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4-page WW election supplement, campaign poster

July 1, 2004

Vol. 45, No. 26

# WORKERS WORLD

workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

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## 10,000 cross Golden Gate Bridge

# Union workers on the march for health care

By Brenda Sandburg  
San Francisco

Enshrouded in fog and tousled by a light breeze, 10,000 Service Employees union members and supporters walked across the Golden Gate Bridge June 19 to demand affordable health care for all.

Cars and trucks honked in support as people on the bridge raised their fists and cheered. A helicopter carrying a huge banner proclaiming "Health Care For All" circled over the bridge and along the shore of the Bay.

The multinational crowd included people of all ages. Some health-care workers marched in their lab coats. Parents pushed youngsters in strollers. SEIU members lined the route, applauding people and contributing to the celebratory atmosphere.

The June 19 event was part of the Health Care National Day of Action sponsored by SEIU's Americans for Health Care, Jobs with Justice and Rock the Vote. The "Bridge the Gap for Health Care" walk in San Francisco was the anchor event in marches and rallies held in 165 cities in all 50 states.

In many cities, the marches for health care joined with celebrations of Juneteenth, marking the end of slavery in the United States. While the SEIU has locals in both Canada and the United States, there weren't any marches in Canada—in that country access to health care is a right.

The actions coincided with SEIU's quadrennial convention, held in San Francisco this year. Thousands of union

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## Workers World Party candidates' Pride salute: Why socialism is key for LGBT liberation

Pride greetings to everyone today!

We are marching with you to celebrate the Stonewall Rebellion that ignited the modern U.S. lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender liberation movement in 1969. And we are here to cheer the great victories against state oppression that we all won last year: the Supreme Court's Lawrence vs. Texas decision that finally decriminalized lesbian and gay lives, and the Massachusetts Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage.

But these victories, won through years of struggle, are just part of what we want. We want more than the lifting of legal penalties and social stigmas. We want a future where LGBT people and all people have free health care and free education, free day care and elder care, affordable housing and jobs—and vacations! We want a society with equality for all—socialism.

Socialism means liberating the vast, worldwide apparatus of production that was built through collective labor from private ownership and organizing production to meet human needs and wants.

We are longtime fighters in the struggle for LGBT liberation—two of us as lesbians, and the other as an ally who has fought



Teresa Gutierrez John Parker LeiLani Dowell

## LESBIAN • GAY • BI • TRANS

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together, shoulder-to-shoulder, with LGBT people for his entire political life.

We are also workers, people of color, supporters of the labor movement, anti-war and anti-imperialist activists.

And we are here as members of Workers World Party—a revolutionary party that has marched with a contingent at Pride since 1972, carrying the banner "Stonewall means fight back!"

Workers World Party has made important contributions to understanding how oppression based on sexuality, gender and sex arose historically. But we know that the point is not just to understand the

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SEIU members and supporters march across Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco June 19 demanding access to healthcare for all.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

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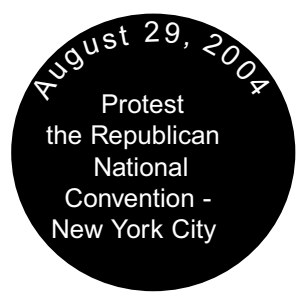
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- Stand Against Racism at Home and Abroad
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- Defend Women's Right to Choose
- Defend Affirmative Action
- Military Recruiters Out of the Schools
- Defend Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

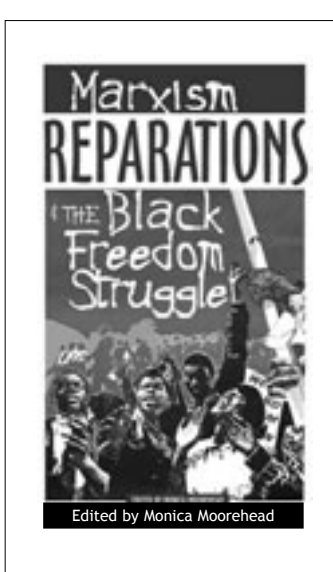
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**WW CALENDAR**

**BUFFALO, N.Y.**  
**Wed., June 30**  
 Teresa Gutierrez, Workers World Party vice presidential candidate, speaking on Cuba. 7:30 p.m. At Unity Church, 1243 Delaware Ave. For info phone International Action Center (716) 604-9515.

**LOS ANGELES**  
**Thur., June 24**  
 Workers World Forum. Equal Marriage Rights & LGBT Liberation. Special guest speaker: Bob McCubbin. McCubbin authored the groundbreaking book, "The Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression—A Marxist View," originally published in 1976. Its unparalleled achievement was its analysis of the roots of LGBT oppression. McCubbin

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## Now anti-government art is 'terrorism'!

