

As 'sovereignty' date nears CIA picks Iraqi prime minister

Resistance pushes Bush clique into deeper crisis

By Fred Goldstein

The process of forming an interim government, preliminary to the June 30 "transfer of sovereignty" to Iraq, has only highlighted the complete failure of the U.S. occupation to subdue the Iraqi people.

After a year of occupation, Washington was only able to come up with a new version of the discredited Iraqi Governing Council, which is widely hated as a complete puppet of the U.S. government.

Previous to his recent overthrow, the most prominent pro-U.S. figure on the Governing Council was Ahmad Chalabi, a rich exile and wheeler-dealer known to be a creature of the Pentagon. Chalabi was toppled as a result of the war between the Pentagon, on the one hand, and on the other the CIA, State Department and U.S. military leaders angry with the Rumsfeld/Wolfowitz group for their conduct of the war.

Chalabi has now been replaced as the pre-eminent puppet by a new interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi, a creature of the CIA and MI6, the British spy agency. In his first speech, Allawi declared that the Iraqis do not like living under occupation, but nevertheless "We will need the participation of the multinational forces to defeat the enemies of Iraq. We will enter

into alliances with our allies to accomplish that."

Thus, Allawi made the requisite declaration to enter into a status-of-forces agreement giving legal cover to the U.S. military to continue its de facto occupation after its de jure status as occupier is over on June 30. He also used Bush/Rumsfeld speak to condemn the Iraqi resistance fighting for national independence, declaring them to be "the enemies of Iraq."

Allawi impressed Western intelligence agencies

Allawi, a former Baathist, was a student leader in Iraq and Britain in the 1970s who defected to the British security services. He then went into business, using Saudi contacts. "He was charming, intelligent and had a gift for impressing Western intelligence agencies," wrote the London Independent of May 29. After the 1991 Gulf War, he founded the Iraqi National Accord with the aid of the CIA.

"He is the person through whom the controversial claim was channeled that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction could be operational in 45 minutes," continued the Independent.

"In the mid-1990s ... Dr. Allawi began to move from the orbit of MI6 to the CIA. He persuaded his new master that he was

in a position to organize a military coup in Baghdad," wrote the Independent. The U.S.- and British-backed coup failed. But after the U.S. capture of Baghdad last year, Allawi and the INA set up in Iraq.

"There were few signs that they had any popular support," continued the Independent. "During an uprising in the town of Baiji, north of Baghdad last year, crowds immediately set fire to the INA office."

The composition of the so-called "interim government" is so thoroughly bankrupt that it is generating gloom and pessimism in U.S. ruling class circles. The Washington Post of June 2 moaned that UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi had failed as a "one-man nation builder."

"In the end, hemmed in by hovering U.S. officials and their present and former Iraqi allies, Mr. Brahimi acquiesced to a cabinet led by the same former exiles and Kurdish politicians who populated the discredited Iraqi Governing Council."

But the Post noted the real dilemma: "Perhaps he had few alternatives: Iraq appears to be bereft of political leaders who are popular, capable and willing to cooperate with the U.S. plans for political transition."

After a bloody war of aggression and a year of occupation, the U.S. government and military and anyone associated with

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draft either

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MESSAGE TO JUNE 5 RALLIES FROM SOCIALIST CANDIDATES

PARKER & GUTIERREZ say: 'Build mass movement of resistance'

Yes, there's a way to vote against the war—and against racism and capitalism, too. It's the Workers World Party presidential campaign.

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WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Teresa Gutierrez, above. John Parker, right center, protests at 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles.



PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL



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Workers World Party candidates: 'Build mass movement of resistance'

To the June 5th marchers:

We salute everyone marching in Washington, D.C., San Francisco and other cities June 5 to demand: "End the torture—End the killings—End the occupation—Bring the troops home now!"

The ANSWER coalition and other groups should be commended for organizing these demonstrations. At a moment of political crisis for the capitalist political establishment over the occupation of Iraq, taking action is of paramount importance.

We also salute those who come out to bring attention to the heroic struggles against U.S. occupations in Haiti, Afghanistan, the Philippines and South Korea, the U.S.-backed Israeli occupation of Palestine, and the danger of U.S. military aggression against Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba and North Korea.

Every day, the world is learning more about the terrible crimes committed by U.S. occupation forces in Iraq: the siege of Falluja; the long-suppressed photos of dead soldiers returning to the United States; the torture and murder of prisoners at Abu Ghraib; the deliberate bombing of a wedding party; and much more. Each has helped to expose the brutal, racist and colonialist character of the occupation.

George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and the Pentagon brass, in collusion with leading Republicans and Democrats in Congress, are guilty of heinous war crimes. And behind them, calling the shots, stand the giant capitalist monopolies of Big Oil and Wall Street.

The growing popular resistance in Iraq has thrown Washington into disarray. Yesterday they all wanted to conquer Iraq; today they are all looking for someone else to blame. There is open political warfare within the Bush administration. The New York Times, which cheered on the war, was forced to admit that it printed false "evidence" to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Public support for the war and occupation has fallen sharply.

The enthusiastic response to the June 5 protests shows that important sectors of the anti-war movement have not been swept up in the "Anybody But Bush" current. As even mainstream commentators now admit, there is little difference between Bush and Kerry over Iraq. Kerry is committed to the occupation and calls for tens of thousands of additional troops to be sent to shore up the chaotic operation. Like Bush, he hopes to convince more of the European imperialist allies to send troops and take some of the heat off Washington by giving the occupation an

"international" veneer.

The road to getting U.S. troops out of Iraq lies through mass action, not electing a "lesser" evil.

With the nominal June 30 handover of "sovereignty" to a government handpicked by the U.S., the anti-war movement must raise ever stronger the demand for real self-determination for Iraq's people. There can be no true sovereignty while U.S. and British troops occupy the country and control all the vital avenues of political and economic life. There can be no real independence under the administration of the United Nations Security Council—a body dominated by the U.S., British and French imperialists.

The people of Iraq must be free to decide for themselves what kind of political, economic and social system they will have. That means demanding that the United States get out now—with no strings attached—and pay reparations for the damage caused by war, occupation and 13 years of genocidal sanctions.

We support the Iraqi people's right to resist the brutal occupation. And it becomes clearer every day that the masses of people are rising together—Sunni, Shiite and secular—to drive the invaders from their homeland.

We stand for the right of all those living under U.S. domination to resist.

In Haiti, U.S. Marines kidnapped Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the elected president, in February. They conduct house-to-house searches, collaborate with former death squad members terrorizing Aristide supporters and their families, and on May 18 presided over a massacre of demonstrators in Port-au-Prince. Yet Haiti's people continue to protest.

In occupied Palestine, the U.S.-backed Israeli army slaughtered 45 people and demolished 67 homes in Gaza in late May. Yet the Palestinian people's unrelenting struggle has thrown Ariel Sharon's apartheid regime into crisis.

U.S. soldiers—mostly workers in uniform, many from nationally oppressed communities—have both the right and obligation to resist illegal occupations and the war crimes the brass tries to push them into, like the torture at Abu Ghraib.

The troops don't want to be stationed abroad for indefinite periods, forced to kill or be killed, hated as occupiers by the people Bush claimed they were "liberating."

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SNAFU says: NO DRAFT, NO WAY

By Greg Butterfield

Could you or someone you love be drafted and sent to fight in Iraq or elsewhere?

Could you be forced to choose between participating in war crimes like the torture of prisoners in Abu Ghraib or going to prison yourself for resisting these illegal orders?

Public outrage forced the Nixon administration to end the draft in 1973. Soldiers returning from Vietnam, their families and the anti-war movement were outspoken about the draft's inherent injustice. They showed how young people from working-class families and communities of color were being sent to fight a war in the interests of the rich and powerful.

You won't hear President George W. Bush or Sen. John Kerry talk about reinstating the draft. Not yet. They know it's too unpopular to bring up during an election year.

A recent poll showed that more than 70 percent of respondents oppose a new draft, even if things get harder for the occupation forces in Iraq.

But either candidate could try to push a law through Congress to bring back the draft after November's election.

The government has already taken steps to prepare for a new draft.

In December 2001, the United States and Canada signed a "smart border declaration." Besides targeting immigrants from the Middle East and Asia, the agreement was designed to make it harder for draftees to seek refuge in Canada.

In January 2003, HR163 and S89 were introduced in the House and Senate. These bills call for a Universal National Service Act "to provide for the common defense by requiring that all young persons in the United States, including women, perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service in furtherance of the national defense and homeland security, or for other purposes." High-school graduates 18 to 26 would be included.

In November 2003, the Defense Department began advertising for volunteers to fill positions on local draft boards throughout the United States. It withdrew the ads after reports began to appear in the news media. But the recruiting has quietly continued.

In April 2004, as the Iraqi resistance intensified, Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel and Democratic Sen. Joseph Biden issued calls for a "fresh national debate" on the draft.

In contrast, Workers World Party presidential and vice presidential candidates John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez say, "No draft, no way." WWP calls for taking the Pentagon's multi-trillion-dollar

budget and using it for human needs instead. Independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader has also raised the alarm against the possibility of a new draft.

Bush, Kerry agree: more troops needed

You won't hear the word "draft" coming from Bush's lips before Election Day. However, he allocated an extra \$28 million for the Selective Service System's 2004 budget.

All males between 18 and 25 years old, including immigrants, must register under penalty of law. By March 30, 2005, the agency is to report to the president about the system's readiness to begin calling up draftees as early as June 15 of next year.

Meanwhile, the May edition of the Army Times reported that 118,000 former soldiers are being screened for possible reactivation this summer. The measure affects former active-duty or reserve soldiers under the Army's Individual Ready Reserve.

In a nationally televised speech at the U.S. Army War College May 25, Bush said additional U.S. troops may be required to shore up the occupation of Iraq. Even after the nominal June 30 handover of "sovereignty," an occupation of several years is envisioned to guarantee a regime compliant to U.S. interests.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told West Point graduates May 29 that the "war on terror" is just beginning.

What about Democrat John Kerry? He too knows that talk of the draft would be political suicide in an election year. But while he's not using the "D" word, he has called repeatedly for tens of thousands more troops to be sent to Iraq.

Recently Tim Russert of NBC's "Meet the Press" commented that it's hard to tell Kerry and Bush apart on Iraq. Kerry voted in favor of Bush's aggression against Iraq. He also voted for the Patriot Act, a terrible attack on civil rights and liberties; but he conveniently missed a crucial vote on extending unemployment benefits, sending that bill to defeat. No one should mistake Kerry for an anti-war candidate.

One of Kerry's best known allies is Sen. Hillary Clinton, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Clinton has been very vocal about demanding more troops be sent to crush the popular resistance in Iraq. She says the draft may be necessary.

Kerry has been courting another committee member, pro-war Republican Sen. John McCain, as a possible running mate.

Would they really do it?

Many young people are worried about the draft. Mainstream journalists and commentators have pooh-poohed their

and Asian, Arab and Native, women and men, lesbian, gay, bi, trans and straight, immigrants and those born here—create all the wealth of this society. Nothing would move, nothing would be built, no profits would be made without our labor power.

We are committed to mobilizing this powerful class to end the occupations from Iraq to Haiti and everywhere, and to building a working-class movement that can take the power away from the billionaires and create a society based on human need, not corporate greed. We are committed to struggling for socialism.

**John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez
Workers World Party candidates
for president and vice president**

concerns. They claim the draft is so unpopular no "sane" politician would try to bring it back.

But there are very deep strategic economic and political reasons why the U.S. ruling class and political establishment might feel the need to reinstate the draft.

