I certainly am not the last. There will always be those in power who seek to squash dissent. Now, as before, exercise of our human rights can be a dangerous act. But remaining silent and doing nothing—

these are the most dangerous acts of all.

"I send greetings to the prisoners of conscience throughout this land and urge all Americans to seek the truth—in their own communities and across the country. Open your minds and hearts. Listen and learn. Act. Stand for freedom and justice for all peoples of the earth."

For more information, see [www.leonardpeltier.org](http://www.leonardpeltier.org). □



FREE LEONARD PELTIER!

## NYC protest hits Israeli assassination

By Dustin Langley  
New York



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

"Abdel Aziz Rantissi was a son of Palestine, a refugee, and a symbol of resistance against a racist apartheid regime," said Rama Kased of the New York City chapter of Al-Awda, the Palestine Right of Return Coalition.

On April 17, this symbol of resistance was gunned down along with two of his bodyguards. Rantissi, a pediatrician and the head of Hamas, was killed when Israeli helicopter gunships fired missiles at his car in Gaza City. The assassination came less than a month after Hamas founder and spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin died in an Israeli helicopter strike.

On April 18, some 200 Palestinians and supporters gathered across the street from the Israeli Mission to the United Nations in New York to denounce the killing of Rantissi.

Protesters, many carrying Palestinian flags, denounced the Israeli policy of assassinating Palestinian resistance leaders. They filled the sidewalk across the street from the mission, holding signs that read, "Bush and Sharon are war criminals," "Globalize the Intifada" and "Stop U.S. and Israeli war crimes."

A coalition of Palestinian, Muslim, Arab and solidarity groups, including Al-Awda, the Muslim American Federation, New Jersey Solidarity and the International Action Center, organized the demonstration after learning of Rantissi's murder.

Charlotte Kates of New Jersey Solidarity/Activists for the Liberation of Palestine said: "This demonstration was an important and necessary response to the Israeli policy of assassination that has been a part of the war continually being waged against the Palestinian people. This demonstration shows that the people of Palestine, with the full support of progressive forces around the world, will never be defeated by massacres and assassinations and will continue their struggle for freedom and for return."

A statement released by the organizers said: "This brutal murder is not just targeting Al-Rantissi or the Hamas movement, but is a systematic attack against the entire Palestinian national movement. It aims to deny them of their leaders ... and attempts to criminalize the legitimate right to resist colonial occupation."

The assassination came shortly after Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon met with U.S. President George W. Bush on April 14. Bush gave his full support to Sharon's brutal policies.

Over 200,000 people filled the streets of Gaza City for the funeral procession, chanting, "We will sacrifice our souls and blood for Rantissi." Protesters also took to the streets in Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon.

The military wing of Hamas has promised a "volcano of revenge" against the Israeli occupation. □

## Young people are host to Native history event

By S. Hedgecok  
New York

People's Video Network youths hosted a program called "Native History for Today's Youth" on April 17 in preparation for the Summer 2004 PVN Youth Camp trip to Oklahoma to visit the Seminole Nation.

The PVN youths are spending months studying Native history and culture to prepare for their summer trip. PVN Youth member Dalia, age 8, opened the program. Shani, age 14, and Kafele, age 12, introduced the speakers. And Aya, age 10, introduced a video the young people made of a previous trip to the Gullah Islands off Georgia.

On earlier trips or "camps" the young people have studied video editing in New York and gone to Cuba to see how children live there, even visiting with the families of the Cuban Five U.S. political prisoners.

This night the children learned from Usti Salegugi ("Little Snapping Turtle"), council member of the Cherokee Language and Cultural Circle, that April 17 is the anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Florida led by Andrew Jackson in 1818. That attack marked the beginning of three U.S. wars against the Seminole Nation. The Seminoles never surrendered to the United States in their guerrilla war to

maintain their lands and sovereignty.

"America the Beautiful' is a myth woven out of lies: bald-faced lies, half truths, lies of omission, and the lies of benign neglect," Little Snapping Turtle said. "The American Revolution was about stealing Indian land. The founding fathers planted the seeds of the Removal and they settled down to establish fortunes."

Little Snapping Turtle spoke about European and U.S. colonization of the Southeast Indigenous Nations, which led up to the genocidal Trail of Tears. "Disease, warfare and environmental devastation, millions of acres of land stolen and centuries of knowledge and culture disappeared," culminating with "eviction at bayonet point."

Mahtowin Munro, co-leader of United American Indians of New England, touched on the many historical examples of Black and Native unity from the first European settlement in South Carolina up to the Robeson County, N.C., struggle against the Ku Klux Klan.

Describing Native people's modern living conditions, she explained: "We are not living in teepees anymore. We live in apartments, in cities and rural areas. Over half of us are not living on reservations today.

"We are in our own country, but we are treated as strangers. The U.S. government actively hates us.

"In the books and media, we either do not exist, or else it is a racist stereotypical misrepresentation."

Munro discussed the U.S. military's racist naming of weaponry, such as "Apache" helicopters and "Tomahawk" missiles. She connected the struggle to free Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier with theft of uranium reserves on Indian lands, and said of the incident for which Peltier was extradited and convicted: "The FBI shoot-out at Pine Ridge was a diversionary tactic. One-eighth of the uranium-rich land at Pine Ridge was signed over that same day."

Discussion after the talks covered the potential for building unity between the Indigenous and Black communities, controversies of the tribal enrollment process, and the connection between the struggle against racist sports team mascots and the stereotypical depictions of Native people in the 2004 Grammy Awards performance by Outkast. Many in the audience clearly explained that within the context of racist society, it is necessary to constantly struggle against divisions actively fomented by capitalism.

Videotapes of the event held at the International Action Center will be made available. Order from PVN by telephone (212) 633-6646 or from [pvnnyc@peoplesvideo.org](mailto:pvnnyc@peoplesvideo.org). □



People's Video Network youths.



From left, Usti Salegugi and Mahtowin Munro.

WW PHOTOS: JOHN CATALINOTTO

BY MONICA MOOREHEAD

**MUMIA ABU-JAMAL** is probably the best-known death-row political prisoner worldwide. But many in the United States still don't know his name, much less why an innocent person is spending his 22nd year on Pennsylvania's Death Row.

Mumia Abu-Jamal was sentenced to die after being convicted of having killed a white police officer on Dec. 9, 1981. His original trial was saturated with blatant prosecutorial misconduct. This included a judge who was overheard using racist epithets against him.

Abu-Jamal's lawyers have filed legal appeals in the state and federal courts. The strength of a people's movement has stopped his legal lynching time and time again.

Abu-Jamal's so-called crimes consist of being a former Black Panther as well as an award-winning African-American journalist who has spoken out about racism, repression, war and the rotten capitalist system that thrives on these injustices and much more. As he himself has said, the ruling class wants his silence more than his death. This includes the big-business-dominated media.

Yet, despite having to endure a horrific existence in a tiny cell 22 hours a day, Abu-Jamal continues to resist. His illuminating writings have touched the lives of millions of poor, oppressed and working people worldwide. His continuing battle against this biased system for his freedom has inspired them.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has written hundreds of columns including those that focus on the struggles of women in the United States and around the world. The following are excerpts from three of his columns.

For more information on Abu-Jamal's case, go to [www.mumia.org](http://www.mumia.org) or [www.millions4mumia.org](http://www.millions4mumia.org). Write to him at Mumia Abu-Jamal #AM 8335, SCI-Greene Unit, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

## What half the world wants

On March 8, 2004, women around the world—in Los Angeles, England, Argentina, Uganda, Peru, Philadelphia, San Francisco, in Guyana, in southern India, in Trinidad and Tobago, in Spain—will be staging the Fifth Global Women's Strike, a movement involving women in some 60 countries, many involved in grassroots organizations, fighting for payment for housework; for clean, safe water resources; for housing, education, gender justice, and peace.

In a world where war is now our norm, the Global Women's Strike is part of the vast throng against war and occupation—not only in Iraq, but in Palestine, in Colombia, in the Congo, and in Kashmir.

Their organizing slogan ... is deceptively simple: "Invest in Caring Not Killing."

Although the movement had its beginning years ago in the "Pay for Housework" movement in England, it has grown considerably into a worldwide, anti-racist and anti-war movement.

The movement recognizes the basic inequality built into the capitalist economic system—the class, racial, and gender-based exploitation underlying it all.

Women's issues differ from nation to nation, and between classes in the same nation; yet there are also similarities in the fundamentals underlying those differences.

Marxist feminist Selma James, in her influential 1973 pamphlet "Sex, Race and Class" (London: Housewives in Dialogue, 1986 repr.), writes:

"Housewives are involved in the production and what is the same thing—reproduction of workers, what Marx calls 'labor power.' They service those who are daily destroyed by working for wages and who need to be daily renewed; and they care for and discipline those who are being prepared to work when they grow up." (pp.2-3)

At base, James argues, because women's work performs such a critical role in capital's production, it should receive a commensurate return.

In Kampala, Uganda, the Kaabong Women's Organization is concerned not with war in a distant land but war at home, in Uganda, for the past 17 years. Their demand is not just for peace, but for land; and for water; for there, as in much in the rest of the world, agriculture rests on the backs of billions of women....

"Invest in Caring, not Killing..." Hmmm ... What a concept!