# Buffalo professor faces FBI charges

By Beverly Hiestand  
Buffalo, N.Y.

Steve Kurtz, an associate art professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, called 911 on May 11 for aid for his wife, who later died of apparent heart failure. The death of his spouse was only the beginning of his nightmare.

Buffalo police made it clear from the beginning that Kurtz was not under any suspicion in connection with the death of his wife, who had a history of an enlarged heart.

Yet federal agents from the Buffalo Joint Terrorism Task Force raided his home later that day.

Kurtz is an artist who uses harmless live organisms found in the everyday environment, and laboratory equipment in his performances that are political commentary on scientific topics. He has been a member, since 1987, of a Buffalo-based Critical Art Ensemble, which uses scientific equipment to create art projects that question the relationship between commerce, politics and biotechnology. The group has exhibited this art all over the world. ([www.caedefensefund.org](http://www.caedefensefund.org))

The day Kurtz's spouse died, federal agents seized from his home computers, vials, test tubes, books on biowarfare and bacterial cultures that were immediately found to be harmless.

Claire Pentecost, a photographer at the Art Institute of Chicago, says that the books on biowarfare carried off by investigators were part of the group's latest

project, "The Marching Plague," which simulates an anthrax attack as part of its critique of government germ warfare research. (Nature, June 17)

The equipment that CAE used to test common food products has also been confiscated by the FBI, even though laboratory tests have shown that it was not used for any illegal purpose, and it is not possible to use this equipment for the production or weaponization of dangerous germs.

"These people aren't bio-terrorists. They're artists, making political statements" said Paul J. Cambria, attorney for Kurtz. "Steve Kurtz is a peaceful man. But after 9/11, our country has been ripe for paranoia about terrorism, and our government feeds that paranoia. [Kurtz] certainly wouldn't have dialed 911 after his wife's death and invited authorities into his home if he had any kind of equipment for terrorism in there." (Buffalo News, June 16)

### Local casualties of Washington's 'war on terror'

The case has drawn international media attention. "Art becomes the next suspect in America's 9/11 paranoia," headlined The Guardian, a major British newspaper, on June 11.

This is the second major effort of state repression under the Patriot Act here in Buffalo.

The first victims of the "war on terror" were six young Yemeni men from the industrial suburb of Lackawanna. They were charged in September 2002 with

having traveled to an Al-Qaeda training camp in the spring of 2001, listening to an anti-U.S. speech and receiving small-arms training for a very brief period.

The six were under tremendous pressure from the Bush-Ashcroft administration. They faced the threat of being tried for treason, a capital crime, and being designated "enemy combatants" with no legal rights at all. Reportedly as a result, all six separately pleaded guilty to providing material support or resources to Al-Qaeda. In December each was sentenced to near-maximum prison terms of from seven to 10 years.

The entire Yemeni community continues to be under state siege. Continuous roadblocks are set up around the area and police make searches and threats without any cause.

### International support for Kurtz

An FBI indictment continues to loom over Kurtz.

His case has attracted international support. On June 15, some 200 supporters from all over the U.S. and from other countries demonstrated in downtown Buffalo at Niagara Square while, a couple of blocks away, a federal grand jury was investigating Kurtz.

Other demonstrations in defense of Kurtz were held on the same day in Vienna, Austria; Amsterdam, the Netherlands; and Berkeley, California. Support for Kurtz is also reportedly widespread in the art communities of Europe and the United States.

Protestors accused the U.S. Justice

Department of trying to turn an edgy art exhibit into a terrorist plot.

They charged that Kurtz is being targeted under the USA Patriot Act of 2001 because his art is critical of the government. The U.S. Attorney's office in Buffalo has declined to comment on the case.

The Critical Arts Ensemble support website states that the group believes Kurtz's case is being pursued under the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989. The act was amended under the post-9/11 Patriot Act to allow the prosecution of "whoever knowingly possesses any biological agent, toxin or delivery system."

One of those protesting the FBI's actions was Nato Thompson. He's curator of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in North Adams, where an art exhibit by Kurtz about genetically altered food was scheduled to be shown in June.

The exhibit, entitled "Free Range Grain," consisted of a small laboratory where patrons could explore the role of genetic engineering in food production. "People could bring some food, like a loaf of bread, and have it tested there, to find out how organic the bread really was," said Katherine Myers, a museum spokesperson. "The artist was using science as a way to get people to investigate things, to ask questions."