Since World War II, dominating the oil-rich Middle East has been a primary goal of both Democratic and Republican governments. Wall Street, Big Oil and their loyal political servants in Washington would sacrifice many, many lives to try to hold on to Iraq, home of the world's second-largest known oil reserves.

U.S. big business is dependent on the economic exploitation of peoples and nations all over the globe. To that end it requires pliant governments that will do Washington's bidding. The Pentagon is the military enforcer of these policies, including "free trade" agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Iraq's people aren't the only ones resisting U.S. domination. North Korea, Palestine, Cuba, Colombia and many other countries have come under threat from the Clinton and Bush administrations. Haiti and Afghanistan are currently occupied by U.S. troops.

Then there's Venezuela, another major oil-producing country. A popular movement for social and economic justice, led by President Hugo Chávez, is taking increasingly radical steps to ensure its independence from U.S. domination. What will happen if the next administration decides U.S. troops must invade there as well?

U.S. Rep. Charles Rangel of Harlem, an opponent of the Iraq invasion, introduced the House bill on the draft. Many people believe that he intended it for anti-war purposes, to help raise public concern and opposition to the draft being reinstated. It pointedly includes provisions barring college deferrals—a loophole that let many wealthy white youths off the hook during the Vietnam War.

Whatever its original purpose, how-

ever, the bill, or one much like it, could be used, especially by a Democratic administration, to actually restart the draft.

No one should forget how the Clinton administration used rhetoric about "volunteerism" and "personal responsibility" to launch a ruthless assault on hard-won gains of the working class, including welfare and public education.

Supporters of conscription have begun to argue that it would be "more just" than the economic draft that pulls many impoverished young people into the current "all-volunteer" military. Many recruits are Black, Latin@, Asian, Arab, Native and poor white youths who see the military as their only hope of escaping unemployment or getting an education.

Draft supporters are also appealing to the families of soldiers currently stationed in Iraq—especially reservists and National Guard members who have had their tours of duty extended repeatedly—saying it would relieve their loved ones' suffering.

These are false and deeply hypocritical arguments.

In a class-divided and racist society like the United States, the rich will always find loopholes to avoid endangering themselves when they can use poor and working people as cannon fodder instead.

The real answer to the soldiers' long and unjust stay in Iraq is to fight to bring the troops home now.

The economic draft must be opposed. But the way to fight it is not to bring back involuntary conscription. The real solution is to fight to end the occupation and abolish the scandalous Pentagon budget. If that money were used for jobs programs, free quality education, and other human needs, the poverty draft would be wiped out immediately.

A militant mass movement to end the war and bring the troops home will force the capitalist establishment to backtrack from any plans to spring a post-election surprise to bring back the draft. With more and more workers, soldiers and military families turning against the war, now is an excellent time to build this movement. □

Picket recruiting center on Memorial Day

On Memorial Day, while George W. Bush was glorifying past wars, the Support Network for an Armed Forces Union (SNAFU) was picketing the Times Square Armed Forces Recruiting Center in New York. With veterans in the lead, carrying mock coffins and photos of dead Iraqis and U.S. soldiers, the group chanted "No more lives for George Bush's lies." SNAFU has set up a committee to support military resisters and is presently campaigning for the freedom of Sgt. Camilo Mejia, who refuses to return to Iraq to commit war crimes. □



WW PHOTO:
JOHN CATALINOTTO

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We look forward to the emergence of more heroic resisters like gay Marine Stephen Funk, recently freed from a military jail, and Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia, sentenced to a year in prison for refusing to commit war crimes. We pledge our support to them.

The working class here at home also has the right to resist. Tens of thousands of families have been torn apart to staff the occupations. Meanwhile, hundreds of billions of dollars that could be spent to create living-wage jobs, provide free, quality education, rebuild communities and create universal health care are instead being given to military-industrial corporations for the slaughter in Iraq.

Workers—Black and white, Latin@

Labor rally kicks off organizing Million Worker March set for October

Special to Workers World
San Francisco

Can labor organize an independent mass mobilization to address the broad range of problems facing the multinational working class here? Though many hurdles need to be overcome, the answer being given is a resounding "Yes!"

On Feb. 26, Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) in San Francisco proposed a bold initiative: a Million Worker March on Washington. This plucky union is well-known nationally for its leading role in class warfare and in struggles against U.S. imperialist wars. The leaders have educated, organized and defended their rank and file in a period of unprecedented hostility from Washington and Wall Street.

The local union passed a resolution that the call be forwarded to "unions, labor councils and labor organizations, as well as other organizations to which workers belong whether organized or not, so they can take similar action to organize this march as soon as possible." At a kickoff rally here on May 22, they set the date for the march: Oct. 16.

The May 22 rally sent a strong message that it was time to take the road of independent class struggle and break labor's traditional ties to the Democratic Party. Clarence Thomas, an executive board member of ILWU Local 10 and a nationally known African-American trade union leader, issued an appeal to support the Million Worker March: "This is a Call to working people to unite and mobilize around our own agenda. For the past decade we have been subject to an unrestrained corporate assault. This is the moment, this is the time for us to advance our own demands, our own needs and to proclaim a political agenda in our own vital interests." He and Trent Willis, another member of Local 10 ILWU, chaired the rally.

Thomas recently returned from a fact-finding contact with Iraqi workers and unions who are besieged under the brutal U.S. military occupation. He attacked the occupation and appealed to the U.S. labor movement to support

these sisters and brothers.

The rally of around 250 participants represented a diverse group, primarily trade union leaders from many parts of the country. From New York, Brenda Stokely—a leader in AFSCME District 1707, a nationally known African-American woman and a strong opponent of the Iraq war—gave a passionate and uplifting talk.

Chris Silvera, secretary treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City, N.Y., and chairperson of the Teamsters' National Black Caucus, reflected the sentiment of the rally. "Now you can sit around and wait for Kerry to do something. But we are going to Washington to shake the house. We need to take back our country, take back our rights and rip up the Patriot Act."

Among the many speakers was Walter Johnson, secretary treasurer of the San Francisco Central Labor Council. The base of support for the project so far is the West Coast labor movement, including undocumented representatives such as the San Francisco Day Laborer Program, community organizations and anti-war representatives.

Individual endorsers included longtime fighters for civil rights and in the anti-war struggle like Dick Gregory, Danny Glover and Casey Kasem. Organizers from Baltimore, St. Louis, Los Angeles, New York, Charleston, S.C., Cleveland and seven other cities agreed to set up centers to build the march.

The labor councils of Charleston, S.C., and five other cities around the country endorsed the proposal.

A call to the rank and file

This call comes at a most opportune time. It is an appeal to the rank and file, to the disfranchised, the oppressed who labor in the fields, the factories, the mines and the offices. It is a reminder that they have a collective power, a power in numbers that can resist the relentless assault on their living conditions.

It is a call to action against the banks and bosses, led by President George W. Bush, who has written off the workers, organized and unorganized.

The Wall Street Journal had gloated on Jan. 23 that "Membership has been in decline since the Reagan years, but the latest report shows a more dramatic fall than usual ... Unions don't seem to have the allure that they once did, especially for younger workers ... All of which must depress John Sweeney who took over the AFL-CIO some years ago promising organizing ... [The] shrinking labor movement has lost clout in the real economy."

The gloating is generated by the overall growth of profits resulting from layoffs, downsizing of wages and benefits, privatizing and outsourcing, which continue unabated without significant resistance. For 1,488 companies tracked by Dow Jones & Co., net income in the first quarter was \$159.2 billion, up 23 percent from the first quarter of 2003. (Wall Street Journal, May 28)

These corporate profits are achieved on the backs of the workers, especially through increased productivity, two-tier concessionary contracts and reduced wages and benefits. In the race to the bottom that generates these huge profits, the top leaders of the official labor movement have so far shown neither an independent policy nor a strategy of action to rescue the besieged sisters and brothers.

Workers restless over reliance on Democrats

The failure of AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and his executive board to mobilize the rank and file to fight for a substantial piece of the exorbitant profits has set a bad example for both the organized and unorganized, who are searching for a way out of the many horrors deluging them.

The Sweeney leadership is tied to the program of the Democratic Party and Sen. John Kerry. However, there is growing concern among the rank and file—who are still supporting the AFL-CIO's "anybody but Bush" pro-Kerry campaign—that it ignores their issues and concerns. Sweeney has shown no inclination to criticize Kerry or demand that he represent labor's needs.

Recently, Kerry failed to show up for a critical Senate vote on the extension of

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CUNY workers walk out

By a Professional Staff Congress member
New York

On May 27 the Professional Staff Congress, an American Federation of Teachers affiliate that represents the faculty and staff at the City University of New York, staged a one-day strike at the University Application Processing Center.

About 75 percent of the UAPC workers walked out. The Teamsters recognized the line and halted deliveries. Construction workers, whose picket lines at CUNY sites have been supported by the PSC, sent a delegation—along with one of the big inflated rats they use to satirize the bosses. Most of the PSC leadership showed up and walked the line.

While CUNY, as a public institution, is covered by New York state's Taylor Law making strikes illegal, the UAPC was privatized decades ago. Workers there have been paid by the Research Foundation of CUNY, a private institution affiliated with CUNY whose money doesn't come

through state or city appropriations.

Thousands of CUNY workers are paid through the foundation. City University has 19 campuses and a number of independent and semi-autonomous institutions—such as academic institutes, high schools, print shops, data processing centers, car pools and a police force—and workers paid by the foundation are scattered all over the city.

A few years ago, the PSC decided to organize workers paid by the foundation who were not in a union. The PSC won an election at the UAPC by a substantial majority and has been trying to gain a contract for over a year.

Recently, however, after losing a grant from the city that had partially funded the UAPC, CUNY decided to close it down. Two-thirds of the workers on the foundation payroll were to be transferred to CUNY and the others laid off.

Most of the transferred workers would be put in temporary and provisional entry-level positions without seniority.

Skilled veteran workers would have the status of new hires on probation. The laid-off workers could take a job with CUNY, if they could find one, but the foundation wasn't going to give them any help.

This caused a great deal of anger. When CUNY refused to bargain, the UAPC workers voted overwhelmingly for a strike.

Organizers for the PSC report that CUNY became more flexible after the strike and that progress is being made.

It should be noted that the PSC has also taken a very active stand on social justice issues. It has brought big contingents to most of the major New York anti-war rallies under the slogan "Money for education, not for war." Its leadership says that the struggles against the war and against higher tuition for immigrant students are part of the struggle for a better contract and working conditions for the membership. □

ON THE

SBC workers defend jobs from outsourcing

It took only four days on the picket line for the 100,000 workers at SBC Communications, the second-biggest phone company in the country, to win their strike on May 25.

One of the big issues for the Communications Workers members, who work for SBC in 13 states,

was job security. SBC, which garnered profits of \$8.5 billion last year, has cut more than 20,000 union jobs over the past three years. The five-year contract guarantees no layoffs of workers now on the payroll and the rehiring of several hundred already laid-off. SBC also agreed to work with the union to bring back jobs it had outsourced abroad.

Workers will receive average raises of 2.3 percent a year and lump sums of \$300 a year. Other key issues in the strike were healthcare costs—SBC wanted workers and retirees to pay more out of pocket—and pension improvements. The union reports that "health care benefits continue to be fully paid by SBC" but "there are some increases in co-payments for medical services and prescription drugs. ... Pensions will increase 13 percent over the contract term." The workers will vote on the contract in June.