Column written Feb. 26, 2004



Counterclockwise, the late Safiya Bukhari, Elaine Brown and Kathleen Cleaver



WW PHOTO: IMANI HENRY

## Mumia's new book—A TRIBUTE TO PANTHER WOMEN

**"WE WANT FREEDOM** looked at perhaps 30 years ago, the emergence and development of the Black Panther Party. Those are voyages into the past, into history ... I read most of the books about the Black Panther Party. Most of them had to do with the women in the party, and there were women that wrote about their own experiences in the party. There was no one who wrote about average, less well known, everyday women who were members of the Black Panther Party who were really the soul and the spirit ... the backbone of the party ... everybody knows about Huey and ... Eldridge ... and if you talk about women, everybody will tell you about Kathleen and Elaine Brown. Everyday women really held that organization together. ... people like Safiya Bukhari and ... of other women who virtually remain nameless ... that was the impetus to tell that story."

—Mumia Abu-Jamal excerpt from Democracy Now radio interview, April 16, 2004

# Mumia's support for women's liberation

Three columns from death row

## The 'other' Women's History Month

How many of us know of the food boycotts of the early 1900s, when poor and working women organized tens of thousands into mass demonstrations that rocked cities across the nation? In 1910-era New York, Jewish women "declared war on kosher butchers" because of high prices. In August 1914, over 1,000 Italian women in Providence, R.I., broke into wholesalers' storage and threw macaroni into the streets battling for lower pasta prices.

In 1929, the Women's Revolt took place in Nigeria, shaking the colony to its foundations. These brave, radical women were protesting an agricultural tax imposed by the British, through the chiefs. The women seized colonial offices (and held some for four days!), organized mass protests and mass community meetings. Before it was over, over 50 women were killed, and at least 50 wounded, by colonial military forces. However, the women forced the British to revoke the tax.

Nor are women limited to mass actions of resistance, as shown by the examples of some of the following: Sarah, Harriet Ross, Mangobe, Jo Ann Robinson, and uncounted others.

Sarah was a captive in 1822-era Kentucky. One Kentucky slaveowner described her as the "biggest devil that ever lived." The fierce six-foot-tall Black woman poisoned her owner's stud horse, set several stables afire, destroyed over \$1,500 worth of property, and \*escaped five times\*!

Mangobe was described by the late revolutionary historian C.L.R. James as the "most revolutionary woman in the Congo," for her role in leading the popular religious movement of the Prophet, Simon Kimbangu, which had a deep, anti-colonial character. The imprisonment of Kimbangu and Mangobe sent the Belgian colony into righteous and sustained revolt in 1921.

Harriet Ross thwarted the will of a slave trader who was seeking her son, by barring the door and telling the man, "the first man that comes into my house, I will split his head open." When her (so-called) owner's son tried to beat her, she grabbed a pole "and beat him nearly to death with it." Her daughter stood by, watching and learning this tradition of resistance.

Such a woman as this could truly be no man's slave, and shortly thereafter Harriet Ross demonstrated as much by mounting a cow and riding away from slavery and the plantation, in broad daylight. Oh. Her daughter? She learned her lesson well. You know of her by the name Harriet Tubman, a woman revered as "Moses."

The American Civil Rights Movement made the great orator, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a household name. Almost as well known is the sweet, quiet presence of Rosa Parks, the proud woman who refused to relinquish her seat to a white man on a bus.

But few recognize the name of Jo Ann Robinson. ... She was the Chair of the Women's Political Council, a professional women's group in Montgomery, Ala., the little known organizers of the historic bus boycott. Robinson wrote the leaflet that informed and energized thousands, and the WPC worked the phones getting the word out.

The names of women warriors of Black Liberation, of those who are still politically active, and of radicals of later generations are known to us, perhaps, as contemporary visions of resistance that continue to move us.

Column written March 6, 2001



A new book by Mumia, an historical account of the Black Panther Party, will be released on April 24, his 50th birthday. Book cover shows a teenaged Mumia in Philadelphia BPP office in the 1970s.

Retail price—\$18.00  
leftbooks.com price—\$13.95

Go to [www.leftbooks.com](http://www.leftbooks.com) to place your order.

# Women's liberation: What's Marxism got to do with it?

By Naomi Cohen

"The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife, and modern society [i.e., capitalism] is a mass composed of these individual families as its molecules. ... Within the family, he [the husband] is the bourgeois, and the wife represents the proletariat."

These words were not written by a modern-day feminist theoretician regarding the patriarchal structure of the family today. They were written by Frederick Engels in Victorian-era England in the classic Marxist work, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State."

In addition to condemning the oppressed status of women in all forms of class societies, Engels' work made a unique contribution to the analysis of the origins of women's oppression. By drawing on anthropological studies of ancient communal societies, Engels showed that

matrilineal, classless societies predated the rise of private property. In particular, he drew on the work of Lewis Morgan, author of "Ancient Society," who lived and worked among the Iroquois of the Northeastern United States. In these societies, women occupied positions of great respect and authority.

It was Engels' contention that the patriarchal family, and with it the enslavement of women and children, only came into being when private property developed and society itself was divided into classes—those who ruled versus those who were exploited and oppressed. This was a truly liberating and revolutionary idea. It contained within it the notion that the oppression of women is not an eternal category or a natural condition that condemns half the human race to be forever enslaved.

Since Engels' time, Marxist anthropologists like Eleanor Burke Leacock have added to the body of work showing that the oppression of women began with the

development of private property and therefore is not an innate condition of the human species. Thus, the abolition of private property can ultimately change all the oppressive and exploitative social relations that capitalist society has imposed on humanity, including women's oppression, racist ideology, and the oppression of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, among so many others.

In fact, the first socialist revolution—the Bolshevik revolution of 1917—began by quickly abolishing all the laws that discriminated against women under the Russian czars. In addition, abortion was legalized. Medical care was established as a basic human right with free access for all.

Lenin wrote on the question of the liberation of women after the revolution: "Not a single democratic party in the world, not even the most advanced bourgeois republic, had done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power."

"We actually razed to the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilized countries."

However, Lenin continues: "Notwithstanding all the liberating laws that have been passed, woman continues to be a domestic slave, because petty housework crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and to the nursery, and wastes her labor on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-wracking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real emancipation of women ... will begin only when a mass struggle is started against this petty domestic economy, or rather when it is transformed on a mass scale into large-scale socialist economy."

The Bolsheviks—among them many leading feminists of the time like Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai and Nadezhda Krupskaya—envisioned creating public child care, laundries and cafeterias, free universal education and health care to emancipate women from the burdens of domestic labor and give them the opportunity for equal education and employment.

Lack of material resources and the imperialist powers' unending war against the Soviet Union and all the socialist countries that came later were major factors in undermining these revolutions and cutting short their attempts to change social relations—and the condition of women. In fact, the socialist revolutions were first established in underdeveloped countries where the conditions for establishing socialism were particularly unfavorable. Added to this were the unending military and economic blockades that isolated the new Soviet Union and later Eastern Europe from technological advances that were necessary for laying the basis of socialist development.

Where once women in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries had the

## VOTE FOR LEILANI DOWELL



"We must not ignore the history of enforced sterilization campaigns in the 1930s, which resulted in the sterilization of an estimated 60,000 Native American, African American, mentally and physically disabled, and poor people. Furthermore, we cannot stay silent about its present manifestation, such as the organization CRACK—Children Requiring a Caring Community—which pays poor people with substance abuse problems to get sterilized or use long-term birth control. To get its initial clients, CRACK placed large billboard ads in Black and Latino communities in Los Angeles. The women's movement would suffer greatly if it ignored this issue, and ignored the connection between racism and reproductive politics."

Workers World Party member Leilani Dowell is running for Congress in California's 8th Congressional District on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket.

WW PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

## 'Only struggle will protect our rights'

By Kathy Durkin

From a talk delivered at an April 9 Workers World Party forum in New York City.

Our party has always supported and participated in the struggle for women's rights, including reproductive rights. We've been on the streets demonstrating. We've helped bring class-conscious, anti-racist politics into the women's movement. Over the years, we've demanded safe, legal, affordable abortions and an end to forced sterilization. And all because in order to have a real choice about raising children, women must have all the economic and social supports necessary.

Workers World Party members of all sexes, genders, nationalities and ages are participating in the April 25 march for women's reproductive rights. We will be there to express our rage at the Bush administration's war on women—part of

the class war against workers and oppressed peoples as a whole, from the racist anti-poor budget cuts to the war drive.

We want to show our support for the women's movement and do everything we can to keep growing and challenging the government.

Some groups have the illusion that if they jump on Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry's bandwagon and vote, reproductive rights will be protected. But how can they trust the Democrats when under the Clinton administration, for example, public assistance was wiped out for tens of thousands of women and children who needed it and abortion clinics and providers faced a siege of terror? And it is Congress that is passing anti-choice legislation, and some Democrats, as well as Republicans, are voting for the restrictions.

It is the struggle that will protect our rights. In the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision,

Continued on page 9

## Lessons from the early women's rights movement

### 'Ain't I a woman?'

—Sojourner Truth

Leslie Feinberg, a managing editor of Workers World newspaper and well-known leader in the lesbian/gay/bi/trans movement, has produced a series of feature articles on the 19th-century struggle for women's rights and its bonds with the movement to abolish chattel slavery. This critical and decades-long battle for women's rights—sometimes referred to as "first-wave feminism"—spanned half the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th. As a result, the movement fought two class enemies: the kings of cotton and the masters of money. The articles also reveal that the fight against white supremacy, gay-baiting, and transphobic and genderphobic attacks were as essential to the strength of the movement then as they are today.