In the space where the exhibit would have appeared, the museum has posted a sign, explaining that Kurtz's work cannot be displayed because the FBI seized it. (Buffalo News, June 16) □

# Lab workers exposed to anthrax by Pentagon-contractor error

Special to Workers World

At least five California laboratory workers were exposed to live anthrax at the Children's Hospital research center in Oakland, hospital officials announced on June 10. The anthrax had been shipped from the Southern Research Institute (SRI), a private company that does classified research on biological weapons for several Pentagon agencies.

SRI is located in Frederick, Md., not too far from Ft. Detrick, a key center for Pentagon biological war research.

Researchers at the Children's Hospital are working on an anthrax vaccine for children and had requested harmless "killed" anthrax material. But SRI sent live anthrax in error.

The lab is about a mile from the hospital itself and no children were exposed. No reported illnesses have been reported among the lab workers, but they will be kept under observation until it is sure they are not in danger.

In 2001, a purposeful release of anthrax spores into the mail system killed five people and sickened 17 others. It also added to the fear and frenzy following the 9/11 attacks.

For months, the media was filled with anthrax stories that were linked to the Bush administration's so-called "war on terror." Media coverage dropped off dramatically, however, when investigators concluded that the anthrax that had been sent in the mail was produced in a

Pentagon laboratory and that either U.S. military personnel or contractors working for the military were most likely responsible. Although a "person of interest" was named, no charges have been filed against anyone.

News accounts of the latest accident in Oakland were sparse. An Associated Press story went out and was picked up by a couple of dozen media outlets. The Washington Post had a small article on page five of its Metro section. A search two weeks later for follow-up articles or editorials has come up empty. In contrast, even false rumors of tiny residues of biological or chemical agents in Iraq still make front-page news and electronic headlines.

The Sunshine Project, an activist organ-

ization that has exposed biological, chemical and nuclear war research by the U.S. and NATO allies, has published links on its website, [www.sunshine-project.org](http://www.sunshine-project.org), documenting SRI's connections with the Pentagon. The Sunshine Project and its U.S. coordinator, Edward Hammond, have demanded that secret facilities like SRI be open to public scrutiny and to public accountability for safety.

Under both the Bush and Clinton administrations, billions of dollars have been poured into secret research. Many fear this is a new and expanded biological and chemical weapons program using "bio-defense" as a cover.

Dr. Hillel Cohen, an epidemiologist in New York who has campaigned against the Bush and Clinton bioterrorism pre-

paredness programs, says that the SRI accident was predictable. "As the government spends more and more on biological weapons research, the danger multiplies that deadly materials will be released accidentally, as just happened, or purposefully as in 2001," he said.

"Those who died from anthrax in 2001 and those who died from the smallpox vaccination program are all victims of the government's supposed defense program—which from the beginning has been more about pro-war propaganda and biological/chemical war research than about defense."

Cohen concludes, "Unless these programs are stopped, more accidents and more deaths and illnesses can be expected." □



## MARKET ELECTIONS: How democracy serves the rich

By Vince Copeland

Every four years, big money chooses the presidential candidates. Their war chests filled to the brim, they are then packaged by the media as "the people's choice." It's U.S.-style democracy—of the rich, by the rich and for the rich. But how do these chosen politicians win the votes of the millions as well as the millionaires?

Who has been excluded from voting? How were electoral politics used to betray Black freedom after the Civil War? How did two Roosevelts wield reform at home to facilitate empire-building abroad? Why did no 'normal' elections take place between 1960 and 1976? Market Elections takes us into smoke filled rooms and raucous conventions to tell the story.

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# Protesters block traffic as Chicago hotel strike marks one year

## Special to Workers World Chicago

With a roar of approval from more than 1,000 demonstrators, 15 people—striking workers at Chicago's Congress Plaza Hotel and their supporters—blocked Michigan Avenue during rush hour on June 15 before being hauled off by the police. Workers at the hotel have been on strike for a year now. Their walkout is believed to be the first ever at a downtown Chicago hotel.

"A year is a long time to be on strike," said striker Sharon Williams. "But we're going to be out there as long as it takes to win justice for ourselves and our families."

"We talk a lot here about how we can help each other," said striker Alicia Rodriguez, 32, a housekeeping worker for 10 years. (Chicago Tribune, June 14)

"The Congress Hotel is a rogue employer with no respect for its workers, its customers or the Chicago community," said Henry Tamarin, president of Local 1 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union (HERE), who was one of those arrested.

The walkout by 130 courageous housekeepers, pantry workers, telephone operators, bartenders and bell persons—most of whom are women and Latin@—began last June. The workers went on strike after the hotel's wealthy owners refused to agree to the terms of a 2002 citywide contract that raised wages and benefits at 27 other hotels throughout Chicago.