Child care workers threaten walkout

State County and Municipal Employees District Council 1707, representing 7,000 child-care workers in New York City, has announced it will strike June 9-11. The union held a one-day strike in February 2003. The teachers, cooks, custodians and supervisors—overwhelmingly women—at 350 private centers financed by the city voted overwhelmingly on May 18 to stage the walkout. They have not received a raise in four years. Mayor Michael Bloomberg claims the city has no money for raises.

Labor unrest at Wall Street Journal

Staff writers and other workers at the Wall Street Journal did something unprecedented in early April. For the first time in the newspaper's history they set up a picket line to let the world know that the mouthpiece of corporate America is unfair to its workers.

In January members of the Independent Association of Publishers' Employees, a company union that recently affiliated with the Newspaper Guild, were offered a contract with a wage freeze and a huge hike in healthcare costs. The workers rejected the contract nine to one.

In April Dow Jones, which owns the Journal, issued a statement to its shareholders reporting that Journal executives had received bonuses totaling \$5 million. The workers calculated that the \$5 million would just cover the increase in their healthcare costs. So they hit the bricks.

Labor unrest stalking the hallways of the Wall Street Journal may not change its editorial viewpoint, but it's a textbook example of how corporate greed leads to labor consciousness and to struggle.

PICKET LINE

BY SUE DAVIS

Hunger strike supports Taco Bell boycott

In early April Tony Rivas, a student at Notre Dame University and the son of a farm worker, launched a seven-day hunger strike in support of the third anniversary of the Taco Bell boycott organized by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

Students at Notre Dame have contributed to the boycott for several years by demanding that the university sever an endorsement arrangement with Taco Bell and its athletic department. The campaign at Notre Dame is a powerful example of student organizing. To learn more about the struggle, go to the CIW's website, www.ciw-online.org.

Boycott Gallo wines

On April 23, the 11th anniversary of Cesar Chavez's death, the United Farm Workers issued a call for supporters to again boycott Gallo wines to help the workers win a new contract.

The legendary UFW founder called a boycott of Gallo wines in 1973 after Gallo refused to renegotiate a contract with the UFW. By 1975, a nationwide Louis Harris poll showed millions of people in the United States were boycotting Gallo wines in support of the UFW.

Now a new generation of the Gallo family is refusing to provide healthcare coverage and other basic benefits for 75 percent of their work force. Last December, a California judge ruled that Gallo had illegally tried to get rid of the UFW. To find out more about how to help the UFW's struggle, go to www.unionvoice.org.

Class action sexual harassment case

More than 2,000 women, both current and former employees of C.H. Robinson Worldwide, a freight logistics company based in Minnesota, are plaintiffs in a sexual discrimination and harassment case against the company. They filed a motion May 28 to turn the case into a class action.

Not only did the company systematically discriminate against the women in promotions and pay, but it permitted a hostile work environment. For example, men sent pornography to one another by email and inappropriately touched and propositioned women workers.

Screenwriters refuse studios' offer

Four days after the May 1 expiration of their contract, screenwriters in the Writers Guild of America called the Hollywood studios' three-year offer "unacceptable." Not only would screenwriters' healthcare benefits be cut, but the studios didn't offer any increases in royalties in the highly lucrative DVD and video-cassette market. There was also no provision for royalties on Internet sales or for the status of writers on television reality shows.

The guild is considering deferring further negotiations until 2005, which the Screen Actors Guild did earlier this year. By adopting the same strategy, the Writers Guild hopes to combine its negotiating power with that of the Screen Actors Guild and the Directors Guild of America, whose contract also expires next year. That follows the old labor adage: In unity there is strength. □

Pride & struggle a century ago

The love that dared to speak its name

By Leslie Feinberg

The love that had dared not speak its name raised its voice in the 1860s in Germany. As its demands rose, they were amplified by support from the revolutionary groundswell of workers who were organizing and fighting to win basic democratic rights.

From the first challenges to sexual oppression in the 1860s, the left wing of the emerging socialist movement—those revolutionaries who were fighting to shatter the manacles of capitalism as well as the mental shackles of ideological reaction—supported this struggle against state repression and for sexual liberation.

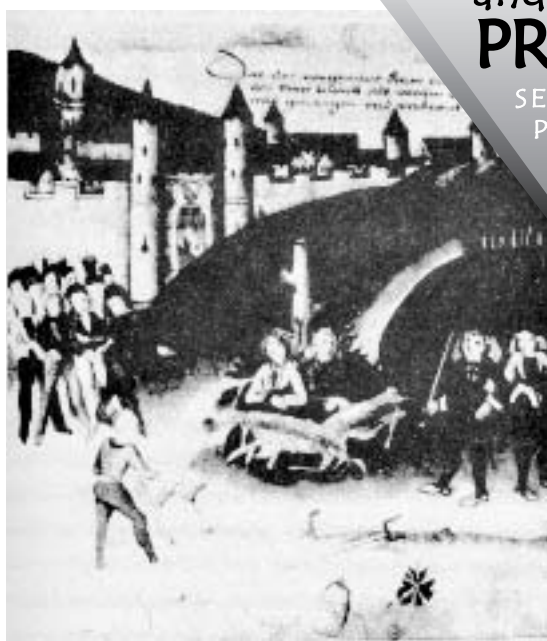
In 1862, a young lawyer named Jean Baptiste von Schweitzer was convicted of a homosexual act in a city park. Von Schweitzer was a member of the socialist German Workers Association, headed by Ferdinand Lassalle. Some in the group wanted to expel Von Schweitzer. But Lassalle defended him, arguing that sexuality "ought to be left up to each person" whenever no one else is harmed.

Not only wasn't Von Schweitzer expelled; he became president of this socialist workers' organization after Lassalle's death.

The struggle for emancipation ratcheted up in the 1860s, when a Prussian proposal for a harsh penal code made male homosexuality an even more serious crime.

In 1864, a gay man in Germany began writing courageously and prolifically

Below, homosexual couple being burned in Zurich, 1482.



against this law and in defense of homosexuality. Karl Ulrichs was a civil servant in the small city-state of Hanover. He knew that Prussia would soon absorb the city, extending anti-gay legislation throughout Germany.

As early as 1862 he had coined the word "Urning" to describe a male sexually attracted to other males, which he believed derived from a kind of intersexuality in some brains. The English translation is "Uranian." This term—based on a myth in Plato's "Symposium" that referred to a goddess of men who love men—was picked up and used throughout Europe and England.

Despite being confronted with shock and outrage, Ulrichs carried out a 30-year



Karl Heinrich Ulrichs

Lesbian ♦ gay ♦ bi
and trans
PRIDE

SERIES
PART
2

public campaign, mainly literary, warning of the dangers of the repressive Prussian law and insisting on justice for "Urnings."

In 1869, a Hungarian doctor wrote an open letter in defense of gay rights to the minister of justice. While his last name is known—Benkert—he wrote under the pseudonym Karoly Maria Kertbeny. In 1868 he created the term "homosexuality."

Benkert pointed out that since the French Revolution and the introduction of the Napoleonic Code, the momentum of history was toward decriminalizing homosexuality.

He listed famous homosexuals in history like Shakespeare, Newton, Michelangelo, Frederick the Great and countless others and asked how much cultural history would have been squandered by their imprisonment.

Benkert stressed that society had to escape from the genocidal feudal campaigns that had claimed millions of lives. He denounced the use of scapegoating and concluded that the state had no business nosing around in people's sexual lives.

In 1871, a Draconian anti-gay Paragraph 175 was introduced with no debate into the penal code of the Second Reich.

Fight against Paragraph 175 heats up

After 30 years of trailblazing work by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Benkert and others, the first political movement of a mass

Continued on page 11

Opponent of police brutality dies in jail

Protesters say cops killed May Molina

By Lou Paulsen
Chicago

The movement against police brutality and abuse in Chicago has swung into action demanding justice in the death of one of its own leaders. May Molina Ortiz, who had organized and participated in countless protests against police brutality, torture and murders, died in the Belmont and Western lockup around 5 a.m. on May 26—about 31 hours after her arrest for heroin possession in a suspicious raid.

Friends and family insist Molina did not use heroin and would not have possessed it. "If you knew my aunt, you know these things [the police are] saying don't make sense," said her niece, Maritza Perez.

Molina was a disabled grandmother in her 50s who suffered from diabetes, asthma and other ailments. She could not travel without a wheelchair and often an oxygen tank. After her arrest around 10 p.m. on May 24, family members tried repeatedly to bring Molina her prescription medications. The police refused. The next afternoon, Molina's lawyer, Jerry Bischoff, visited her and found her almost comatose.

He warned the desk sergeant to take her



May Molina Ortiz holds sign calling for her son's freedom.

to a hospital. The police refused. The next morning, she was found dead in her holding cell.

"They denied her her medicine," said nephew Alexander Hauad. "They murdered her."

The medical examiner's office claims to have found six tinfoil packets of heroin in Molina's esophagus, stomach and small intestine. If true, persons close to the case say, this is most consistent with her having been fed the packets shortly before

death.

Witnesses to the raid say police, with suspicious speed, "found" quantities of heroin in two apartments in Molina's building, then ransacked the apartments to make it look as if they had searched.

Molina co-founded the group Comite Exigimos Justicia (We Demand Justice) while trying to free her son, Salvador Ortiz, from a frame-up murder charge. She was also a leader of Families of the Wrongfully Convicted.

"She had a very big heart," wrote Rose Sifuentes of the Comite. "Whenever we were planning to organize a rally or bringing in supplies for our fundraisers, no questions asked, she was ready to vol-

unteer."

Five days before her death, she got a major law firm to take her son's case.

The evening of Molina's death, over 100 attended a candlelight vigil in front of the police station where she died. Family members of all ages wept as they remembered a woman who was always ready to feed the hungry and the homeless, who would "stuff you with rice and red beans" if you went to her house for a meeting, and who was never deterred from protesting by bad weather or anything else.

People were outraged that she had died "under torture." They compared her to the U.S. occupiers' victims at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

The next night, nearly 200 people packed a meeting of the Police Board to demand justice. When they rose from their seats and approached board members, the board hastily adjourned. Family and supporters were promised a meeting with Lori Lightfoot, head of the Office of Professional Standards.

But that promise was broken on May 28, when Lightfoot announced she would meet only with family members. "People who supported May Molina are family," retorted her nephew.

Further actions are scheduled for the first week in June. Said one speaker at the vigil, "We will make her name a banner in the struggle." □

Unnatural disaster

Behind Haiti's flood devastation

By G. Dunkel

The recent floods in southwestern Haiti have caused great devastation—so great, in fact, that the authorities have stopped counting the dead. Bodies are being piled in common graves 10 feet wide, 10 feet long and 20 feet deep. Up to 3,000 deaths are estimated in Haiti alone. There has also been much devastation in nearby areas of the Dominican Republic.

There will be more deaths. Three dams in Haiti were close to bursting May 30. The flood waters are filled with dead bod-

ies that will become breeding grounds for dengue, cholera, typhoid, hepatitis and insects that carry pathogens.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in a statement released as he left Jamaica for South Africa May 30, connected this ecological disaster with the political disaster of the U.S.-backed coup that struck Haiti on Feb. 29.

Aristide said: "While on one side thousands are being killed for supporting their elected government, on the other side, more than 2,000 people lost their lives because of the ecological disaster that we

all recently witnessed. We stand in solidarity with the residents of Mapou, Fonds Verette, Jimani, and with all Haitians and Dominicans directly affected."

The floods, produced by up to 5 feet of rainfall over the past month, wiped out whole villages. Some refugees walked for days over 8,000-foot-high mountains to reach the safety of the coast, but not everyone had the strength.

In flooded areas on the Dominican side of the border, the Dominican Air Force sprayed disinfectant and insecticide on flood waters to curb the spread of disease. Haiti doesn't have an air force but officials of the coup regime say they are trying to arrange similar measures.