Readers can find these articles using the search engine on the Workers World newspaper website: [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)



### A Workers World newspaper series

PART 1: March 11, 2004  
Anti-slavery movement & women's rights

PART 2: March 25, 2004  
Women's rights & Black liberation

PART 3: April 1, 2004  
Former slaves backed early movement

PART 4: APRIL  
The Civil War & Reconstruction

PART 5: April 15, 2004

Democrats, Republicans create breach

Parts 6 and 7 will appear in upcoming issues. □

# Women, imperialism & the fight for socialism

By Monica Moorehead

rights to employment, free medical care, and maternity leave, today they face massive unemployment, soaring infant mortality rates and loss of almost all their social welfare programs. The desperate condition of women in the former socialist countries is starkly exemplified by the growing slave trade in women from these regions.

Nevertheless, there are important lessons to be learned from what was accomplished in these countries and what is today being accomplished. In Cuba, for example, there is universal, free medical care and child care, and education and employment opportunities for women.

Before the revolution, most Cuban women who worked outside the home were either maids or prostitutes. In the countryside, women did backbreaking agricultural work with no access to education or medical care, no contraception or abortion.

One of the first projects of the revolution after 1959 was to send young people to the countryside to teach women and men to read and write. This huge literacy campaign raised the entire population's educational level and set the stage for women to go to college and participate in all areas of employment.

In 1960, the Federation of Cuban Women was formed to address women's needs and bring them into social and political life. Over 80 percent of Cuban women belong to this organization, which continues to be an advocate for affirmative action in all areas of Cuban life.

Today Cuban women, living in a poor, blockaded country, enjoy free medical care including contraception and abortion on demand, education through university level, access to universal child care, paid maternity leave and low-cost housing.

This is no accident. Cuba's socialist revolution set itself the task of liberating the population from the grip of capitalist exploitation and the imperialist plunder of its resources.

What's Marxism got to do with women's liberation? Everything. □

Capitalist expansion—imperialism—has meant the feminization of poverty.

More than 1 billion people live on a dollar a day or less. Some 880 million people have no access to any medical services.

Seventy percent of the world's impoverished people are women.

This mass poverty has led to an enormous accumulation of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. According to the United Nations, the world's 200 richest people more than doubled their wealth in 1998, to more than a trillion dollars.

The assets of the three top billionaires are more than the gross national product of the 48 least developed countries with a population of 600 million people.

The roots of this poverty are found in the long-term legacy of colonialism and currently "globalization" or neocolonialism.

After World War II, a new form of colonization evolved, organized by the banks through the instrument of the International Monetary Fund, which has forced over 100 countries to sign so-called structural adjustment agreements. These agreements force governments to sell off state resources to the corporate monopolies, cut back spending for social welfare, devalue their currency and open up trade to imperialist penetration with the aid of crushing subsidies. All this leads to the destruction of local and national economies.

The greatest concentration of dire poverty and underdevelopment is on the African continent. African women bear the greatest brunt of this poverty. One-third of all families worldwide are headed by women. The highest proportion of female-led households is in Africa.

According to the United Nations, in the developing countries on the whole, women produce half the food—in Africa as much as three-fourths.

A 2000 World Bank statement reads in part: "While more African girls are attending school, only 74 percent of African girls are enrolled in primary school, compared

with 86 percent of boys. While 65 percent of African men can read and write, fully half of African women cannot. The high fertility in Africa, 5.5 children per woman, also translates into higher morbidity and mortality rates for African women, compared to the rest of the world. For each 1,000 children born in Africa, 91 will die as infants, while the figure is 37 per 1,000 in East Asia, 32 in Latin America, and 23 in Eastern Europe."

Over 34.3 million people are infected with the HIV/AIDS virus in sub-Saharan Africa alone. Some 71 percent of the world's HIV-infected population lives in South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia, Malawi and Kenya. Over 60 percent of them are women. The UN estimates that 50 percent of all girls in Kenya now 15 years old will be infected in their lifetimes.

The U.S. pharmaceutical industry holds accessible HIV/AIDS treatments hostage to the grab for profits. AIDS has been the number-one killer on the African continent, especially of women.

## Socialism and women's liberation

Where socialism once guaranteed jobs, paid maternity leave, childcare, health care, vacations, pensions, nutrition and basic political rights of the working class, now mass unemployment, homelessness, prostitution, and all the ills of capitalism have quickly developed in the former socialist countries after the counter-revolution.

In Eastern Europe, there is a widening slave trade of women and girls. It is estimated that more than 500,000 Eastern European women and girls are brought to Western Europe for sexual exploitation every year—a business estimated at \$7 billion annually.

Between 1980 and 1994 in the developing countries, the industrial working class grew from 285 million to 400 million people. Almost half of these new workers were women. Imperialism has extended its upswing in production by re-conquering one-sixth of the earth's surface and adding

300 million people to its sphere of exploitation. For example, it is targeting the 600 million people on the African continent as new "consumers" to buy the imperialists' products.

The United States gained a free hand to greatly intensify its thievery in the oppressed world, which had been partially protected by the existence of the USSR.

The historic significance of the 20th century will be that the Russian Revolution took place. A tiny, downtrodden working class in a peasant country, with 85 percent illiteracy, was able to seize the power from its capitalist class, hold it and build up a country that defeated the Nazis, launched the space age and made great strides in solving the problem of national antagonisms.

It was a spontaneous strike of women garment workers in Russia that sparked the Russian Revolution.

Despite the Russian Revolution's great flaws that helped imperialism overthrow it, its significance lies in its accomplishments. The revolution showed that a new, superior form of planned human society free of bosses and exploiters could exist and develop under the most unfavorable conditions imaginable. Women made the greatest strides under socialism; for example, they outnumbered men in becoming doctors and educators.

Millions around the world are still fighting for a socialist future.

These revolutionaries, especially those in the imperialist countries, must continue to extend a hand of solidarity to the women and men from Iraq to Palestine to Haiti to the Philippines to Africa—especially those on the front lines of resistance in the so-called war on terrorism initiated by the Pentagon and the White House.

This solidarity includes supporting the right to reparations to compensate for centuries of slavery and colonial oppression.

In 2001 the heroic Nigerian women inspired women everywhere when they demanded reparations in the form of jobs, health care and economic development when they took over several Chevron-Texaco installations in Nigeria. □

## Time for a new wave

# STOP the war on women

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Washington is waging a war on women at home while hypocritically claiming to be "liberating" women in Afghanistan and Iraq.

This domestic war is not new. During every administration—from Reagan to Bush, to Clinton to Bush—right-wing fanatics have bombed women's clinics and killed abortion-provider doctors while those in office looked the other way. Impoverished women lost access to abortion decades ago, with the 1977 passage of the Hyde Amendment under Democratic President Jimmy Carter.

With the declaration of President George W. Bush's "endless war," billions of dollars have been funneled into so-called Homeland Security and the cost of militarily taking over Afghanistan and Iraq. At the same time, here in the United States basic human services, health care, education and housing are cut to the bone.

Services for women, including funding for emergency shelters, domestic violence centers and rape crisis hot lines, are hit hard.

In response, the International Action Center is rallying to unite the fight back against the two-pronged war—domestic economic oppression and imperialist war—as part of the ANSWER Coalition (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) contingent at the April 25 "March for Women's Lives" in Washington, D.C.

## Selling Afghan women's lives

The United States justified its invasion of Afghanistan with a barrage of publicity that claimed the "collateral benefit" of a regime change would give women new rights. The actual goal? To support the interests of energy corporations like Unocal in getting a pipeline for fossil fuels from the rich Caspian sea region through Afghanistan.

The Carter administration had armed

and backed reactionary forces like the Taliban. The CIA orchestrated a war in 1978 against the young socialist government that claimed the resources of Afghanistan for its own people. This revolutionary government had banned the bride price, established special literacy programs for women, and sent brigades of women into the countryside to provide medical services to poor women.

Years of terrible suffering for women have followed the counter-revolutionary overthrow of the socialist government. What is life like for Afghan women today as the feudal landlords have strengthened their grip and Washington has invaded, destroyed much of the infrastructure and is continuing its assaults? Women are still being beaten, harassed, and raped by the militias of U.S.-backed landlords.

Girls' schools have been burned, co-education banned, and married women forbidden to attend high school, a heavy blow to the many under-age girls in forced

marriages. There are 593 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births in some provinces.

What few rights women have retained are actually being taken away. Washington's handpicked titular President Hamid Karzai appointed fundamentalist Fazl Hadi Shinwari as chief justice of the Supreme Court. Hadi Shinwari has brought back the Taliban's Department of Vice and Virtue. Renamed the Ministry of Religious Affairs, its stated purpose is to control women's public dress and behavior.

## U.S. war on Iraqi women

In a recent news conference, Bush claimed that the United States is waging war in Iraq against a "fanatical political ideology" that seeks to "oppress and persecute women."