Instead, the greedy Congress bosses proposed a 7-percent wage cut and no raises for the life of the contract. They also refused to increase health and welfare payments (effectively eliminating health and pension benefits) and tried to gut job security by demanding the unlimited right to subcontract any worker's job.

Finally, the owners tried to impose their



Photos of the rally at [www.congresshotelstrike.info/gallery.asp](http://www.congresshotelstrike.info/gallery.asp)



last offer on the workers—a violation of federal labor law for which they are now on trial before the National Labor Relations Board. Meanwhile, in December 2003 the hotel was charged with 68 categories of building code violations by the City of Chicago.

### Fighting a global empire

"The union is demanding a five-star hotel rate contract, when we're not getting \$400 a night for our rooms," claimed hotel mouthpiece Peter Andjelkovich. (Chicago Sun-Times, June 11)

In reality, the owners of the 850-bed Congress Plaza—the fifth-largest hotel in downtown Chicago—are global billionaires. Albert Nasser, a key investor in the limited partnership that owns the hotel, is also CEO and chair of Gelmart Industries, a major manufacturer of women's undergarments. The owners want to wring prof-

its from hotel workers just like they super-exploit similar workers abroad. But this also makes them vulnerable to cross-border labor organizing.

In a heroic show of international solidarity, Gelmart workers in the Philippines staged a July 2003 demonstration in solidarity with their striking sisters and brothers at the Congress Plaza Hotel. In March 2004, a solidarity delegation from HERE Local 1 visited Gelmart's factory in the Philippines and issued a stinging report on labor violations there.

Workers at Gelmart's Philippine subcontractors say they make less than \$4 a day, are given impossibly high "quotas," and lose a day's pay if they don't reach them in eight hours. They are also forced to clock out at 5 p.m. even when they work overnight until 8 a.m. Many workers com-

plain of urinary tract infections because they are afraid to take bathroom breaks for fear of falling below the quota.

"[Our] report shows that Nasser's abusive business practices literally span the globe," said HERE General President John Wilhelm, who was in Chicago for the strike anniversary rally.

A bargaining session is scheduled for June 28. The union wants supporters to swamp management with calls and messages demanding "Justice for the Congress Plaza Hotel strikers." It asks supporters to call (800) 635-1666 or (312) 427-3800 and demand to speak with owner representative Shlomo Mahmias or someone in management. Details about making donations to the strike fund can be found at [www.congresshotelstrike.info](http://www.congresshotelstrike.info). □

### Health-care crisis

## 10,000 walk across Golden Gate Bridge

*Continued from page 1*

members from around the country gathered at Crissy Field. The path up to the bridge was a sea of purple as SEIU members wearing the union's trademark colored jackets began the trek across the nearly mile-long bridge. A mariachi band played at the foot of the bridge as people began the walk.

Health care has become a luxury that fewer and fewer people have access to in the U.S. Forty-four million Americans are without health care coverage and millions more are under-insured.

At a rally following the march, Lisa Scott of Iowa described the horror of not having health insurance. Scott's daughter Janelle died at the age of 18 because doctors refused to perform tests and X-rays necessary to diagnose her illness.

"They saw a faceless, uninsured girl," Scott said. "They never ran one test to diagnose what was wrong. In the medical records it is written 'this girl has no insurance' ... The health-care system violated her right to live."

Several other unions also participated in the San Francisco action, including the United Food and Commercial Workers, the United Farm Workers, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, the Laborers and the Sheet Metal Workers.

A woman who has worked for Safeway for 20 years spoke of the recent strike of California grocery workers.

"Grocery workers are not rich people," she said. "For some health care is all we have ... We will not sit calmly by and allow evil to triumph. California workers will defend our health care." □

# Thousands march for health care

Thousands of workers and their families marched for health care in New York June 19. The Service Employees union initiated the demonstration as part of day of actions across the U.S. called "Bridging the Gap: Health Care for All."

While many marchers were SEIU members, contingents also came from other unions, including the Professional Staff Congress representing faculty and staff at the City University of New York (CUNY), and progressive neighborhood groups.

Posters for the march were posted throughout the Lower East Side and other working-class neighborhoods the week before.

The march started in Brooklyn at Cadman Plaza, trekked across the Brooklyn Bridge, and wound up with a rally in front of the Federal Building in lower Manhattan.

At the rally, rank-and-file workers spoke about what the lack of affordable health coverage meant to their lives and living standards, as well as the pain and suffering of the uninsured. One janitor from SEIU Local 32BJ, recently unionized, saw his salary go from \$6.15 to \$9.25 an hour, but still doesn't have medical benefits.

Another speaker had been limited to 19 hours a week when she worked for the Research Foundation of CUNY because an additional hour would have qualified her for medical benefits.