Marines sent in for photo-ops

The United States announced it would grant Haiti a mere \$50,000 to help with the costs of the floods, which as of May 29 had affected between 75,000 and 150,000 people. The Organization of American States will chip in another \$25,000. France, which has about 1,000 soldiers occupying Haiti, and the European Union have promised aid, but haven't delivered yet.

Some 1,900 U.S. Marines currently occupy Haiti to back up the U.S.-trained and -financed contras that overthrew Aristide's elected government. Following a plan by the U.S. ambassador, the Marines kidnapped President Aristide and removed him from the country last Feb. 29.

Since then, the Marines have aided the contras—former death-squad members and soldiers—in house-to-house searches and arrests of Aristide supporters.

On May 18, Haitian Flag Day, Marines presided over a police massacre that left several protesters dead on the streets of Port-au-Prince.

What have the U.S. forces done to help flood-stricken Haitian communities? Not much. Marine helicopters have transported some supplies from the capital to the flooded areas.

Heavy-lift helicopters like those used by the Marines are the only practical way of supplying aid, since all roads in the area have been washed out. The coup regime's "public works minister," Jean-Paul Toussaint, said it would be late autumn before the roads are repaired.

But the Marines, having facilitated the kidnapping of Aristide, began pulling out of Haiti on June 1. They are scheduled to be gone by June 20. They and their helicopters are headed to Iraq.

The United Nations force replacing them will include soldiers from Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, China, Nepal, Bangladesh and France. This force has yet to be organized—and won't have heavy-lift helicopters.

So much for the U.S. military's humanitarianism, lauded by President George W. Bush in the aftermath of the Abu Ghraib prison torture scandal.

Relief organizations say they will try to replace the helicopters with stopgap measures. Barges will carry aid from Port-au-Prince to small ports in southwestern Haiti. The supplies will then have to be carried inland by mule caravans.

Poverty and deforestation

Anyone flying over the island of Hispaniola, shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, can easily see the border. The Dominican side is verdant and lush. The Haitian side is parched brown.

Haiti has almost no forests—less than 4 percent of its land, according to a survey

made in 2000. What forest it does have is shrinking rapidly.

Without forests, the soil is unable to absorb the abundant rains. Rainwater flows out to sea in torrents, stripping the land. Floods are common.

Most Haitians don't have access to safe drinking water—70 percent, according to the World Health Organization. People must drink from rivers, polluted wells or stagnant reservoirs. A 2003 survey ranked Haiti last out of 147 countries surveyed on access to potable water.

Haiti's deforestation began in the 18th century when the French slave owners chopped down every mahogany tree they could find. In the 19th century, after Haiti won a revolutionary war for independence, it endured a 56-year boycott imposed by the U.S. and subsequent economic strangulation. Charcoal was the only practical way for most Haitians to cook their food. The forests were further depleted by the need to make charcoal.

Millions of trees were planted over the past 80 years, but most have been converted to charcoal. Peasants need the cash they get by selling it and poor people in the cities have no other way of cooking.

Two U.S. occupations in the past decade, costing workers here well over a billion dollars, have only reinforced Haiti's poverty by tightening the grip of transnational companies and the local ruling class over the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation.

"Many Haitians eat one meal a day," reported the June 1 New York Times. "The main course is rice, and the price of a 110-pound sack doubled, to \$45 from \$22.50, between late January and early May. That price has dropped to about \$37 in the past few weeks but is still too high, said Clermathe Baron, 29, who sells the big white sacks across the street from the Haitian customs office near the port."

The U.S.-coup regime removed price controls enforced by Aristide to keep this staple within the reach of Haitian workers. While rice prices have doubled, the new regime has cut the daily minimum wage in half. □

Holding Haitian flag are, from left, Zakia Rafiq Shabazz, featured speaker Pat Chin, and forum co-chairs Sue Kelly of Richmond ANSWER and Ana Edwards of Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality.



WW PHOTO: PHIL WILAYTO

Richmond forum hears

Truth behind overthrow of Aristide

By Phil Wilayto
Richmond, Va.

The public forum advertised in Richmond, Va., promised to reveal "the real story behind the overthrow of President Aristide" of Haiti. The audience at the May 27 event wasn't disappointed.

The evening's featured speaker was Pat Chin, activist, journalist and co-editor of the recently published book "Haiti: A Slave Rebellion—200 Years after 1804." Jamaica-born Chin is a contributing editor to Workers World newspaper.

Speaking at Asbury United Methodist Church, one of the city's oldest African-American congregations, Chin detailed how President Jean-Bertrand Aristide had tried to improve the lives of Haiti's impoverished masses, only to be undermined by Washington. The International Monetary Fund was pressured to suspend promised development loans. The U.S. big-business media accused his administration of corruption.

By contrast, although former dictators "Papa Doc" and "Baby Doc" Duvalier ran Haiti like a private family business, Washington supported them for decades.

Chin explained how the United States supplied the arms used by anti-Aristide "rebels" to undermine his government's rule. Aristide had abolished the corrupt and notoriously brutal Haitian army. But because he had not replaced it with any kind of people's militia, he and his government had little defense against the U.S.-backed insurgency.

While the news media here faithfully repeated the U.S. State Department lie that Aristide had "resigned" his office on Feb. 29, Chin explained how the popularly

elected president had been virtually kidnapped by U.S. Marines and flown to isolation in the Central African Republic. It was only after an emergency solidarity delegation followed Aristide to the CAR and demanded to be allowed to meet with him that he was able to speak to reporters. The delegation included members of the New York-based Haiti Support Network and the International Action Center.

Since the coup, Chin explained, repression has continued. Many former government officials, along with members and supporters of the popular movement that had swept Aristide into office, have been arrested. "U.S. soldiers now work to defend the coup regime while doing little to protect the people," Chin said.

Despite the repression, however, the people of Haiti, the world's first independent Black republic, have courageously mobilized to demand the return of their president and the removal of U.S., French and other foreign troops from their land.

Chin concluded her talk by urging support for the June 5 ANSWER march in Washington, D.C., demanding the withdrawal of all U.S. and other foreign forces from Haiti, Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries.

The Richmond forum, which included a showing of the award-winning documentary "Bitter Cane," was co-sponsored by the Richmond chapter of International ANSWER and the Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality, a predominantly Black community organization.

Also speaking was Zakia Rafiq Shabazz, founder and national director of United Parents Against Lead, who reported on an ongoing community campaign to end lead poisoning in Richmond. □

Million Worker set for October

Continued from page 4

unemployment benefits, a life-and-death issue for the millions who have exhausted them. It needed 60 votes to pass. The amendment failed by one vote. Kerry knew it would be close but decided it was more important to continue on the campaign trail, posturing as the champion of the people and lauding the virtues of his differences with Bush.

The Democratic Party is nothing more than a "loyal opposition" to the self-serving, openly pro-big-business Republican Party. The election campaigns of the two capitalist parties show an interest only in getting votes, spending hundreds of millions of dollars to outdo each other and bedazzle the people with ads, television commercials and monopolized media exposure. Neither candidate can solve the crisis of imperialist wars for markets and profits or the relentless drive to exploit the workers and oppressed here.

Once again, the workers and the oppressed face the choice of a lesser of two evils.

In the United States today over 13 million workers, coming from many different

Colombian unions fight back

Int'l caravan to challenge repression

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

SINALTRAINAL, the Colombian Coca-Cola workers' union, and others will host an International Caravan to Save the Lives of Colombian Workers from June 21-25. Several international delegations have already pledged support for this crucial event, including one from the United States.

The caravan's purpose is to raise global awareness about the courageous women and men who put themselves in the line of fire by defending their jobs, their livelihoods and their unions. In the process, they are also defending human rights and working to build another Colombia where social justice, peace and solidarity prevail.

Workers have been threatened, kidnapped, disappeared, imprisoned, tortured and even assassinated by paramilitary death squads that do the dirty work for the Colombian government and its chief partners, Wall Street and Washington. The threats and violence extend to workers' families. No union leader or activist is immune.

Colombia is the deadliest country for union organizers. Nine out of every 10 union leaders murdered in the world die in Colombia. A recent report released by the International Labor Organization stated: "The workers of Colombia are among the most unprotected of the world as far as their union rights are concerned."

This deliberate policy of exterminating workers' organization has decimated the union movement's ranks. Over the last four years the general membership in trade unions has decreased from 10 percent to less than 5 percent.

Yet the threats haven't deterred the workers' relentless struggle.

Take the strike begun April 22 by oil workers of the Workers Syndicate Union (USO) against the attempted privatization of ECOPEPETROL. This oil company was nationalized in 1948 through a worker's strike that ended the control of transnational monopolies.

President Álvaro Uribe Vélez, a strong

supporter of U.S. neoliberal policies, wanted to rewrite contracts to give U.S. oil companies like Chevron-Texaco and ExxonMobil greater control. He declared the strike illegal.

Unionists and supporters endured a climate of violent harassment for over a month. More than 100 USO members were threatened or fired for their participation in the strike. There were persistent rumors of assassination planned against all the leaders active in the strike. In Colombia, those rumors tend to materialize.

The assassination "rumors" were directed against USO's national board members, SINALTRAINAL, the human rights organization CREDHOS and the Popular Women's Organization.

A written death threat was sent to the home of union leader César Martínez on May 26—just six hours after an accord was signed ending the strike.

Indigenous people attacked

The violence extends to any person or group that interferes with the Colombian government's neoliberal policies, whether by organizing or just residing in a part of the country sought by transnational corporations for their "megaprojects."

More than 400 Indigenous Wayúu people were recently displaced from La Guajira, an oil- and coal-rich department of northern Colombia, on the Venezuelan border.

The testimony of Alberto, a Wayúu, to the Venezuelan newspaper Últimas Noticias on May 23 speaks of the horrendous methods used by the paramilitaries. "Oh, brother, I feel as if my heart is coming out my mouth. You cannot imagine how it is to have to escape on the run so that they won't kill you, and then hear the cries of the kids, of my two little sons who they burned alive without me being able to do anything.

"They burned them alive inside my pickup. Also, they beheaded my mother and cut my nephews to pieces. They didn't shoot them, they tortured them so we would hear their screams, and they cut

them up alive with a chainsaw."

Thirty Wayúu people were massacred to terrorize the rest of the population and render them unable to continue resisting the government/corporate attempt to steal their land. According to the Associated Press, the Wayúu crossed into Venezuela, settling in a poor neighborhood of Maracaibo.

That is standard operating procedure for the paramilitaries.

There is concern now in Colombia that a plan for the so-called demobilization of the paramilitaries will lead to more widespread violence from the "paras," who could now be recruited by the state as "peasant soldiers" to spy on the population.

U.S. targets FARC

The Colombian Self-Defense Forces (AUC) is the paramilitaries' umbrella group. AUC is in bogus "peace negotiations" with President Uribe in an attempt to hush up denunciations by international human rights organizations and make it easier for the U.S. government to aid the war against labor, Indigenous communities and revolutionary guerrilla movements.

General James T. Hill, the U.S. Army Commander of the Southern Command, testified before the House Armed Services Committee on March 24 on the situation in Latin America. He said: "The narcoterrorists in Colombia remain the largest and most well-known threat in our region."

Hill continued: "All three narcoterrorist groups are named on the Department of State's list of designated foreign terrorist organizations: the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC; the National Liberation Army, or ELN; and the United Self-Defense Forces, or AUC. The FARC still comprises the largest threat, with an estimated 13,000-15,000 members. Much of the AUC, while still a threat and still heavily involved in narcotics trafficking, is in peace negotiations with the Government of Colombia."