The reality? Life is far worse for women in Iraq since the first Gulf War, the impo-

*Continued on page 11*

## Tribunal in Belgium

# Bush cabal plotted war on Iraq years ago

By Sara Flounders  
Brussels, Belgium

A well-planned, politically solid session of the World Tribunal on Iraq took place April 15-17 in Brussels, Belgium. The hearings showed that key Bush administration members planned aggression against Iraq starting years before the war was launched. Key organizers and activists from throughout Europe attended the full event, with representatives from other continents. This hearing was the first major step in a growing international effort by organizations in many countries to consolidate charges against the Bush administration for war crimes.

The idea for a war-crimes tribunal was raised a year ago and took shape in Istanbul last fall. There have already been public meetings or hearings in Mexico, Japan, Denmark and this three-day hearing in Brussels. There will be a hearing on May 8 in New York City at Cooper Union and on June 19 in Germany.

The Brussels Tribunal held the rapt attention of the audience through two solid days of testimony. With the auditorium packed, an overflow audience followed the proceedings by video camera in an upstairs theater. The discussion focused on the programs and policies promoted by the "Project for the New American Century," or PNAC.

This neoconservative think tank has advocated global U.S. hegemony, primarily through the threat or use of military

power. Prominent supporters of PNAC include Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice and Paul Wolfowitz, who are now leading members of the Bush gang. Their public advocacy of preemptive war, their use of overwhelming military force and their focus on reshaping the entire Middle East through regime change and occupation in Iraq began long before Sept. 11, 2001.

Lieven de Cauter, a Belgian professor who played a key role in organizing the tribunal here, wrote, "In the New American Century politics, military logic, economics and organized crime have become a seamless continuum, one large global casino."

Testimony included 30-minute presentations by Michael Parenti, Michel Collon and Hans Von Sponeck, among others. A special panel of three Iraqis—Ghazwan Al Mukhtar, Haifa Zangana and Abdul Ilah Al Bayaty—gave first-hand testimony on the impact of the war. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, unable to travel because of an injury, testified by video.

Following each presentation, two people acting as prosecutors and two as defense cross-examined the presenters. The panel of jurists then asked additional questions.

The defense of PNAC was made by two



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Sara Flounders

specialists in politics of the militarist "neo-con" grouping—Jim Lobe and Tom Barry. Karen Parker and Jean Bricmont were the prosecutors.

The final ruling of an impressive panel of jurists reflected the seriousness of the event. The following are some excerpts from the ruling.

### Tribunal ruling

"According to a clear majority of States and a large consensus of legal experts, the invasion of Iraq constitutes an act of aggression, a breach of one of the most fundamental norms of the international legal order. ...

"Far from bringing stability and peace in Iraq and the region, the invasion and occupation have created instability and chaos. Moreover, the deliberate destruction of Iraq has effectively promoted the Israeli government's policies of further unlawful expansion and de facto annexation of territories as well as further annihilation of the rights of the Palestinian people. ...

"The United Nations should avoid complicity with—let alone legitimize in any way—the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq. Any such action would further discredit this world body. ...

"Finally, the Tribunal calls upon the peoples of the world to demand that their governments deny military, political, financial or any other support to the occupying powers; and oppose the illegal

implementation by occupation forces or their surrogates of any plans for the wholesale privatization of the Iraqi economy. The Tribunal also expresses its solidarity with the Iraqi people and its support for their attempts at recovering their full sovereignty."

The panel of jurists was headed by Francois Houtart, who participated in the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal on U.S. Crimes in Vietnam in 1967. The panel included Denis Halliday, formerly head of the UN Oil for Food Program; Nawal el-Sadaawi, a well-known Egyptian author and doctor; Salah Al-Mukhtar of the Arab Lawyer Association of Britain, Pierre Klein, Samir Amin and Ludo Abicht.

In the United States, the ANSWER Coalition plans to promote the work of the World Tribunal on Iraq by calling a hearing on Aug. 26 in New York as the world media gathers there on the eve of the Republican National Convention. This hearing in late August will offer tribunal organizers from around the world an opportunity to report their most important findings and conclusions. Because of its proximity to the convention, the hearing will connect the work done around the world with the mass struggles expected there.

More information on the tribunal movement can be found at [www.iacenter.org](http://www.iacenter.org).

*Flounders, co-coordinator of the International Action Center, testified at the Brussels tribunal.*

## Bush, Kerry stab Palestinians in back

*Continued from page 1*

were forcibly expelled from their homes, and their descendants, have been trying to come back ever since Israel was founded on their land in 1948.

Sharon today is making no pretense of negotiating with the Palestinians. He refuses to recognize any Palestinian authority not selected by Israel. On his return from Washington, Sharon—a recognized war criminal for the 1982 massacres at Sabra and Shatila—triumphantly

told Israel's largest newspaper, "They [the Palestinians] were dealt a lethal blow."

Of course, there is a political cover for this. Sharon is supposed to have stood up to his far-right wing by also saying that Israel would pull its troops out of the Gaza Strip, where they have been since the 1963 war with Egypt. A small number of Jewish settlers there would have to leave along with Israeli troops. But even Israel's far-right parties have now endorsed this plan.

And why not? Israelis have not exactly

been flocking to Gaza. An arid strip of land bordering Egypt where 1.3 million Palestinians live, Gaza has one of the highest population densities in the world. The inhabitants are mostly Palestinian refugees living in deplorable camps where there are no jobs and no prospect of building a viable economy.

Israel isn't giving up anything. The New York Times of April 18 reported that "for some time after a withdrawal, Israel wants to retain military control of Gaza's border

with Egypt, its airport, airspace and coastline." And Israel reserves the right to reinvade Gaza, a hotbed of Palestinian resistance, at any time.

In return, it has gotten U.S. endorsement for grabbing valuable land from Palestinians in the West Bank and is keeping an apartheid wall in place that cuts off Palestinian territory equivalent in area to the state of Rhode Island.

The anger in the Arab world over all this is volcanic. Even long-time U.S. allies like

## Shift to left

# Rightists routed in S. Korean election

By Deirdre Griswold

The view in Washington a year ago, when Pentagon troops had just rolled into Baghdad after a devastating but relatively brief war, was that this dazzling display of U.S. military might would cow the whole world and make it clear that resistance was futile. Anyone not with Bush was against him. Those labeled "rogue states" or part of the "axis of evil" would be dealt with next.

North Korea was high on the list of countries being threatened by Washington's doctrine, which boasted that the United States was ready to fight two wars at the same time.

How long ago that seems now!

Those threats were aimed not only at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north, formed in 1948 after a socialist revolution in Korea. They were also meant to intimidate the militant movements in South Korea that have demanded

U.S. troops get out, the south be reunified with the north, and workers' conditions be improved.

The threats didn't work.

The movements have remained strong and in the streets. At the same time, President George W. Bush's win in Iraq has unraveled, revealing a politically weakened imperialism.

And now, in South Korea, this has been reflected in the arena most controlled by the capitalist ruling establishment: the elections.

Parliamentary elections on April 15 resulted in a dramatic shift to the left. For the first time since the repression of the 1950s, a socialist party emerging from the labor movement has won seats in the legislature.

The Korean Democratic Labor Party, which won 10 seats, calls for the withdrawal of the 37,000 U.S. troops in Korea and rapid reconciliation with the north. Its program is for a shorter work week,

workers' participation in management, and heavy taxes on the wealthy to finance free medical services and education.

The biggest winner in the election was the Uri Party, formed only six months ago. It won 152 seats out of 299, a clear majority. The conservative Grand National Party lost seats, as did the Millennium Democratic Party of former president Kim Dae-jung.

The vote for the liberal Uri Party, which tripled its seats in parliament, was a repudiation of the last legislature's move to impeach President Roh Moooh-hyun, who had recently endorsed the party. Voter turnout was high.

The percentage of women in the legislature also rose substantially, from 5.5 percent to 13 percent.

The first test for this new, more liberal parliament is the issue of South Korean soldiers in Iraq. In February, yielding to U.S. pressure, the parliament, at that time dominated by the conservatives, voted to

send 600 South Korean troops to Iraq, and promised 3,000 more. But there is no mistaking mass sentiment, which is vehemently opposed to participating in Washington's colonial-style war and occupation.

The Democratic Labor Party announced at a news conference in April that it was ready to introduce a bill into parliament blocking the dispatch of more troops to Iraq.

The issue is closely tied to the unpopular U.S. military occupation of South Korea. Unlike Spain, which recently announced it was withdrawing its troops from Iraq, South Korea is directly under the boot heel of the Pentagon and has an economy closely linked to U.S. banks and corporations. The ruling class greatly fears offending its imperialist patron and would have to fear even more the strong pressure of the working class and progressive masses before it would give in to such a move. □



## Ambassador to themselves?

# U.S. plan for Iraq only broadens resistance

By Fred Goldstein

April 20—For weeks the corporate media have been agonizing and hand-wringing over the June 30 deadline for the Bush administration's handover of "sovereignty" in Iraq. Who will be in charge, everyone asks. Now the question has been answered: John Negroponte.

Negroponte is a career terrorist for U.S. imperialism. He was an aide to war criminal Henry Kissinger during the Vietnam war and an organizer of death squads in Honduras and the Contras in Nicaragua. Now Bush's ambassador to the United Nations, Negroponte will replace proconsul L. Paul Bremer, the present U.S. sovereign, only he will have the title of "ambassador to Iraq."