Even union members with medical insurance often lack dental or prescription coverage.



WW PHOTO: ARTURO J. PEREZ SAAD

"We have to fight to keep the health care we have in the face of rising costs," said Mike Fishman, president of Local 32BJ. The union represents 70,000 building-service workers in the New York metropolitan area.

John Sweeney, president of the national AFL-CIO, said: "Health-care costs are a national crisis. Every other industrialized country in the world has put together a national health-care system. It's about time these workers rise and demand universal health care."

While the union, whose members are mostly immigrants, marched past City Hall, heavily-armed cops in flack jackets and holding assault rifles stood guard over the offices of billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

—G. Dunkel

The Service Employees union convention in San Francisco passed a July 22 resolution condemning the war and occupation of Iraq. The resolution, adopted by the AFL-CIO's largest constituent union, calls for "an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq ... [and] solidarity with workers around the world struggling for their own labor and human rights."

## Boston school bus drivers

# Solidarity against racism at heart of union fight-back

By Stevan Kirschbaum  
Chief Steward, Readville,  
Steel Workers Local 8751  
Boston

On June 15, over 150 multinational Boston school bus drivers and monitors, members of Steel Workers Local 8751, and their supporters took to the streets of the Charlestown section of Boston in a militant show of force. They marched on the corporate offices of First Student Inc., the city's bus management company.

At the front of the march was a banner that spanned the width of the street. It read, "First Student Inc.—Stop union busting, contract justice now!" Atop a sound truck/mobile stage donated by Boston Labor's ANSWER, union and community leaders broadcast their message non-stop through chant and song. A brightly-decorated 14-vehicle motorcade followed the marchers.

Though the procession snarled traffic as it wound toward the posh Shrafft Center in the Sullivan Square rotary, neighborhood residents expressed solidarity with the union. Raised fists were seen and shouts of approval and car and truck horns were heard throughout the demonstration.

A massive police presence was dispatched to the area, led by the notorious Capt. Bernard O'Rourke, including many squad cars and motorcycles. But the posturing didn't deter the demonstrators, whose only permit was their rock solid determination.

### First Student, city demand cutbacks and concessions

First Student Inc., a British conglomerate, is the second-largest school bus management company in the U.S., with operating profits of over \$380 million this year. It won the Boston management contract by promising the city administration tens of millions of dollars in cuts.

First Student, in collusion with the City of Boston, came to the negotiating table demanding huge concessions, including cuts to the drivers' pay, language demanding second-tier status for part-timers, introduction of global positioning systems, speed-ups and job reclassifications, attacks on seniority and bid rights, and more.

At a June 10 negotiating session scheduled by First Student to present the company's final offer, the company issued another concession-filled ultimatum. Rank-and-file workers who packed the session said "No way!" and decided that the union's counter-offer should be presented through the June 15 protest.

As the demonstrators approached the Shrafft Center's entrance, union workers from the firehouse next door came out to holler their solidarity. The bus drivers and monitors are part of a citywide union coalition that includes the firefighters, teachers, school custodians and others.

Marchers jammed the entrance and set up their mobile stage for a solidarity rally. The Shrafft Center houses many corporate offices. Building security goons who tried to intimidate, photograph and attack the workers were pushed back.

Rich Rodgers of the 90,000-strong Greater Boston Labor Council pledged the council's support until the union wins justice. He declared, "This is what real unionism looks like. You have taken your struggle to the streets and we are with you." Joe Carlson of the Steel Workers International also pledged 100-percent support.

Moe Penn, a leader of Service Employees Local 888, led the gathering in singing, "Power, power, power! Unions have the power! Power by the hour! Working people power!"

Brother Lo of the Greater Roxbury Workers Association, a leader in the fight for affirmative action in the building trades, brought greetings from his organization.

Local 8751 steward Bob Traynham lead the crowd in chanting, "First Student, we say no! Union busting has got to go!" to make sure they got the point.

Steve Gillis, president of the bus drivers and monitors local, said: "This is the fourth time in the span of one week that you have answered the call of your union and taken to the streets for contract justice. You have shown the company and their city backers that you will fight until the battle is won."

He urged everyone to join the upcoming July 25 protest at the Democratic National Convention.

At one point First Student Regional Vice-President Ted Leclerc slunk out to



Boston school bus drivers and monitors rally for a decent contract.

WW PHOTO:  
LIZA GREEN

pick up the union's no-concession counter-proposal.

### Attacks on desegregation

Another important theme of the march was the need to fight the new wave of attacks on school desegregation.