"Narcoterrorist" is a slanderous term used to falsely implicate the Marxist

groups FARC and ELN in drug-running.

Hill went on to remind Congress how vital the Andean region is to U.S. business interests and how the Pentagon has been helping the Colombian military in conjunction with Plan Colombia.

The most common accusation against union leaders and other progressive activists, including peasants, Colombians of African descent and the Indigenous people, is aiding the guerrillas. That accusation has led to mass arrests in several regions of the country.

It has also caused the criminalization of protests—which are increasing in frequency and getting more massive, particularly those denouncing privatization and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. On May 18, during talks on the FTAA, demonstrations were called in several cities by a variety of organizations and unions.

Some 60,000 people marched in Bogotá and 20,000 came from different cities in the south to converge on Cartagena, the northern city where the talks were held. The peaceful march in Cartagena was attacked by police with rubber bullets and tear gas.

Colombia's people are under constant assault by the U.S.-backed Colombian military, paramilitaries and police. They show continued determination to struggle in the face of the almost unimaginable repression imposed by "Democratic Security," Uribe's plan to eliminate dissent.

Their courage must be supported internationally. This is a case where solidarity can truly make a difference. As long as news of the violence against union leaders, activists and communities remains confined to Colombia's borders, they will face extermination. Their voices must be heard and answered by the international community.

For more information about the International Caravan to Save the Lives of Colombian Workers, call the International Action Center at (212) 633-6646, send email to iacenter@iacenter.org, or visit www.iacenter.org. □

er March er

nationalities, are organized into 66 affiliated unions. They are primarily low-paid and service-oriented. Many are women. There are differences among the AFL-CIO officials on a number of issues. Can this immense rank and file pressure the more progressive wing of the leadership to support the Million Worker March on Washington?

The May 22 kickoff rally here ended with a Mission Statement: "Why will we be marching on Washington? Only our own independent mobilization of working people across America can open the way to addressing our needs and our agenda."

History has confirmed over and over again that all profound social, economic and political change starts from below. The Million Worker March on Washington is a beginning—a significant step in building a movement of multinational workers and oppressed nationalities in a classwide, independent struggle that can generate a genuine, anti-capitalist fight-back. □



René González

Ramón Labañino

Gerardo Hernández

Fernando González

Antonio Guerrero

Campaign for Cuban 5 at critical point

By Julie Fry

Any day now, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals will announce its decision on whether it will overturn the convictions of the Cuban Five, political prisoners in the United States. Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González were arrested for trying to prevent violent attacks on Cuban and U.S. citizens by right-wing groups in Miami.

The defense team for the five have filed a several-hundred-page appellate brief with the Court of Appeals exten-

sively documenting many violations of law and the Constitution committed by the prosecutors in the original trial of the five in Miami. The defense team also showed that the five did not receive a fair trial because of the overwhelming weight of anti-Cuba forces in Miami that undoubtedly influenced the jury.

The three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit recently requested more documentation from the defense team for all the points raised in the appeal. It is not clear what this request means for the five prisoners, but it does indicate that the judges have not made a decision yet.

It is therefore crucial that activists take this opportunity to build heightened support for the five.

The Cuban Five have been held in inhuman conditions in U.S. jails. Although model prisoners, they were kept in solitary confinement for over a year. Several have also been denied the right to visit with their wives and children.

Contingents in support of the five will march at the major anti-occupation rallies on June 5. They will be demanding freedom for the Cuban Five and an end to U.S. aggression toward Cuba. □



Manufactured 'sovereignty'

CIA picks Iraqi prime minister

Continued from page 1

them are hated in Iraq. There is no way around it. For the minority who still do not hate them for their brutal military raids, their torture at Abu Ghraib, the death and destruction visited on Falluja, Najaf and countless other cities, and their imperial arrogance, fear of being tainted by association with the occupiers keeps them away from even appearing to collaborate.

Everyone knows that there is no way to transfer "sovereignty" to a group that relies on the U.S. militarily, financially, politically and is hated by the Iraqi people in whose name they are supposed to be exercising sovereignty.

Washington quietly planned total control

Right now negotiations among the imperialist powers are going on in the United Nations Security Council over how much "sovereignty" to give Iraq. The axis of the debate is whether or not to put forward a time table for U.S. withdrawal, how much say the Iraqis will have in U.S. military operations, the command over the Iraqi army and police, access to finances, and so on.

This debate is largely one of form. "As Washington prepares to hand over power, U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer and other officials are quietly building institutions that will give the U.S. powerful levers for influencing nearly every important decision the interim government will make." (Wall Street Journal, May 13)

Washington has established advisers at every level of government and in every ministry. The advisers, either U.S. or Iraqi proxies, will serve multi-year terms and will have authority to award contracts, conduct investigations and direct troops. The new government will "be unable to make major decisions within specific ministries without tacit U.S. approval."

The Office of Inspector General will put appointees in every ministry for five-year terms. The Board of Supreme Audit will review all contracts and investigate any agency that uses public money—most of which will come from the U.S. government.

"The nerve center of the U.S. presence in Iraq," reported the Journal, "will be the massive new embassy." It will employ 1,300 people from the U.S. and 2,000 or



Relatives greet 17-year-old released from Abu Ghraib prison.

more Iraqis. Ambassador John Negroponte will be the new proconsul of Iraq, assisted by two deputies: James Jeffrey, formerly of the Army Special Forces, and Ron Newman, another military figure.

In addition to having 140,000 troops in the country, the Pentagon is going ahead with plans to establish 14 permanent military bases in Iraq. Washington has set up intricate consulting relationships, auditing programs and other secret methods of controlling Iraqi oil money.

Mission not accomplished

The point is, however, that the Iraqi people know all this. And no Bush-orchestrated phony "transfer of sovereignty" can conceal the plans to hold the country in subjugation. This is what has fueled the resistance and will continue to do so.

The June 30 transfer was originally conceived of last December, as part of Bush's election strategy. It was supposed

to be a moment of triumph. Oil was supposed to be flowing and oil profits were supposed to be recycled into U.S. corporate coffers. The "reconstruction process" was supposed to be in full swing as a prime mechanism for U.S. multinationals to get a complete lock on the Iraqi economy.

A stable puppet regime was supposed to be in place and on display for the world—a cover for the U.S. imperialist takeover. The riches were supposed to be flowing into Wall Street and the ruling class would be content; media critics would be silenced. The Bush-Rumsfeld triumphalist doctrine of preemptive war and unilateral world conquest would be vindicated. Bush's poll numbers would rise irresistibly on his way to the election.

June 30, 2004, was supposed to reverse the humiliating after-effects of Bush's "mission accomplished" landing on the USS Lincoln aircraft carrier on May 1, 2003. That would-be presidential cam-

paign photo-op subsequently turned out to be a disaster.

Today, no one can ignore the fact that an isolated group of puppets has been selected behind the scenes, in secret back-room deals, protected by the highest security inside the U.S. Occupation Authority Green Zone. The site and time of the presentation of the new "interim government" was kept a secret. But that did not keep the Iraqi resistance from setting off a car bomb outside the Green Zone to coincide with the ceremonies.

While the new group was speaking, smoke was billowing up in central Baghdad near the Green Zone. Four mortar-like explosions were heard in the same area. Gunfire erupted near one of the entrances to the zone. The U.S. military had to rush soldiers from the convention center toward the al-Rashid Hotel while aircraft hovered overhead.

The capitalist media tried to minimize these events, but the presentation of the interim government will turn out to be a strong show of the weakness and isolation, not only of the puppet group, but of the U.S. occupation itself.

On both occasions, May 1, 2003, and June 1, 2004, the U.S. imperialists suffered from the same fundamental miscalculation. They completely discounted the determination of the Iraqi people to resist and to fight for national liberation from colonialism—just as they had done in Vietnam, just as the French did in Algeria, just as all ruling classes do. The U.S. imperialists discounted the politically conscious masses of people who, with their long history of anti-colonialism, are a fundamental factor that must be taken into consideration.

The struggle of the Iraqis has forced the Bush administration to pull back in Falluja and Najaf. It has forced the Pentagon to seek relief. The timing of the pull-back has been influenced by the exhaustion of the U.S. soldiers who have been kept on extended tours, sent in to fight a dirty war, and demoralized by the exposure of horrendous tortures at Abu Ghraib prison and the subsequent attempt by the high command to dump it



Palestinians resist despite massacres

Gaza becomes an urban battleground

all on low-ranking enlisted soldiers.

The pullback has also been dictated by Bush's election needs. The growing discontent of the people in this country with mounting casualties, the hundreds of billions of dollars being poured into the occupation with no real end in sight, and the Abu Ghraib revelations have sent Bush's poll ratings to record lows.

Warning: Split in ruling class does not mean pullout

The relentless Iraqi resistance has split the ruling class, the military and the media. Where there was once uniform praise for the war, now there is massive and growing criticism and disillusionment with the course of the occupation. Bush could not afford another major military and political setback in Iraq, either in Falluja or Najaf.

Because of the resistance, the occupation is truly in crisis. Talk of setting an exit date is beginning to show up in the media and from various advisors to U.S. imperialism, including Zbigniew Brzezinski, Gen. William Odom and others. Creeping defeatism is setting in among sections of the ruling class.

But the anti-war movement should not be lulled into inactivity by all the splits and criticisms. The Pentagon is on the ground. The stakes for U.S. imperialism are high. Its goal of reconquering the Middle East with Iraq as its strategic centerpiece looks dim right now. But no one should count on them to pull out. They are coming toward a situation where they will eventually be faced with a stark choice between defeat and an escalation in their Iraq military adventure.

John Kerry is trying to put forth a program that would pull their irons out of the fire. His program for Iraq is to internationalize the occupation, internationalize the oppression and the exploitation of the Iraqi people. Share the plunder with imperialist allies in return for troops on the ground.

That itself is an imperialist solution that is unacceptable to the Iraqi people and should be unacceptable to the anti-war movement.

But Kerry speaks for a section of the ruling class that says "defeat is unthinkable." He has said as much, declaring that "the stakes are too high." And in the event that the other imperialists cannot be persuaded to take Washington off the hook, and until that should happen, he is firmly committed, as is a large section of the military, to sending in more U.S. troops.

Of course, he does not say where these troops will come from. No one mentions the draft in an election year. But a draft is inevitable should the U.S. ruling class decide on the adventure of escalation.

The combination of the determined Iraqi resistance, the splits growing in the ruling class, the exhaustion of U.S. troops, the need for a new military strategy, and the needs of the Bush election campaign have produced a moment in which many are watching the politics of the election and the maneuvers of the U.S. government in Iraq in the hope that there will be some sort of peaceful resolution of the situation.

The only course to pursue, now that the occupation is in a crisis, is one of independent anti-war struggle, without falling prey to the "anybody but Bush" syndrome. It is time to escalate the anti-war struggle and point the finger at the giant capitalists, the imperialists who want to exploit and dominate the world. They are the true war makers and war criminals. □

By John Catalinotto

For over two weeks in May the Israeli military carried out a massive assault in the densely populated and occupied Gaza Strip, especially the southern town of Rafah at the Egyptian border. They killed dozens of Palestinians and wounded hundreds with rockets, tank shells, machine gun rounds and sniper fire.

The ultra-right Israeli Premier Ariel Sharon ordered this assault even as he promoted a plan that is ostensibly to remove Israeli settlements from Gaza. He is in a battle with other right-wing members of his Likud Party over what tactics to apply to make the Israeli occupation of Palestine succeed.