The plan is for Negroponte to preside over the largest embassy in the world with a staff of 3,000. It will be filled with spies, military attaches, oil experts, technocrats, "experts" in devising schemes for neocolonial rule, and so on. To back up his ambassadorial functions, Negroponte will have at his disposal 14 planned permanent U.S. military bases and a military force entirely under U.S. control.

What is the ostensible function of an ambassador? To represent a government to another government. How many people does it require to represent the U.S.

King Abdullah of Jordan and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt have expressed shock. Abdullah canceled a scheduled meeting with Bush, bypassing Washington to fly directly home after a visit to California. These heads of state have to publicly distance themselves from both Israel and the U.S. or face incalculable repercussions at home.

The Palestinian struggle for self-determination, along with the resistance in Iraq to the U.S. military occupation there, are natural and justified responses by peoples who have been oppressed and robbed by the arrogant imperialist powers dominating the world. Until this is rectified, these struggles will continue. □

## Only struggle

Continued from page 6

there was a majority of Republicans on the Supreme Court that ruled abortion was a legal right. It was the massive women's struggle and their supporters who wrested that victory. It was movements of the working class and oppressed that won Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, affirmative action, food programs, suffrage, lesbian/ gay/bi/trans rights, and all social and economic programs. Nothing was ever handed out by a politician or given as a right—not under the brutal capitalist system.

We as revolutionaries support all struggles to push women's rights forward—these struggles are a crucial part of the class struggle. And in turn, it is in the interests of all women activists to participate in all the struggles against racism, poverty, repression and imperialist war. □

government to the government of a small country of 25 million people, even with a requisite number of spies? Is it 50, 100, 200, even 500? It is clear that the Bush administration is attempting to set up not a representation to an Iraqi government, but a virtual government of its own. And, given the size of this so-called "embassy," it is undoubtedly meant to serve as a political/military/espionage center for U.S. imperialism in the entire Middle East. It accords with the neo-cons' plan to recolonize the region.

But what is most telling is that Negroponte has been appointed ambassador to a government whose membership still does not exist, even on paper, just 10 weeks before June 30.

This deadline was set by Bush last November. And it is a commentary on the utter failure of U.S. imperialism's colonial adventure in Iraq that the problem of finding any credible group willing to masquerade as an interim government is getting larger by the day.

With each woman or child killed by Marine snipers in Falluja, with each new threat to invade the holy city of Najaf, with each new act of aggression and brutalization of the Iraqi population, whether it be in Sadr City in Baghdad, Mosul in the north, or Kut in the south, the U.S. occupation is step by step propelling the entire Iraqi people on the road to a people's war of national liberation.

### Report from Falluja

A report from Falluja in France's weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* of April 15 is illustrative. The reporter, Sara Daniel, describes Falluja as "a phantom city where American snipers are posted on the rooftops of every block of houses, the inhabitants are prisoners in their own homes. It's impossible to go out. Those who have tried it are still lying on the sidewalks."

The dispatch describes a brilliant young surgeon, Dr. Ibrahim, who ventured out during the U.S. "cease-fire" and tried to collect 10 new corpses struck in the head or the heart. "There was this old man struck down in his garden and this woman at the door who begged me to take care of her husband's body. It had been lying there for two days in front of her," said Ibrahim. "The day before yesterday," he continued, "I saw a car that had been hit by an Apache helicopter missile. On the inside were four carbonized bodies, on the hood, the body of a little 5-year-old girl. I couldn't even take them with me. When we got close to the car, our ambulance driver was hit in the shoulder."

Sara Daniel writes: "Far from the neighborhoods where the guerrillas are raging, a family of 12 was pulverized by a bomb." It took the doctor all morning to collect the remains. "Here's what the ground of Falluja is strewn with," he tells the reporter, holding up a piece of shrapnel recovered from the body of an ambulance driver, "shells that explode in all directions at a person's height before they hit their target. Illegal weapons that kill civilians."

Ibrahim had done the rounds of Falluja's hospitals. He said there were more than 600 dead and 1,224 wounded. The dead, which didn't include those buried in their own gardens or being kept at home, included 153 women, 58 children under 5 years old and 83 young people between 5 and 15 years old.



U.S. occupation more isolated as Spanish troops withdraw from Iraq.

"Everywhere, guerrilla rage feeds off tales from the refugees and the wounded who stream into Baghdad," wrote Daniel. "Mohammed Numuvavy, 12 years old, who lost his leg when his house in Falluja's Al-Jawlan neighborhood was hit by a fragmentation bomb, lies in Al-Adhamia Hospital. Tomorrow, his other, gangrenous, leg will have to be amputated. Mohammed does not know yet whether the other 24 members of his family ... have all been killed. Asla, 54 years old, had to flee with her daughter, Intesar, and her one and a half year-old grandson, Houda, when her house in the Askari neighborhood was bombarded by a tank. She was hit by a sniper as she ran through the alley along her house. In the garden of the Abou Hanifa, two children are being buried. They were killed as their families attempted to flee the city."

The U.S. military attack on Falluja has only stiffened the resistance. "According to Dr. Ibrahim, 'All the tiny little groups who were doing their own thing in a corner have combined. Today, I can assure you, the resistance has a head, a structure; like a real army...' And to hear him tell it, former Fedayeen from Saddam's army, who represent less than 10 percent of the fighters, have been working hand in hand with the fundamentalists."

Daniel ended her report: "In spite of the images of these jagged corpses that unceasingly proceed before his eyes, in spite of the tears of his mother, who says a final good-bye every time he leaves again for [Falluja], the young surgeon is happy to finally see a united Iraq: 'Today, my country from south to north is determined to fight those who have come to "liberate" us by killing our women and our children. The Americans will win the battle, but by besieging Falluja, they have lost the war.'"

This report, translated and reprinted in *truthout.org* on April 19, is echoed in dozens of other reports in the media and by activists who have been to Baghdad and Falluja.

### U.S. holds population hostage

It has been a policy of the U.S. military in urban warfare in Falluja, Baghdad, Najaf and other cities to shoot ambulances, close hospitals and drag the wounded out for interrogation if they have any suspicion that they might be fighters.

Right now the U.S. military has negotiated an "agreement" with intermediaries and collaborators in Falluja, including members of the puppet Governing Council, to get the fighters of Falluja to turn in their weapons. None of the fighters were party to the "negotiations."

The Pentagon is threatening to drown the city in blood, holding the population hostage as leverage to disarm the resistance. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gave a warning today of impending attack, as did L. Paul Bremer two days ago and Gen. Mark Kimmitt yesterday.

The imperialists are desperate to stop the resistance. The U.S. Marines have taken heavy casualties, even though they prefer to fight from afar using 500-pound bombs, helicopter gunships, tanks and rapid-fire C-130 machine guns.

U.S. forces are being attacked at will throughout the country. Resistance fighters set up checkpoints on the roads from Baghdad leading west to Falluja, south to Najaf and north to Mosul. U.S. military convoys travel at high risk and commercial convoys cannot find drivers.

In Najaf and Kut the U.S. military commanders are demanding the arrest of Shiite leader Moqtada al-Sadr, whose Mahdi Army carried out a regional insurrection after the newspaper *al-Hawza* was closed down by Bremer and protesting demonstrators were gunned down by U.S. forces.

The Occupation Authority is demanding that the Mahdi Army be disbanded and disarmed, as in Falluja. The military are being exceptionally cautious in Najaf, partly because an invasion of this religious capital of the Shiites could set off a powder keg, and also because they have learned from the past 10 days that it is unwise to fight on two fronts at once.

### From "shock and awe" to national resistance

The tendency of the Bush administration and the military is to try to drown the resistance in blood. But they are in an insoluble dilemma, a continuation of the situation that really began the day they invaded Iraq.

When they launched their campaign of "shock and awe," bombing Baghdad and then trying to make a "lightning" dash to take the capital, they immediately ran into determined resistance in the south. They then prematurely celebrated their victory in Baghdad.

In the course of destroying Saddam's regime by force, they killed and wounded thousands of civilians, destroyed the telephone system, the sewer system, water pipes, schools, hospitals and residences, and entered the cities in tanks and armored personnel carriers.

At that point, they had won the military struggle but had lost the political battle by showing the hand of the colonial occupier. From that day forward, despite massive military raids and attacks by air and by land, the resistance has grown wider and deeper. It has not yet surfaced as a coalesced national liberation front in the political sense. But all segments of society, whether active or passive, are being galvanized by a burning hatred of the occupation.

That is why the real sovereign taking over on July 1 will be John Negroponte and the Pentagon, no matter whom Bremer and U.N. representative Lakhdar Brahimi can dredge up as a fig leaf for imperialism. □



## It takes women to change the world

*Continued from page 1*

change from seeing that the path forward to liberation lies in the overturning of the capitalist economic system.

Those struggling for economic justice and social equality are admonished by those at the citadel of power that we should be grateful to live in the richest, most democratic country on the planet. The fact is that, although this is certainly the richest ruling class in the world, the people lack many, many things freely available in other countries—health care is just one—and even the gains won in the imperialist centers can be wiped out in a period of political reaction.