On the 30th anniversary of Boston's desegregation case, the forces of racism have reared their ugly heads again. Rallying behind the false slogan of a "return to neighborhood schools," their campaign is a thinly-veiled plan to deny Boston's communities of color the right to equal education.

Led by Mayor Thomas Menino, City Council President Michael Flaherty and an assemblage of "anti-busing" segregationists, they are following in the footsteps of notorious bigots Louis Day Hicks, Pixie Paladino, Jim Kelly, and Bill Bulger. Their campaign is part of a national effort to turn back the gains of the historic civil-rights movement.

The White House and the State House are united. They want to abolish desegregation, affirmative action, bilingual

education and more.

Local 8751 has stood with the community in its battle against racism since its founding nearly three decades ago. Many of the signs and chants June 15 reflected the long history of struggle on these issues.

It's worth noting that this demonstration by a 90-percent African American, Haitian and Cape Verdean union local received strong solidarity in Charlestown, a predominately white working-class neighborhood which had historically been linked to the racist anti-busing forces.

Charlestown has been the victim of cruel and widespread gentrification. It is clear that protests such as this union/community rally strike blows against racism and show the way toward a united fight against the common enemy—capitalism.

After two hours the workers took to the streets again and marched back to the Charlestown bus yard. Brother Lo's closing chant summed up the day: "Eighty-seven fifty-one, we won't stop till the battle's won!" □

## Houston Juneteenth Parade

# 'Stop torturing prisoners in Texas and Iraq!'

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Anti-death penalty and anti-war activists participated in Houston's 31st Annual Juneteenth Freedom Parade on June 19. They carried banners and placards demanding the end of torture of prisoners both in Texas and in Iraq and calling for U.S. troops to be brought home now.

Juneteenth—June 19—marks the day in 1865 when enslaved African laborers in Galveston, Texas, finally learned of the Emancipation Proclamation, two years after it became law.

This year, speakers for the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement and ANSWER drew wild support as they addressed the crowd along the parade

route. They demanded that the war be "brought home"—that it should be a war against the racist criminal justice system, and a war for jobs, schools and health care.

The Abolition Movement carried signs and passed out hundreds of flyers about death row prisoner Tony Ford, whose birthday is also June 19.

Supporters stress that Ford has maintained his innocence and has a strong case to prove it. These supporters—from Texas, to Ford's home town of Detroit, to Italy—are taking his case to the people.

Flyers were also distributed for a commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the execution of Shaka Sankofa, "legally lynched" by the state of Texas on June 22, 2000. □



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

By Brenda Sandburg  
San Francisco

Imagine having free, universal health care, a minimum wage of \$15 per hour, college education accessible to all, and an end to the military occupation of Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan.

Most U.S. politicians say this is an impossible utopia. They don't fight for people to live free of poverty. They don't care that people are being laid off or forced into low-paying jobs. They do nothing for people dying because they lack health insurance.

They are indifferent to the men and women being sent to Iraq to kill and die, just as they are indifferent to the people tortured, bombed and maimed in the U.S. government's "endless wars" of colonization.

That's because they are part of the capitalist system. Democrats and Republicans alike represent the interests of the rich, the big corporations and the banks. To expose the hypocrisy of capitalist elections and to help build a movement to change the system, Workers World Party is running a candidate for Congress in California.

LeiLani Dowell, an anti-war fighter and community activist, is campaigning against Democratic incumbent Nancy Pelosi in California's 8th Congressional District, which includes most of San Francisco. A member of Workers World Party, Dowell is running on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket.

Peace and Freedom, the only socialist party on the California ballot, regained its electoral status after losing it in 1998 for failing to meet the 2-percent threshold in that year's election. A statewide struggle by socialists, including Workers World Party, put it back on the ballot last year.

"The election provides an opportunity to offer millions of workers a genuine alternative to the whole system of exploitation and oppression," Dowell said. "We can't achieve what we need by depending on Congress or the legislature. Our real hope lies in building a powerful,



WW PHOTOS: JULIA LA RIVA

Los Angeles Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans Pride, June 20.

## LeiLani Dowell: The people's candidate for Congress

united people's movement."

Since Dowell launched her campaign six months ago she has been in the forefront of struggles for same-sex marriage, women's reproductive rights and affirmative action. She has also been active in the fight against the death penalty, participating in the movement that halted the execution of Kevin Cooper in February, and in the battle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Dowell has been a leading organizer in the anti-war movement, helping to build the major demonstrations since the U.S. first announced plans to attack Iraq.

She has supported the struggle against imperialism in Latin America, traveling to Venezuela in solidarity with the masses of people backing President Hugo Chavez, and to Colombia in support of the trade

union campaign against Coca-Cola. The union accuses Coca-Cola of collaborating with Colombian paramilitaries in a campaign of murder and human rights violations against union activists.