According to Palestinian medical caregivers, most of the dead and wounded in Gaza were civilians, many of them children. In addition, the Israeli military used bulldozers and explosives to destroy hundreds of homes and make thousands of Palestinians homeless.

Amnesty International has demanded an investigation into the deaths of Asma al-Mughayr, 16 years old, and her 13-year-old brother, Ahmad. The two children were shot dead on May 18 on the roof terrace of their home in Rafah. Each was killed by a single bullet to the head.

According to the Israeli anti-war movement Gush Shalom, evidence indicates that "the bullets which killed the two children were fired from the top floor of a nearby house, the highest building in the area, which had been taken over by Israeli soldiers shortly before the two children were shot."

The incident that sparked international condemnations took place on May 19 when Israeli tanks fired on civilian demonstrators in Rafah. According to an Associated Press report: "Israeli forces fired a missile and a barrage of tank shells to hold back a crowd of Palestinians protesting military operations in Gaza on Wednesday, killing at least 10, including children and teens. Overwhelmed doctors treated some of the dozens of wounded on blood-drenched hospital floors."

The United Nations Security Council voted 14-0 on May 19 to condemn the Israeli attacks, but the U.S. ambassador abstained. Many individual governments, including Brazil, India and Pakistan, as well as the African Union, condemned the Israeli massacres.

Washington refused to join the condemnation. When it abstained instead of vetoing, that did put more public distance between U.S. and Israeli policies than is usual. Nevertheless, the Israeli military's helicopter pilots continued to use U.S.-supplied weapons to carry out bombing and rocket attacks on targets—that is, Palestinian people—in the occupied territories.

Although the Israeli military has been carrying out a wholesale slaughter of Palestinians, perhaps the most telling battles of the month took place on May 10 and 11. On May 10, an Israeli tank carrying explosives to blow up homes hit a mine in the Zeitoun district of Gaza. It exploded, killing the six-member tank crew. The next day another five Israeli troops were killed when a rocket-propelled grenade hit their explosives-laden armored personnel carrier. This added up to the greatest loss of Israeli troops in years.

These casualties, though small in num-

ber compared to the slaughter of Palestinian civilians, still represented a show of determination and courage by the Palestinian fighters that had an impact on the Israeli population. On May 15 some 150,000 war-weary Israelis protested Sharon's aggressive policies in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square and demanded he withdraw from Gaza.

Later in the month, 46 reserve soldiers signed a statement refusing to defend the settlements in Gaza. As the attacks on Rafah continued, the mother of an Israeli colonel joined a protest of the massacres, carrying a sign that read, "Down with the occupation."

June 5, 1967

Before June 1967, the Egyptian government administered Gaza. It was populated by Palestinian refugees who had been driven from their homes in the 1948 war that created Israel. On June 5, 1967, Israel, with the full support of the U.S. government under President Lyndon Johnson, a Democrat, launched a lightning war on Syria, Egypt and Jordan. It seized and has held until now Jordan's West Bank, Syria's Golan Heights, and Gaza.

The preponderant strategy endorsed by all groupings in the U.S. imperialist ruling class having major interests in this oil-rich region has been to develop the Israeli state as a strategic ally in repressing the movements for Middle East liberation. For over 50 years Washington has given close economic, military and diplomatic support to Israel, which in turn is completely dependent on U.S. imperialism for its existence as a settler state.

The Bush administration's so-called neo-cons, that is, the grouping most

responsible for planning the war on Iraq, have also given the strongest support to the most aggressive Israeli factions in the Likud Party, including Sharon himself. These rightists agree on using force to destroy any regime in the region that expresses independence and sovereignty. Throughout these same years, however, not only these rightists but liberal Democrats have fully supported Israel against any real gains for Palestinian liberation.

In a word, the U.S. ruling class believes its interests in the region are best served by maintaining an alliance with the Israeli state. This virtual unity of ruling-class interests had always proved an obstacle to developing a popular movement of solidarity with Palestinian liberation. Even within the anti-war movement, this solidarity could not be taken for granted.

At the time of the 1967 war, the only action taken by the U.S. movement was a demonstration by Youth Against War and Fascism, the youth organization of Workers World Party. YAWF protested the U.S.-backed Israeli aggression in a demonstration at the United Nations in New York.

In the 37 years since that date, the Palestinians, through their heroic struggle, have established themselves as a central liberation movement among the peoples of the region, winning solidarity throughout the world. Even so, it was only after a determined effort by the ANSWER coalition that the new anti-war movement in the United States included solidarity with Palestine liberation in the demonstrations last March 20.

For the demonstrations this June 5, the ANSWER coalition will demand: "End colonial occupation from Iraq to Palestine—support the right of return!" □

With Bush there for D-Day

Mass protests expected in Italy, France

By John Catalinotto

President George Bush has been hoping that his early June visit to Italy and France on the 60th anniversary of D-Day would strengthen ties and mend fences with Western European capitalist leaders. Instead it's providing an opportunity for Europe's workers and students to register the strongest protest against U.S. war crimes in Iraq.

On June 4 Bush meets with Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi, a billionaire media magnate who, despite his wealth, is seen as a servile follower of U.S. policies. Berlusconi has sent 3,000 Italian troops to join the occupation of Iraq.

Italians have called local rallies in the days leading up to Bush's visit. On June 4 people from all over the country will come to Rome to confront the two war makers. The Italian anti-war movement expects a massive protest.

One anti-war group in Naples has prepared a leaflet calling on Italian youths and soldiers to refuse to go along with the criminal war. On June 2, when official military parades mark the anniversary of

the founding of the republic in Italy, this group will distribute the appeal to the troops and their families.

On June 5 Bush heads to Paris to meet with French leaders. The next day he will take part in ceremonies on the Atlantic coast celebrating the 60th anniversary of D-Day. On June 6, 1944, U.S. and British troops landed on the Normandy coast to start the invasion that drove the occupying German armies out of France.

Anti-Bush sentiment is high among the French population. Big protests are expected. In France they won't be as sharply directed against the government as the Italian movement is against Berlusconi, since French imperialism has not yet participated in the conquest and occupation of Iraq.

During World War II, both Italian and French partisans fought against the German occupation. The partisan struggle in all its forms was known as the resistance. These heroic partisans have more in common with the Iraqi resistance than they do with Bush, Berlusconi or even the French leaders. □



A victory for women

The women's movement has won a major victory.

A federal judge in San Francisco, Phyllis J. Hamilton, has ruled that the law banning second trimester abortions is unconstitutional. The law, passed last November by an overwhelmingly male Congress, had been carefully crafted to contain ambiguous language that could be used to whittle away even further at abortion rights. One thing was clear, however. It banned this type of abortion even when the woman's health was endangered by the fetus. The only exception allowed was when continuing the pregnancy was a definite threat to her life.

Judge Hamilton, who was appointed during the Clinton administration, took strong exception to the sensational language used in the bill and its title. "The term 'partial-birth abortion,'" she wrote, "is neither recognized in the medical literature nor used by physicians who routinely perform second trimester abortions."

The lawyer who took the case to court for Planned Parenthood called the decision "an enormous victory."

"It reaffirms that the government has no role in this very intimate decision between the woman and her physician," attorney Beth Parker added. "Today's decision also gives physicians the comfort that they don't have to be concerned that the procedures performed can expose them to two years in prison for violating the act."

This case can now be cited as a precedent in other federal districts.

There will be much discussion in the progressive movement about the significance of this ruling. Some will see it as confirmation that you need to get Democrats in office to solve the accumulating social problems—even though the bill had had support from both capitalist parties.

But the elephant in the room that few media accounts seem to mention is the huge March for Women's Lives that took place in Washington on April 25. Over a million people flooded the Mall demanding women's right to choose. Speaker after speaker talked movingly about how, before *Roe v. Wade*, illegal abortions had killed or maimed their grandmothers, their mothers, their friends.

Particularly notable was the large number of very young women who brought their energy to the demonstration.

The law does not come from "on high." It reflects the relations of classes and other social groupings. Laws are constantly changing—and too often it's because the rich and powerful have armies of lobbyists and lawyers at their disposal to write and push through new legislation.

But when a mass movement really takes hold, it can penetrate the layers of conservatism incorporated in government bodies and change the relation of forces. That's what happened on April 25, and this court ruling was a not-very-delayed reaction to it. □

Hands off ...

The huge transnational corporations and banks that craft U.S. foreign policy have caused this country to intervene in so many places around the world that the anti-war movement is saying, "U.S. out of Iraq, Haiti, Palestine—and Everywhere."

So it almost seems like favoritism to mention one group of countries, when so many are struggling to fend off the giant octopus. But so be it. There are important things that need to be said about Cuba and Venezuela.

The Cuban revolutionaries came to power 45 years ago after building a guerrilla army that fought and bled in the mountains and won the trust of the ordinary Cuban people because they really meant it when they said they would change Cuba forever. They got rid of Batista and his torturing police, took the land back from U.S. sugar and tobacco companies, and aligned themselves with the people around the world fighting colonial rule, poverty and the brazen theft of their resources.

Cuba now is worried. The Bush administration is packed with people from the expatriate Cuban community—the former "occupation authority" that ruled the island while furthering U.S. corporate interests. They have many schemes to make life difficult for this courageous nation that has stood up to a blockade, an invasion, the threat of nuclear annihilation, and

hundreds of attempted assassinations of its leader, Fidel Castro.

At the same time, a new revolutionary process is unfolding in Venezuela. Nature has given it oil, which is both a blessing and a curse. The Rockefellers' Standard Oil Company began exploiting Venezuela a century ago. And they made sure that the wealth it provided to the Yankee colossus would be shared by only a thin upper crust of Venezuelan society. The masses were shut out of Venezuela's development.

Until now. The Bolivarian Revolution is beginning to reach into the depths of the Venezuelan soul and awaken hope and energy among the dispossessed, the downtrodden, the millions who have been shut out—until now.

And Venezuela is tightening its bonds with Cuba, supplying it with oil and receiving doctors and teachers—the product of Cuba's exemplary socialist development.

How this enrages the counter-revolutionaries in Washington! For it exposes them, shows that capitalism, with its billionaires and its millions in poverty, is a sick and doomed society. That the future belongs to socialism and the masses of people, not a puffed-up elite.

So let us be on guard. Cuba and Venezuela will need our solidarity, and we must be there for them. □

Old cast of characters

Right-wing focuses on bashing North Korea

By Deirdre Griswold

Some of the same right-wingers who not long ago were calling for the "liberation" of Iraq are now focusing on "regime change" in North Korea.

They range from the Christian right and conservative think tanks to a former Watergate criminal, a former CIA director, and a Kansas Republican senator who wants to spend millions of tax dollars on destabilizing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

They are organizing meetings in Washington, Los Angeles and Seoul, putting ads in newspapers like the Wall Street Journal and lobbying Congress for passage of the "North Korean Freedom Act."

The first version of the act, introduced in 2003, was written by Michael Horowitz of the far-right Hudson Institute. Horowitz wrings his hands over the threat to civilization posed by the DPRK's nuclear program. He seems to have forgotten that the founder of the institute where he works, Herman Kahn, was the author of "On Thermonuclear War," the bible of those who advocated that the U.S. could win a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Kahn was the inspiration for the loony Dr. Strangelove character in Stanley Kubrick's film.

Since 1945, the Pentagon has produced 70,000 nuclear warheads. U.S. intelligence says that the DPRK may have "possibly two" bombs.

Horowitz was an official in the Reagan administration and is a National Advisory Board member of the Institute for Democracy in Vietnam. His Hudson Institute also pushed for the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998.