What's omitted from every attempt to defend the brutal status quo is that the ruling class in the United States has grown into a world power because of the super-exploitation of much of the world's most oppressed people by imperialist globalization of capital. And within the U.S., economic and social inequities based on nationality, sex, gender, sexuality, physical abilities and age are fostered to foment division, keep the vast laboring class divided, and drive down the overall wages and living conditions of all.

That's why we believe that organization based on solidarity—conscious unity among people who do not share a common oppression but who face a common enemy—is the most powerful weapon that working and oppressed people have to carry out a revolutionary transformation of society.

Some will scoff that such change is utopian. A few will argue that capitalism—the private ownership by a wealthy few of the vast apparatus of production produced through collective labor—is the highest form of economic and social organization to which humankind can aspire.

We say the idea that capitalism is the “end of history” is a fantasy, the delusion of eternal rule shared alike by all owning classes—slave-owners, feudal landlords and barons of banking and industry.

The working class and its most oppressed sectors are already doing the daily labor that keeps the world's economy running, but we have no say in how the world is run. The immense concentration of production into giant monopolies, fusing finance and industry, makes them ripe for takeover from the handful of families who have grown unimaginably wealthy through these fruits of cooperative labor. The potential and capacity to produce to meet human needs—and desires—has already been reached, but it requires collective ownership and planned production to be a reality.

Women play a key and numerically huge role in world production. And in the U.S., women—particularly oppressed and immigrant women—have entered the “high tech, low pay” workforce in large numbers.

Those who have the least to lose and the most to gain from profound economic change hold the greatest potential for revolutionary leadership. This has been proven from the class battles of immigrant women garment workers on the Lower East Side of Manhattan to the downtrodden Russian women workers whose fight helped spark the Russian Revolution, from the Cuban women today on the frontlines defending their island revolution from imperialist encirclement to the Palestinian and Iraqi women fighting to help defend their national self-determination.

Capitalism cannot meet the needs of the world's population. It will continue to generate hunger and homelessness, racism and bigotry, political reaction and imperialist war.

The oppression of women under capitalism, including denial of reproductive rights, brought you to this April 25 demonstration. We're here with you. If you've been looking for a revolutionary organization, check us out.

Start with our web page:  
www.workers.org. □

## PPN leader: New situation in Haiti

By G. Dunkel  
New York

Ben Dupuy, general secretary of Haiti's National Popular Party (PPN) and co-director of the newspaper *Haiti-Progress*, recently spoke here on the new situation in Haiti since a Feb. 29 coup removed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

On April 16 he spoke in English to a Workers World Party meeting. The next day he spoke in Creole to the Haitian American Student Association at Medgar Evers College, a part of the City University of New York, and to the Committee to Support the PPN.

The talk at Medgar Evers was preceded by the showing of a documentary film, “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised,” about the failed 2002 coup in Venezuela during which Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez was kidnapped and nearly transported out of the country. A vigorous discussion followed.

Commenting on the film, Dupuy said that Chávez had prepared the people of Venezuela ideologically to resist the coup everyone saw coming by informing them of their constitutional rights. While Fanmi Lavalas, Aristide's party, is organized to fight for election victories, the PPN is an “ideological” party, organized on a community level, then on a district level. Every four years, the PPN holds a delegated national conference to select its national leadership and set policy.

The PPN held several big demonstrations in Port-au-Prince before and shortly after the coup to support democracy in Haiti and Aristide's constitutional right to serve out his five-year term.

Haiti, currently under U.S. and French occupation, is now seldom in the news. However, an unidentified “top U.S. official” told the Los Angeles Times of April 15 that U.S. forces, under a United Nations mandate, will be there for at least a year.

Dupuy feels that to understand the current class struggle in Haiti, one must understand the semi-feudal class structure that came out of the Haitian revolution two centuries ago. In pre-revolutionary Haiti, there were three major classes: colons—French who owned the land, the source of wealth in that society; affranchis—ex-slaves who bought their freedom

or were freed by their masters for personal reasons; and slaves, the vast majority.

Most of the leaders in the Haitian revolution— Toussaint Louverture, Alexandre Pétion, Henri Christophe, Capois la Mort, and even Jean-Jacques Dessalines—were affranchis and had been officers in the French army at one time or another. Their struggle's main objective was political equality with the colons.

After Napoleon made a coup in France and decided to re-enslave Haiti, the affranchis realized they could not win their struggle with the French without an alliance with the slaves, whose leader was Jean-Jacques Dessalines. They made the alliance and drove out the French, but Dessalines, who wanted to go further, was killed in Haiti's first coup in 1806.

The upper officers in the Haitian army became the large landowners, or grandons. Their struggle with the comprador bourgeoisie, primarily a merchant class, provided most of the instability in Haitian politics up to the U.S. intervention of 1915. After the U.S. intervention ended in 1934, the United States backed the brutal Duvaliers, representatives of the grandons, until the mid-1980s. Then Washington supported a democratic phase, expecting the candidate it favored and funded to win, but was dismayed when Aristide, a priest popular with the very poor, was elected.

The United States trained, supplied and used some of the most brutal Duvalier supporters in the recent coup. The “democratic opposition” to Aristide, which represents the comprador bourgeoisie, has welcomed U.S./French intervention and violence from the paramilitaries tied to the grandons in order to oust Aristide.

All of this has made life much harder for the Haitian people. UN spokesperson Alejandro Chicheri says the 23 health centers monitored by the World Food Program in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, can't meet the demands for food. Prices have shot up by 30 percent since the coup. “Fifty percent of the population is chronically malnourished,” says Chicheri, “and it's not just food. Many also have no access to clean water.”

Groups like PPN are resisting under difficult conditions while preparing for the next phase of the struggle. □

## Cuba, human rights and the UNHRC

By Gloria La Riva

On Cuban soil, there are over 600 prisoners who are denied any semblance of human rights by their captors. They have been subjected to unlimited physical and psychological abuse and denied the right to see a lawyer, family member or anyone else for years on end.

They are imprisoned not by Cuba, but by the United States, at the Guantánamo naval base.

After the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, hundreds of men and boys as young as 12 were rounded up and shipped, blindfolded and bound, halfway around the world to Guantánamo. There they are warehoused in open-air cages, exposed to mosquitoes and the scorching sun, and denied all due process and protection under the Geneva Convention regarding prisoners of war.

Now Cuba has intervened on the prisoners' behalf to demand justice.

In mid-April Cuba introduced a resolution to the United Nations Human Rights

Commission, calling for an investigation of conditions in the U.S. military prison and an end to the violation of the prisoners' rights. Cuba's resolution on the Guantánamo prison was announced minutes after a U.S.-sponsored anti-Cuba resolution passed the UNHRC by the narrowest of margins.

Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque announced the Guantánamo resolution, saying: “The international community has a right to know what is happening there.”

Midway through this year's UNHRC six-week session, a U.S.-engineered resolution criticizing Cuba was narrowly approved, 22 to 21 with 10 abstentions. That vote came after several weeks of intense pressure from U.S. representatives who threatened states with denial of foreign aid, political isolation, and worse.

The Human Rights Commission's 53 member states meet in Geneva each spring to discuss, vote and take action on human rights issues around the world. As with many international forums under the

U.S. and other Western powers' domination, the UNHRC distorts the phrase “human rights,” using it as a weapon to try to bludgeon socialist and other independent countries into submission, or to establish pretexts for further aggression.

Nothing could better expose the utter hypocrisy of Washington's “human rights policy” than the anti-Cuba vote at the UNHRC.

This year, Washington pressured Honduras to “sponsor” the U.S.-authored resolution against Cuba, and arm-twisted dependent countries in Latin America to support the campaign. Among those voting for the resolution were the governments of countries with some of the most atrocious records of military and death-squad repression, including Peru, Chile and Guatemala.

Guatemala condemning Cuba for human rights violations! In a half-century of genocidal repression after the U.S. coup in 1954, a succession of Pentagon-supplied military regimes slaughtered more than 250,000 indigenous Guatemalans.

The sponsor of the anti-Cuba resolution, Honduras, had its own death squads when John Negroponte, currently U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and soon to be proconsul in Iraq, served in the same role in Honduras in the 1980s. Negroponte was appointed as ambassador to Honduras to help organize the infamous Contra death squads that terrorized the Nicaraguan people after the Sandinista Revolution of 1978. The 10-year U.S./Contra war against one of the world's poorest countries killed more than 50,000 Nicaraguans in a country of 2 million.

Cuba, with a very low infant mortality rate of six per 1,000 live births, universal and free health care, no homelessness, is condemned—but no resolution is passed against the United States for killing thousands of Iraqi people and illegally occupying the country.

Even its most vitriolic critics cannot claim a shred of evidence that any death squads exist in Cuba.

U.S. imperialism has held the seven square miles on Cuba's southeastern end

## Venezuela conference

# Celebrating popular mass struggle

By Teresa Gutierrez  
Caracas, Venezuela

On April 11, 2002, the wealthy oligarchy of Venezuela—with the prodding and backing of the U.S. government—attempted to carry out a counter-revolutionary coup to oust popularly elected President Hugo Chavez Frias.

Venezuela's people poured into the streets in record numbers, from every corner of the country—and marched to the presidential palace and to the military barracks to demand their president's release.

Thanks to the Venezuelan people, the U.S.-backed coup failed miserably. President Chavez was triumphantly back in office within 48 hours, on April 13.