She has also spoken out to educate people about the Cuban 5 political prisoners.

A 26-year old lesbian of African American and Hawaiian descent, Dowell is a socialist who has worked as a preschool teacher, union organizer and office worker. She knows what it's like to scrape together the rent and work to pay tuition.

The media touts Dowell's opponent Pelosi as an anti-war candidate. But since 9/11 Pelosi has consistently supported

Bush's "war on terror." She is now calling for more U.S. troops in Iraq "to get the job done." She also supports Israel's occupation of Palestine and voted against easing the travel ban on Cuba.

And like most members of the House Pelosi is a millionaire. She sold one of her vineyards last year for a reported \$1 million to \$5 million. She owns another vineyard in St. Helena, town houses in Lake Tahoe and Norden, Calif., and real estate in Napa.

The rich have their candidates like Pelosi. Working and poor people need their own. Dowell's campaign is dedicated to building a movement to fight for a just society, before and after the elections.

"The working class—African American, Latin@, Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, Arab and white, women and men, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and straight, able-bodied and disabled, immigrant and U.S.-born—the vast majority who create all the wealth in society should determine how it is utilized," Dowell said. □

## Why socialism is key to LGBT liberation

Continued from page 1

world. The point is to change it! So in every political struggle we bring forward the issue of LGBT liberation.

We know that the LGBT struggle is connected to the struggle against racism, the struggle of people with disabilities, the struggle of the people who do the work of the world—that all struggles for liberation are connected.

### Why campaign in these elections?

Why are we campaigning now? We want to bring the struggle for LGBT liberation forward during this election year—and we know Bush and Kerry aren't going to advance our cause.

Bush wants to make same-sex marriage unconstitutional. Kerry would let it be declared illegal on a state-by-state basis! But their position on marriage is just a signal—a message to the right wing that neither of them intends to fight for LGBT people.

Kerry doesn't even bother to give lip service like Bill Clinton, who wooed LGBT people during his 1992 campaign, then turned around and surrendered to the generals with "don't ask, don't tell," which has actually made life even worse for LGBT people in the military. Then Clinton joined with arch-reactionary Jesse Helms and signed the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act.

But Kerry is not even pretending to be a supporter of LGBT rights.

Both Bush and Kerry are for continuing the brutal war in Iraq. As LGBT people we can be proud that the first military resister who refused to serve was gay Filipino Marine reservist Stephen Funk.

We know that LGBT people are everywhere—in the workforce, in the struggle for immigrant rights, for health care and funding for AIDS and for women's health, for custody of our children and for day care, and as young people who soon may be subject to the looming draft.

That's why it is crucial in this election year that we have our own independent political movement that will fight for LGBT lives—which means to fight for all of our lives under this racist, oppressive economic system of capitalism.

We are the candidates that represent that independent movement for people's power. We don't intend to hand our power over to the Republicans or the Democrats. We are waging an educational, struggle campaign to take the message to the world that the only road forward is for working and oppressed peoples to unite and fight in our own interests for a socialist future.

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

**LeiLani Dowell**  
WWP member, Peace & Freedom  
Party candidate for Eighth  
Congressional District, San Francisco

## La solidaridad es la fuerza de la labor organizada

Continúa de página 16

Miembr@s de sindicatos, las cuotas de quienes están auspiciando el candidato Demócrata, tienen el derecho de preguntar si el multimillonario Senador John Kerry es una alternativa de verdad para Bush. Vamos a revisar su historia.

Kerry votó por la represiva Ley Patriota. Él está en oposición a los derechos de matrimonio entre gente del mismo género.

Él estuvo ausente por un voto crucial para extender los beneficios del seguro de desempleo. Aunque supo que iba haber un margen estrecho, se mantuvo en la senda de la campaña electoral. El propuesto de ley falló por un solo voto.

¿Y qué con Irak? Kerry quiere enviar más tropas a Irak porque "fallar no es una opción". ¿No es una opción para quién? Solo para las grandes empresas petroleras y para Wall Street, los dos intereses notoriamente antitrabajo y reaccionario, ellos quieren asegurar el control del petróleo de Irak. No hay ninguna ventaja en eso para l@s trabajadores fuera de gastos excesivos y dolor.

### En la unidad hay fuerza

La estrategia de "cualquier candidato que no es Bush" está basado en la idea falsa que las elecciones son los medios más importantes para forjar cambio social progresista.

Nadie puede negar la importancia del derecho de votar, especialmente para ell@s que han sido denegad@s por muchos años esos derechos como por ejemplo l@s african@-american@s,

incluso ell@s que fueron robados de esos derechos durante las elecciones de 2000 en la Florida.