Maybe because that one turned out to be such a disaster, the name of the bill on Korea was changed this year to the "North Korea Human Rights Act." It was introduced by Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas, who is utilizing the troops of the Christian right to defame the DPRK as preparation for a mass conversion of that country to capitalism by way of the Good Book—reinforced by cruel economic sanctions and some 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea.

Colson's connection with 'evil'

Another character who suddenly found Korea along with religion is Charles "Chuck" Colson, Richard Nixon's chief counsel from 1969 to 1973, who was jailed for his part in the Watergate cabal. Colson writes a column now for BreakPoint Online. The headline on one of his recent musings was "Confronting Evil: North Korea Freedom Day."

The column exhorted his readers to participate in lobbying on April 28 for the new bill so they could connect "a biblical understanding of humanity with practical and political efforts to confront intolerable evil." George W. Bush certainly knew who to whip up with his "Axis of Evil" speech.

All this from folks who will tell you that one of the problems with North Korea is that its leaders use "strident language."

Speaking at the Capitol Hill rally on April 28, in addition to Brownback, was Richard Land, a Southern Baptist "religious liberty specialist."

Land called for "a complete cessation of all aid to North Korea by the United States until the fair distribution of that aid can be monitored and assured. I for one am not interested in trading the lives of millions of

North Koreans for a worthless commitment by Kim Jong Il to dismantle his nuclear weapons. We should not allow this gangster dictator to hold his nuclear missiles over our heads in order to extort our continued support for his poisonous regime."

It will be news to a few billion people around the globe that the U.S. has been "supporting" the DPRK government.

Some of the ideas for "liberating" North Korea that are now codified in Brownback's bill first appeared on Jan. 18, 2003, in a Wall Street Journal ad entitled "Statement of Principles for U.S.-North Korean Relations." It was signed by Horowitz, Colson and a cast of other notables on the right, including former CIA Director R. James Woolsey and Heritage Foundation Fellow William J. Bennett. Bennett promoted the notoriously racist book, "The Bell Curve," and, as Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration, initiated the school voucher system that is undermining public education.

This propaganda offensive from the right of course cloaks itself in promises of "human rights" and "freedom" for the people of the DPRK.

Under the new bill, far-right groups would be able to tap into the public treasury, getting some of the millions of dollars that would be devoted to radio and print propaganda promoting their brand of "democracy" to the Koreans. The bill calls for around-the-clock radio programming aimed at North Korea. Wonder who'd get the jobs setting that up?

Religious right groups could also get government money to set up "refugee camps" to entice Koreans to leave their homeland, which the demand for a "complete cessation of all aid" and promises of U.S. citizenship would presumably provoke.

DPRK wants peace treaty

The government of the DPRK has for some time been in negotiations with the U.S. over its nuclear program. It would agree to a freeze in the program, but only if Washington agrees to compensate it for the loss of potential energy by supplying fuel and other needs.

What the bashers of North Korea never mention is that in 1994 the U.S. government signed an agreement with the DPRK, called the Agreed Framework, that would provide funding and technical assistance for Korea to build light-water reactors instead of the graphite reactors it had under construction. LWRs do not produce plutonium as a byproduct and therefore have no possible military application.

While the reactors were being built, Washington was to supply a good part of the DPRK's energy needs.

The problem is, nothing happened. The promised reactors were never built. Oil deliveries came late, after the coldest weather had passed. The North Korean people went through a series of severe winters with very little heat and light. Their agriculture was affected, too, and life was extremely harsh.

The DPRK sees a freeze in its nuclear program as just the first step toward making all of Korea a nuclear-free zone. The ball is definitely in the U.S. court. Washington has refused for over 50 years to sign a peace treaty formally ending the Korean War. Now the warhawks are trying to further evade their responsibility for the tensions over Korea by unleashing their ideological attack dogs. □

Symptom of capitalist rot

U.S. prison rate highest in world

By Monica Moorehead

On May 27 the U.S. Justice Department issued an alarming but not surprising report. The report documents that by the middle of 2003, one out of every 75 men in the United States was incarcerated.

This amounts to a 2.9-percent increase over 2002.

The U.S. rate of imprisonment is the highest in the world.

Including women and men, 715 people out of every 100,000 are behind bars. Right behind the United States is capitalist Russia, with an imprisonment rate of 584 per 100,000.

This compares to only 169 in Mexico, 116 in Canada and 143 per 100,000 for England and Wales combined.

The 2003 U.S. inmate population increased at its fastest pace in four years. The number of inmates rose 1.8 percent in state prisons, 7.1 percent in federal prisons and 3.9 percent in local jails.

Other Justice Department statistics show that the United States leads the world as the "prison house of nations." An overwhelmingly disproportionate number of prisoners belong to oppressed nationalities—African American, Latin@ and Native people, especially.

The fact that 68 percent of all U.S. prisoners are people of color exposes the thoroughly racist nature of this country's incarceration policies.

Within these numbers are these: 12 percent of all Black men in their 20s were incarcerated last year, compared to 3.7 percent of Latin@ men and 1.6 percent of white men in this age group.

Many of these prisoners are non-violent "offenders" who received long sentences for drug-related charges.

Women are the fastest-growing category of prisoners. The number of women in state and federal prisons increased by 5 percent, compared to a 2.7-percent increase for men.

Men, however, greatly outnumber women in prison: 1,360,000 to 100,102. Inmates in local jails total over 690,000.

One-quarter of all the prisoners in the world are held in the United States—at last count, over 2.1 million people.

A prison research and advocacy group, the Sentencing Project, reports that almost 10 percent of those detained in federal and state prisons are serving life sentences. Almost 20 percent of prisoners in New York and California are in for life.

Parole is extremely rare for those serving life sentences. Because of stiffer sentencing laws, the number of those in for life has risen by 83 percent since 1992.

"Some of those serving a life sentence for the least serious crimes have been sentenced under California's 'three strikes and you're out' law," the New York Times reported May 12. "The Supreme Court

recently upheld the life sentence of Leandro Andrade, whose third strike, or felony conviction, was for the theft of children's videotapes worth \$153."

Some 23,523 inmates serving life sentences were mentally ill. Many battered women, in prison for killing the husbands or boyfriends who beat them, are serving life, the Sentencing Project said.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has written about the prison-industrial complex that locks up so many people of color, so many workers, so many poor and destitute women and men who the billionaires have sentenced to prison, poverty and exploitation.

People of color are suffering an occupation of their communities, not unlike the U.S. occupation of Iraq. Many U.S. military police learned the brutish methods they used on Iraqis serving as prison guards here.

The prison system here at home upholds a status quo dominated by the billionaire class that loots the world and also profits from endless wars, occupations and the prison system itself.

This monstrous growth of the repressive state, represented by the Pentagon and the prison system, confirms that capitalism is in its decline. Mass movements against exploitation, racism and war must also expose the character of the prisons, which are nothing but concentration camps for the poor and the nationally oppressed. □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

A tale of terrorists

To say the word "terrorist" is to evoke an image inculcated into our consciousness of a scowling, bearded and turbaned fundamentalist Arab.

That is the sheer power of the corporate media, in its ability to shape and limit our thinking.

For what's lost is the distinction between retail terrorism and state terrorism. When a state unleashes its power against innocents, it's acceptable collateral damage; when a group does it, it's animalistic evil and sheer barbarity.

The media's innate bias in favor of nation-states and corporate power makes state violence the norm and thus makes it virtually invisible.

That's because the media are owned by the wealthy and uses their influence to protect their class interests.

The day this is written, a U.S. plane fired high-powered weaponry into a wedding party in Iraq; at least 40 people were killed. The same day Israeli tanks opened fire on a Palestinian protest march to Rafah, killing some 20 unarmed civilians, including women and children.

No corporate media agency will call these acts "terrorist," but for the Iraqis and Palestinians on the receiving end of the tanks, fighter planes and helicopter gunships, terror is probably the overwhelming feeling.

But under the reigning media regimes, Arabs can only be projected as terrorists (especially after 9-11), and even when they are subjected to massive state violence, it is overlooked as if they are somehow complicit in their own oppression. And because they are permanent suspects, they are somehow responsible for calling this extreme carnage on themselves.

It's war—and "war is hell." Oh, well! We are witnessing the dehumanization of a people—where Arab = terrorist—and any degree of violence visited upon them is acceptable.

When we digest this media mental poisoning, we become a party to this evil, and acquiesce in acts of media violence.

We must all reject it, for the mind-poison that it is, and call state terror the evil that it is—whether the culprit is American or Israeli. □



The love that dared to speak its name

Continued from page 5

character for sexual and gender rights emerged in Germany in 1896. The demand for sexual and gender emancipation continued to draw backing from socialist leaders.

A year before the official emergence of this movement, Eduard Bernstein, then a Marxist and a leader of the German Social Democratic Party, wrote a defense of the gay British literary figure Oscar Wilde in an important left newspaper. Wilde's arrest and trial were an example of how anti-gay and anti-transgender repression—in this case charges against a feminine gay male—were intertwined in the minds of prosecutors.

Bernstein's article called on socialists to lead the way in sexual reform, challenged anti-gay prejudice and rejected the increasingly popular psychiatric theories that pathologized same-sex love.

The first gay liberation organization was born in Germany two years later, in 1897. It was called the Scientific Humanitarian Committee.

Its founder and notable leader throughout much of the committee's 35 years was Magnus Hirschfeld—a gay Jewish doctor who may have also been, like many other leaders of the German movement, a cross-dresser. He coined the word "transvestite," did extensive research and produced germinal writings on the subject of cross-dressing.

The Scientific Humanitarian Committee published a yearbook that reported on movement activities. It also documented literary, cross-cultural, cross-historical and scientific studies on same-sex love and transgender.

The committee aimed to abolish Paragraph 175, raise social consciousness

and encourage sexually oppressed people to fight for their rights. To achieve its goals, the committee held regular public forums, organized speaking tours nationally and internationally, and sent literature to other governments about the need to decriminalize same-sex love.

The committee's main focus was a petition campaign, launched in 1897, to collect signatures of prominent people demanding the repeal of Paragraph 175.

Socialists of all sexualities unite

From its earliest days, the committee won support from revolutionaries, who were at that time called Social Democrats. In 1898, the committee took to parliament the signatures of 900 doctors, lawyers, educators and scientists calling for the repeal of Paragraph 175. It was rebuffed.

However, the socialist minority in the German parliament did support the demand. The great socialist leader August Bebel took the floor, becoming the first

major supporter to battle for the petition.

Bebel, author of "The Rights of Women"—an early socialist denunciation of the oppression of women under capitalism—signed the petition, took copies to parliament and urged others to add their names.

He argued that homosexuality was so widespread among all economic classes in society that "if the police dutifully did what they were supposed to, the Prussian state would immediately be obliged to build two new penitentiaries just to handle the number of violations against Paragraph 175 committed within the confines of Berlin alone."

When Bebel made this speech, and subsequent ones, on the parliament floor, the right-wing politicians booed. But socialists greeted his defense of same-sex love with supporting shouts of "Hear, hear!"

Hirschfeld himself was affiliated with the Social Democratic Party from 1898 until the rise of fascism forced him into exile.

Rise of a mass movement

The committee carried on a whirlwind of activity. In 1899 it sent a letter to Roman Catholic priests asking them to take a stand on gay oppression and gay rights, sent information to parliament members, wrote to more than 2,000 daily newspapers, placed ads in newspapers, sent 8,000 letters to top administration and police officials, another to public prosecutors, and 8,000 copies of the petition to judges.