The April 2002 events in Venezuela are a dazzling example that shows the masses are a major agent of change in any society.

A major chapter in Venezuelan history had been written. From that point on, there was no turning back from the revolutionary movement sweeping the country.

"Every 11th of April will have its 13th" was one of the themes of President Hugo Chavez's April 13 speech at this year's commemoration of the 2002 events.

Chavez's speech was one of the highlights of the Second International Conference in Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution, held April 10-17 in Caracas. In a tremendous show of solidarity, over 200 international delegates from throughout the Americas, Europe and Africa attended the conference.

Before one of the major events, Caracas Mayor Freddy Bernal welcomed the participants at the central chamber of the National Assembly. Bernal, a fiery orator, gave a revolutionary speech to the delegates as well as to Venezuelans from the community.

Bernal was one of many Venezuelans the international guests heard and met with. He affirmed that the revolutionary Bolivarian process would not be turned back, and that people's power is marching forward in his country.

After Bernal's speech, a very old man who looked like he had led a hard life came right up to the mayor. With tears running down his cheeks, he kissed Bernal, thank-

ing him for what the government, for the very first time in Venezuelan history, is doing to help the poor.

This was but one of many examples of people's power evident throughout the country.

At the panels held during the week, on topics from human rights to the Free Trade Area of the Americas, many Venezuelans joined international guests. Entire student delegations attended to listen and ask questions of the panelists.

At one forum, a worker charged up to the podium and demanded to know why there were reserved seats, declaring that these are contrary to the revolutionary process. When organizers explained that some seats were reserved to assure that international guests and Venezuela's university delegation had seats, the crowd applauded in approval.

### Progressive programs thrive

One workshop panelist was Ali Rodriguez, president of PDVSA, the state-owned oil company. PDVSA's role in Venezuelan society is one of many concrete examples showing how the Chavez government carries out revolutionary measures.

Rodriguez said that one of the main obstacles to the revolutionary movement is that while Venezuela has a revolutionary government it does not have a revolutionary state.

This observation was often repeated during the week's events. This opinion came not just from the left or from the masses, but even from the official leadership like Rodriguez and President Chavez.

On the last days of the conference, the guests were invited to go into several of Caracas' barrios, such as the 23rd of January neighborhood, Petare, and El Valle. Delegates spoke and exchanged opinions within the communities. They heard first-hand about the social programs that the government has initiated.

One such program is Barrio Adentro (Into the Neighborhood). This has brought more than 10,000 doctors into poor communities, which now for the first

time have health care available. Many such doctors are Cubans on international solidarity missions.

People gather to hear Hugo Chavez. Caracas, April 13.

WW PHOTO: TERESA GUTIERREZ



In the Barrio Adentro area of the 23rd of January neighborhood, both the Venezuelan and Cuban flags were flying. Young people said this was in thanks to the Cuban doctors as well as a message of solidarity to the Cuban Revolution.

Also sweeping the country are innovative educational programs that help people advance from basic literacy through college degree programs. These programs are called Mision Robinson and Mision Sucre.

Another government initiative in 2003 was distributing over 5 million acres of land to the country's peasants.

Another government initiative in 2003 was distributing over 5 million acres of land to the country's peasants.

### Revolution is thriving

A week in Venezuela makes it clear that the revolutionary process in this country not only exists but is thriving and consolidating. This is not only important; it is decisive.

Despite its April 2002 setback, U.S. imperialism has refused to abandon its strategy in Venezuela. Washington continues to attempt to sabotage the Bolivarian Revolution and to oust Chavez.

Such acts of sabotage made the news in Venezuela during the week of the conference.

According to CNN Español as well as Znet, on April 13 the Colombian Senate—the most criminal and dictatorial of the region and the closest ally of U.S. imperialism—approved a resolution condemning Venezuela's "dictatorial regime." The Colombian resolution calls for the Organization of American States

to apply the Interamerican Democratic Charter to Venezuela. In the event of the collapse of a "democratic order" in a member state, the Interamerican Democratic Charter opens the door to intervention.

Venezuelans, Colombians and others in defense of Venezuela were alarmed by this resolution, which could include "all actions up to and including military intervention by OAS states, including the United States." (Znet April 18.)

After President Chavez' revolutionary speech on April 13 denouncing U.S. imperialism, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega—a key player in the overthrow of the Haitian government—declared that "negative examples" from President Chavez are mounting. (New York Times, April 15). Noriega called for a "rigorous assessment" by the international community of Venezuela's respect for law and human rights.

The truth, however, is that for the very first time in Venezuela's history the government is enforcing a people's law defending human rights and workers' rights. For representing the yearnings of the poor and oppressed, President Chavez and the Venezuelan people have aroused U.S. imperialism's ire.

Solidarity with and defense of the Bolivarian Revolution is the order of the day for progressive activists around the world. For those working in the belly of the beast, the task is to assure that imperialism's 13th of April arrives as soon as possible. □

## Stop the war against women

Continued from page 7

sition of U.S. sanctions and now the imperialist occupation.

After the Iraqi national revolution of 1958 overthrew a monarchy and feudal landlords who had been supported by U.S. and British economic interests, some of the profits from the country's oil fields finally went to its people rather than to U.S. and British corporations. There was free education through the university level, encouraging families to keep daughters in school; guaranteed jobs for women who wanted to work; and equal pay for equal work. Health care was free, mothers had pre- and post-natal care, and working women had six months of paid maternity leave. There was subsidized basic food and housing, and subsidized child care in most work places. (Madre)

And after the "liberation" of the U.S. invasion? According to the Independent, "U.S.-led forces have killed more than 10,000 Iraqis since the onset of the invasion—the highest civilian casualty rate of any war waged by the West since Vietnam." (Feb. 8)

Many of these must be women, given

that 80 percent of small arms casualties in any war are women and children. (United Nations Human Rights Commission)

Women are now forced to spend hours hauling water from streams choked with raw sewage. Meanwhile, U.S. tax dollars have paid the Bechtel Corp. \$3 billion to repair Iraq's water, electricity and other infrastructure—but only as needed by other corporations and the U.S. military.

Farmers, many of them women, cannot grow food because of unexploded cluster bombs in their fields.

One-third of all clinics offering family-planning services were destroyed during the war, while the U.S. works to turn the Iraqi health system into a profit-making machine. (Madre)

The occupying U.S. Coalition Provisional Authority has refused requests from Iraqi women's groups "to create a women's ministry; appoint women to the drafting committee of Iraq's new constitution and guarantee that 40 percent of all CPA appointees are women, [and] pass laws codifying women's rights and criminalizing domestic violence." (Madre)

### The next wave of women's liberation

Washington's propaganda about "freedom" for women in Afghanistan and Iraq is camouflage for its military control of territory that will give its corporate bosses access to new markets, bigger profits and cheaper labor—much of it by poor and working women.

Women's liberation can only be advanced in the context of the battle against capitalism and its imperialist military aggression. Otherwise, the powers that be will manipulate legitimate anguish about atrocities and injustices against women into support for actions that actually bring more oppression and exploitation.

A women's movement independent of capitalist interests and their big-business political parties is essential. The great victories of women's liberation in the past have been won not by the vote, but by mass action and mass organizing.

Working together with a strong anti-imperialist, anti-war movement, women's liberation can surge forward in a bold new wave. □

since 1898, after the United States invaded Cuba just as Cuba was about to win its independence from Spain.

The United States forcibly added the ignominious Platt amendment to Cuba's new constitution in 1902 in "exchange" for the U.S. military's leaving the island. The amendment allowed U.S. intervention at any time, plus the free establishment of U.S. military bases to fuel ships.

A revolutionary struggle of the Cuban masses ousted dictator Gerardo Machado in 1933 and threw out the Platt amendment in 1934.

But the United States has refused for the 70 years since to leave Guantánamo, flagrantly violating Cuba's territorial sovereignty.

Cuba's revolutionary government has maintained a non-confrontational approach toward this violation, stating that it cannot engage in a struggle at this critical time when U.S. imperialism could use any pretext to attack Cuba. □

¡PROLETARIOS Y OPRIMIDOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNÍOS!

# MUNDO★OBRERO

## El levantamiento del 1920 y la actual resistencia iraquí

Por Richard Becker

“Dénnos una señal y continuaremos el levantamiento del 1920,” corearon los partidarios de Moqtada al-Sadr en una manifestación en Bagdad el 1 de abril. Si los comandantes del ejército estadounidense en Irak no temblaron al oír esta consigna, los ocupantes británicos sí lo sintieron. Fue en el 1920 que el pueblo de Irak se levantó al enterarse que se habían convertido en sujetos coloniales del Imperio Británico.

La manifestación del 1 de abril se dio hacia la mitad de una semana que transformó la ocupación de Irak en una crisis de primera magnitud para Washington. El domingo anterior, el 28 de marzo, la Autoridad Provisional de la Coalición, (CAP), encabezada por el dictador estadounidense, L. Paul Bremer, había encendido la crisis al cerrar la publicación del periódico que refleja la opinión de al-Sadr, un líder religioso chiíta. El cierre produjo una serie de protestas masivas. Cuando los Estados Unidos intentaron aplastar las protestas a fuerza brutal, surgió un levantamiento popular en muchas ciudades iraquíes a partir del 4 de abril.

Al mismo tiempo, las fuerzas de ocupación se preparaban para un asalto general contra Faluja, ciudad industrial de cerca de 300.000 habitantes localizada al oeste de Bagdad la cual ha sido el centro de la resistencia iraquí desde el comienzo de la ocupación hace un año.

Faluja es una ciudad de trabajador@s cuya población es predominante aunque no exclusivamente, de musulmanes sunni. Los sunni constituyen casi el 85 por ciento de los musulmanes en el mundo, y están divididos en cuatro ramas principales. En Irak, los chiítas (otra de las principales ramas del Islam) constituyen casi el 60 por ciento de la población.

### ¿Quién es la resistencia iraquí?

Aunque sería imposible responder a esta pregunta exhaustivamente ahora, está muy claro que la resistencia en Faluja y en todo Irak tiene una composición política muy diversa. El 31 de enero, durante una entrevista conducida por el Campo Antiimperialista con el activista de la resistencia, Jabbar al-Kubaysi, quien se identificó a sí mismo como un “baatista, de izquierda,” se le preguntó sobre los componentes de la resistencia que podrían formar un frente político común.

Al-Kubaysi contestó: “Hay cuatro corrientes principales en todo el país. Estamos nosotros, la Alianza Patriótica Iraquí, la cual aproximadamente podría describir como antiimperialista, los árabes nacionalistas, que luchan por la democracia y la justicia social y respetan y defienden nuestra herencia islámica.

“Está el Comité Islámico Suní, el cual agrupa a los principales líderes islámicos que se oponen fuertemente a la Hermandad Musulmana, la cual está colaborando con el enemigo. Ellos están listos a trabajar con cualquiera que esté en la resistencia incluyendo a cristianos y comunistas.

“La tercera fuerza son los Naseritas, quienes están por reorganizarse. Y finalmente están los antiimperialistas comunistas del comando central quienes han sido nuestros amigos por mucho tiempo y a quienes esperamos convencer.” [El Comando Central se separó del Partido Comunista Iraquí oficial, el cual está colaborando con la ocupación y es miembro del Consejo títere de Gobernación Iraquí]

Cuando se le preguntó sobre la participación chiíta en la resistencia, al-Kubaysi contestó: “Antes que nada, los chiítas están bien representados en la mayoría de las fuerzas que nombré, y en algunas ellos son la mayoría.

Ustedes tienen que olvidar la noción difundida por los americanos que la sociedad chiíta es una entidad única, totalmente apartada. La mayoría de los chiítas se consideran a sí mismos árabes-iraquíes y participan como tal en la vida política.”

Es importante mencionar que esta entrevista se hizo dos meses antes del levantamiento actual.

Los comentarios de al-Kubaysi señalan una realidad de Irak que ha sido ocultada por la cobertura de la prensa corporativa: Irak, especialmente el área urbana donde más del 60% de la población de hoy reside, no está dividida por religión o nacionalidad. El proceso de desarrollo capitalista en Irak, como en muchos otros países, ha traído consigo el rompimiento de las estructuras feudales y una migración masiva de zonas rurales a las urbanas durante el siglo pasado.

La descripción de Irak por Washington que repite la prensa, pinta a un norte kurdita, un sur chiíta y un “Triángulo suní” en el centro.

La frase “Triángulo suní” es de hecho, una fabricación propagandística. Incluido en el “Triángulo” está Bagdad, aunque tiene por lo menos una tercera parte chiíta y un gran número de kurdos, asirios, turcomenes y otros. Excluido del “Triángulo” está el norte de Irak, a pesar del hecho que la gran mayoría de árabes, kurdos y turcomenes son sunís.

### Washington busca una Irak débil y dividida

La falsificación de la realidad iraquí por líderes estadounidenses y por su prensa cómplice no es accidental ni benigna. Las fuerzas de ocupación están utilizando la táctica de dividir para conquistar y así mantener el control, la estrategia de enfrentar iraquíes contra iraquíes.

Bajo la nueva “constitución” redactada por los Estados Unidos, Irak se convertiría en un estado federado con un débil gobierno central. El objetivo de largo alcance es el de transformar el área estratégica y rica en petróleo del Golfo, en una región de estados frágiles que puedan ser fácilmente dominados por el imperialismo estadounidense.

Si bien sería una equivocación ignorar los aspectos religiosos de la resistencia, la continua caracterización de los medios informáticos capitalistas de la resistencia iraquí en términos religiosos debe verse como una estrategia de dividir para vencer.

El profesor de comunicación, Nabil Dajani de la Universidad Americana de Beirut hizo una comparación entre el reportaje de los medios estadounidenses y los del mundo árabe como por ejemplo la televisora Al-Jazira diciendo: “Cada reportero está influenciado por su cultura. Todavía ellos [los estadounidenses] consideran que lo que está pasando en Irak es terrorismo. Todavía lo ven como si fuera triángulo suní o chiíta. No son capaces de ver a los iraquíes como iraquíes...”

“Los americanos tienen el derecho de interpretar la situación como una de sunís y chiítas y Al-Jazira tiene el derecho de interpretarla como la resistencia a una ocupación militar.”

Un artículo del Washington Post del 9 de abril reportó que, “La separación entre chiítas y sunís, ya menor en Irak que en otras partes del mundo musulmán, sigue disminuyendo a diario mientras los iraquíes concuerdan que su problema más urgente es la ocupación.”

El mismo artículo citó a Mohammed Najem Mausoumi mientras donaba sangre en la comunidad mayormente chiíta de Kadhimiya de Bagdad. “No necesitamos un llamado de la mezquita.”

“Como los demás en la alegre multitud bajo el toldo,” siguió el artículo del Post, “rehusó contestar si

era chiíta o suní.”

Faluja ha surgido como un símbolo de resistencia nacional y de orgullo para iraquíes a través de la gama política y religiosa. Miles de residentes de Bagdad en carros, autobuses y a pié formaron una caravana gigante de ayuda para la ciudad asediada el 8 de abril, desafiando así a que entraran los vehículos estadounidenses blindados.

Mezquitas sunís y chiítas de la capital de Irak organizaron a muchos de los participantes. Esta creciente coordinación consciente representa un problema potencialmente sin solución para la ocupación, al igual que lo hizo cuando emergió por primera vez hace 84 años en la Rebelión de 1920.

### Rebelión del 1920

En mayo de 1920, los árabes de Irak, Siria y Palestina se sublevaron masivamente cuando descubrieron que en vez de lograr la independencia después de cientos de años de dominación por el imperio turco-otomano, habían sido incorporados a los imperios más grandes de la época, el francés y el británico.

Siria y el Líbano se volvieron colonias francesas, según el acuerdo firmado en San Remo, Italia el 24 de abril de 1920. Irak, Palestina y Jordania fueron tomadas por Bretaña. Todo esto fue hecho bajo la cubierta de “mandatos” de la Liga de las Naciones, antecedente de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas.

Como parte de este trato secreto, empresas petroleras de los Estados Unidos recibieron un porcentaje de 23,75 del petróleo de Irak, e igual cantidad para Bretaña, Francia y Holanda. Irak fue propietario entonces de un cero porcentaje de sus inmensos recursos petroleros.

La táctica utilizada por los británicos en Irak, que ocupó militarmente en 1918, fue similar a la usada durante su imperio: asegurar su control provocando divisiones entre los pueblos colonizados, enfrentándolos unos contra otros mientras buscaba la manera de cooptar las élites de cada nacionalidad. En Irak, esto implicó fomentar antagonismos entre chiítas y sunís, y entre árabes y kurdos.

Pero para sorpresa de los británicos ocurrió algo muy inusitado para esa época. La historiadora marxista, Hanna Batatu escribió sobre la rebelión del 1920: “Por primera vez en muchos siglos, los chiítas se unieron políticamente con los sunís, y el pueblo urbano de Bagdad colaboró con el pueblo rural de las tribus del Éufrates.

“Celebraciones conjuntas sin precedente entre chiítas y sunís, aparentemente religiosas, pero políticas en su realidad, ocurrieron en las mezquitas chiítas y sunís... con las celebraciones culminando en patrióticos discursos y fervorosas poesías condenando a los ingleses.

“Ciertamente, no sería demasiado decir que con los hechos ocurridos en 1919-1920, y más particularmente con la cooperación, aunque delicada, que fue establecida entre los chiítas y los sunís, un nuevo proceso comenzó: el crecimiento a veces doloroso, gradual e intermitente, de una comunidad iraquí nacional.” (Las Antiguas Clases Sociales y los Movimientos Revolucionarios de Irak, Princeton University Press, 1978)

Los militares británicos necesitaron varios meses para sofocar la Rebelión de 1920. Más de 10.000 iraquíes murieron, así como 2.000 soldados británicos incluyendo a su comandante. Decenas de miles fueron heridos, cuando la población era apenas 3 millones de personas. Winston Churchill, entonces en la oficina colonial británica, ordenó el desarrollo de bombas de gases tóxicos para ser empleadas contra la rebelión y en 1925 esas bombas fueron utilizadas contra los kurdos rebeldes en el norte de Irak.

La historia de Irak bajo el imperio británico desde 1920 hasta 1958 fue una de rebelión tras otra, en las cuales participaron personas de todas las etnias y regiones.

Esa tradición de firme oposición a la ocupación y dominación extranjera está germinando otra vez en la nueva resistencia iraquí. □

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