More than 6,000 prominent people, half of them doctors, signed the petition. Others included Albert Einstein, Leo Tolstoy, Emile Zola, Kathe Kollwitz, Hermann Hesse, Thomas Mann and

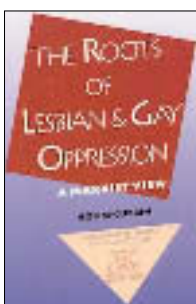
The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression:

A MARXIST VIEW By Bob McCubbin

This ground breaking pamphlet was originally published as the Gay Question in 1976, during the first flush of the modern lesbian and gay movement.

Its unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how lesbian and gay oppression developed.

WW Publishers
leftbooks.com
\$6.99



Rainer Maria Rilke.

Well-known socialists of that period, including Bebel, Karl Kautsky, Rudolf Hilferding, Gerhardt Hauptman and Eduard Bernstein, also signed.

In 1905, during another debate on Paragraph 175, the committee went back to parliament with more than 5,000 signatures. The Center Party, a right-wing group with strong support from the Catholic Church, led opposition to reform.

Again it was a socialist—Adolph Thiele—who argued on behalf of gay rights. But the move for reform was again defeated.

In 1907 more than 2,000 people attended a public debate on Paragraph 175.

But this pinnacle of organizing was followed by a period of reaction that drove many supporters underground and forced activists to keep a lower profile. The opening shot of this anti-gay witch hunt was a highly publicized scandal about alleged gay activities by a number of high German political figures who were forced to stand trial.

In 1910, at the height of anti-gay frenzy, the parliament began to debate extending Paragraph 175 to include lesbian acts between women.

Next: Lesbians on front lines of fight for liberation

¡PROLETARIOS Y OPRIMIDOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNÍOS!

MUNDO OBRERO

División en la clase gobernante proviene de la guerra y la economía

Por Milton Neidenberg

El corazón de Wall Street está lleno de incertidumbre. Desde la publicación de las torturas a los prisioneros iraquíes, los mercados financieros de aquí y del exterior han estado subiendo y bajando. El índice del Dow Jones perdió 123 puntos el 7 de mayo, y 127 el 10 de mayo.

Ese mismo día los mercados mundiales cayeron también. Los mercados asiáticos cayeron más del 6% encabezados por Japón y Corea del sur. La peor caída desde el 12 de septiembre del 2001.

El 7 de mayo, los mercados europeos más importantes cayeron en un dos por ciento. La crisis se expandió a América Latina. Brasil, la economía más grande, cayó un 5,4%.

El 12 de mayo, el índice del Dow Jones cayó más de 160 puntos antes de recuperarse un poco. Cerró por debajo de los 10.000 puntos por primera vez en este año. Un 4 por ciento más bajo que al comienzo del 2004.

¿Serán estos eventos titánicos una aberración? ¿O serán el barómetro de una crisis imperialista camino a la catástrofe, fuera del control de la clase gobernante de los Estados Unidos?

En un editorial publicado por el periódico Wall Street Journal del 13 de mayo, los grandes expertos de las altas finanzas confirmaron que hay una crisis. El periódico expresó temor de que Irak sea la fuerza propulsora detrás de todo esto. Era un análisis serio, sin precedente para el arrogante Wall Street Journal que como vocero ha estado celebrando la línea de "misión cumplida" de la asociación Bush-Cheney.

"Las revelaciones de los abusos contra los prisioneros en Irak," escribió el Journal, "no sólo representa un retraso en los esfuerzos americanos para estabilizar al país, sino que hasta podría usarse por los críticos criollos contra la guerra para socavar el apoyo del público para obtener una victoria. El petróleo [ahora cuesta] \$40 dólares el barril."

El periódico no mencionó los otros factores en la crisis. Estos incluyen la resistencia popular a la ocupación, los fuegos en los oleoductos iraquíes, y el costo militar que ha alcanzado los \$200 mil millones de dólares desde la preparación para la invasión y que ahora está creciendo \$4 mil millones al mes.

Esa mención de los "críticos criollos de la guerra" fue en referencia al Senador John Kerry, el candidato Demócrata a la presidencia. Pero la formulación está muy lejos de la verdad. Esto no es un asunto de Republicanos contra Demócratas.

Esto esconde una realidad fundamental de clase. Existe una división en la clase gobernante, persistente e impredecible.

Los sueños imperialistas de las súper potencias de conquistar al Medio Oriente, su petróleo y su importancia geopolítica, están en peligro. La amenaza a esos sueños ha estremecido a la clase gobernante. Se dan cuenta de que la asociación Bush-Cheney está llevando al imperio hacia una dirección peligrosa y está extendiendo sus recursos más allá de sus límites tanto militar como económicamente.

Esta es la base de la división.

La oposición a la táctica de la administración de Bush incluye, para nombrar unos pocos, a Robert Rubin del Wall Street, secretario del tesoro de Bill Clinton y socio en la corporación global de inversiones bancarias Goldman Sachs; Warren Buffet, multimillonario jefe de Berkshire Hathaway, un inversionista con bolsillos profundos; George Soros, miembro veterano de la Fortune 500; y muchos otros como ellos. Ellos, junto a una man-

ada de asesores de Clinton se han reagrupado en apoyo a John Kerry.

Ambas facciones reconocen los peligros al imperialismo estadounidense. La lucha por el poder se está dando lugar bajo la farsa de las elecciones burguesas. La facción opositora ha encontrado un héroe de guerra quien se opuso a la guerra en Vietnam y quien ahora está desesperado por internacionalizar el conflicto en Irak, preparado para compartir el saqueo de Irak con los aliados imperialistas y dispuesto a enviar más tropas si es necesario.

Kerry es una apuesta segura para ellos hacer sus negocios dentro de la crisis económica de los Estados Unidos.

¿Se irá Greenspan?

Casi al mismo tiempo en que las fotografías de los iraquíes torturados llegaban a las primeras planas, Alan Greenspan, el presidente de la Reserva Federal, (FRB) habló ante un grupo de participantes de la conferencia de la FRB en Chicago sobre la crisis del déficit del presupuesto general. El 7 de mayo el New York Times reportó con este titular, "Greenspan Señala los Déficit como una Gran Amenaza a la Economía."

Esto quería decir que el republicano estaba advirtiendo al Presidente George W. Bush, al Pentágono y a Wall Street que un cheque en blanco, particularmente para la guerra, los recortes de impuestos para los ricos, el servicio de la deuda y los proyectos congresionales no se pueden mantener más.

Sumando al problema, según las cifras del Departamento del Trabajo, el déficit del comercio de los Estados Unidos para marzo se amplió y subió a una cifra récord de \$45,96 mil millones de dólares. Se culpó al creciente precio del petróleo importado. Pero la tendencia es más extensa. Los dos últimos meses han visto un alza rápida de otros precios de bienes de consumo.

La deuda enorme y obstinada ha convencido a la Junta Federal de la Reserva que debe frenar la crisis, que ya está fuera de control, subiendo las tasas de interés. Greenspan rompió su promesa anterior a Bush de que iba a mantener el flujo de la moneda de papel, barata y abundante hasta después de los comicios.

Dado el hecho que la mejora en la economía fue fructífera para los socios de Bush en Wall Street, esto podría ser un rudo golpe para su campaña electoral. No le cae bien a la camarilla Bush-Cheney-Pentágono.

Recientemente, para reforzar el apoyo al Secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld, se llevó a cabo una reunión íntima en su gran mansión en Washington. El presidente y Laura Bush asistieron. Disfrutando la cena con ellos estuvo Greenspan, el banquero de última instancia para Wall Street. ¿Fue presionado Greenspan, cuyo período en su puesto vence en junio, para ajustar la política monetaria para satisfacer al Pentágono? Lo sabremos durante los meses venideros, porque el 18 de mayo el Presidente Bush nombró a Greenspan a otro período más en su puesto.

Comparado a estos conspiradores furtivos, Machiavelli era un santo.

¿Ha salido el mago?

Según James Grant, redactor del Observador Grant de las Tasas de Interés: "La inflación está volviendo a las líneas de las cajeras en el supermercado. ... La deuda total, excluyendo lo que reciben prestado los bancos y el gobierno federal... ahora llega a un 163 por ciento del producto bruto doméstico. Está terminando rápidamente la época del 1 por ciento y los mercados financieros alrededor del mundo están temblando. ... Sólo la posibilidad de

una tasa de interés un poco más alta ha llevado disturbios a los templos de altas finanzas". (El New York Times del 16 de mayo)

A su nivel más bajo en 43 años, la tasa del 1 por ciento ha sido ventajosa para los banqueros de Wall Street y las corporaciones gigantescas transnacionales. Privatizando e invirtiendo riesgosamente con fondos prestados, ellos han prosperado con una moneda barata que ha cubierto al mundo entero.

Estas inversiones altamente arriesgadas alentadas por intercambios de fondos especulativos en moneda y en mercados de artículos de consumo y otras inversiones especulativas a veces se refieren como "capitalismo de casino". La Junta Federal de la Reserva está a punto de cambiar su dirección y subir las tasas de interés para tratar de frenar este evento peligroso.

Marxistas llaman a esta especulación "el capital ficticio".

Los mercados financieros reflejan el temor de que la deuda internacional de los EE.UU. desestabilice los mercados financieros alrededor del mundo. Los bancos centrales en el extranjero son los dueños de la mayoría de este endeudamiento. Ellos podrían decidir vender este mercado si la economía de los EE.UU. se dilata. Algunos analistas de Wall Street están preocupados de que esto sea inminente.

La inflación y el alza de precios han comenzado. El futuro de esta expansión capitalista sustentada por la deuda es dudoso.

¿Qué pueden esperar los trabajadores multinacionales y las nacionalidades oprimidas de este país mientras esta crisis se desarrolla?

Los casi 650.000 trabajos nuevos que se han abierto durante los últimos dos meses son todavía casi 1,5 millones menos que cuando Bush asumió la presidencia. Los contratos sindicales indican un descenso Cuarenta y cuatro millones de trabajadores carecen de seguro de salud. Las primas del seguro, co-pagos, y los deducibles antes de poder colectar los pagos del seguro han incrementado la posibilidad de que hasta los que tienen seguro de salud no tendrán posibilidad de aprovecharse del beneficio.

Casi 7 millones de trabajadores en la fuerza laboral son pobres, ganando un salario de miseria. Estos son en su gran mayoría gente de color, mujeres, y adolescentes `negr@s` y `latin@s a l@s` que le son negados una educación universitaria.

Más de 14,7 millones de trabajadores están desempleados, subempleados o se han dado por vencido en la búsqueda de empleo. (Transportation Communication Union AFL-CIO, marzo-abril de 2004) Los prisioneros en los Estados Unidos, como los encarcelados en las cámaras de tortura del Pentágono en Irak son sometidos al abuso y la violencia, juegan un papel en la producción de productos y servicios bajo condiciones de súper explotación. La población de personas encarceladas en este país se ha multiplicado 10 veces en los últimos 30 años.

No hay que ser economista para reconocer que mientras todo esto está pasando y los precios están subiendo, las condiciones enfrentadas por millones de trabajadores van a volverse intolerables. El ingreso neto estará recordado aún más por la inflación. La campaña electoral de Bush ni de Kerry tiene soluciones para estos sucesos catastróficos.

Esta es una crisis política del capitalismo imperialista empeorada por los acontecimientos que actualmente se desarrollan en Irak. Ha conducido a una división en la clase dominante. ¿Cómo puede utilizar tal división el movimiento sindical? ¿Cómo se puede forjar un movimiento independiente que incluya a todas las partes de nuestra clase trabajadora para que cambie y mejore más a nuestra ventaja la correlación de fuerzas entre las clases sociales?

Ha llegado un momento en la historia para que la clase trabajadora multinacional reflexione y actúe consecuentemente. □

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