Pero si aprendemos algo de la historia del trabajo, debe ser que las luchas militantes y organizadas de l@s trabajadores y la gente oprimida para la justicia política, económica y social son la única fuerza verdadera para lograr el cambio.

Lo más fundamental es que sin nuestra labor no se puede producir a nada, nada se mueve, no hay servicios, y no hay ganancias.

L@s trabajadores de verduras de California, l@s trabajadores del cuidado de la salud doméstica y del cuidado infantil, los lavander@s de Washington, D.C., y otros han demostrado que el motor del movimiento sindical de hoy son l@s trabajadores multinacionales, l@s trabajadores mujeres e inmigrantes de bajos salarios. Ell@s son la nueva cara del movimiento sindical.

Imagínese si los dólares y horas proviniendo de los de miembr@s de los sindicatos fueran invertidos en forjar una campaña nacional a nivel comunitario para organizar a l@s trabajadores de bajos salarios y no organizad@s en sindicatos en vez de enfocar la atención en los comicios. Eso tendría un efecto poderoso en el clima político no importa quien ocupara la Casa Blanca.

Nos vemos en las líneas de piquete, en las protestas fuera de las convenciones Demócrata y Republicana, en las calles, dondequiera l@s trabajadores luchan por sus derechos. Unete a nosotr@s, John Parker y Teresa Gutiérrez candidat@s del Partido Mundo Obrero (Workers World Party) para presidente y vicepresidente. □



## Vote for working-class candidates, join a workers' party

Isn't it time workers spoke for themselves?

Every four years it's the same story. Millionaire/billionaire politicians funded by Big Business pose as friends of workers. But after the elections, no matter who wins, the results are the same: more war, more union busting, more racism and bigotry, more hardship for poor and working people.

The choice between Republican and Democrat this year is a choice between the greater evil and the lesser evil. When it comes to the interests of the workers and oppressed worldwide, the answer to the bosses' evil is not to vote for Bush, author of the bloody war and occupation of Iraq—nor vote for Kerry, who wants to increase the number of troops in Iraq and declares, "failure is not an option."

Workers World Party runs in the elections, too. But we're not in it to play the warmongers' game. We're here to crash the elections. And we have

great candidates. John Parker for president. Teresa Gutierrez for vice president. LeiLani Dowell for Congress in San Francisco on the Peace & Freedom Party ticket. People of color. Workers. Anti-war activists. Fighters against lesbian/gay /bi/trans and women's oppression. Socialists. Fighters for all the oppressed.

Our goal is to reach tens of thousands, if not millions, of people with a message they won't hear anywhere else:

Bring the troops home now. Real social change happens through class struggles, not elections. Workers need their own party to represent their interests. United in solidarity, we can organize an independent movement to fight for a society that puts people's needs before profit and global conquest—socialism.

**Support the Parker-Gutierrez campaign. And join a party that represents your interests—a workers' party—Workers World Party.** □

## Vote por los candidatos de la clase obrera, únase al partido de los trabajadores.

¿No es hora de que los trabajadores hablen por sí mismos?

Cada cuatro años es la misma historia. Políticos Millonarios financiados por las Grandes Empresas se presentan como amigos de los trabajadores. Pero después de las elecciones, no importa quién gane, los resultados son siempre los mismos: más guerras, más ataques a los sindicatos, más racismo y discriminación, más dificultades para los pobres y los trabajadores.

La selección entre Republicanos y Demócratas este año es la selección entre el malo y el más malo. Cuando vigilamos por los intereses de los trabajadores y de los oprimidos de todo mundo, la respuesta contra la mala voluntad patronal es no votar por Bush, el autor de la san-

grienta guerra y ocupación de Irak, ni votar por Kerry, quien desea aumentar el número de tropas en Irak y declara que "el fracaso no es una opción."

El Partido Mundo Obrero corre en las elecciones también. Pero no para participar en el juego de los belicosos. Estamos para asaltar las elecciones. Y tenemos excelentes candidatos: John Parker para presidente. Teresa Gutierrez para vicepresidenta. LeiLani Dowell para el Congreso por San Francisco bajo la boleta del Partido de Paz y Libertad (Peace & Freedom Party). Gente de color. Trabajadores. Activistas anti-guerra. Luchadores contra la opresión de homo, bi, y trans-sexuales y contra la opresión de mujeres. Socialistas. Luchadores por todos los oprimidos.

Nuestra meta es alcanzar a decenas de miles, si no a millones de personas con un mensaje que no escucharán en ningún otro lugar:

Que regresen las tropas ahora. El verdadero cambio social ocurre a través de la lucha de clases, no mediante elecciones. Los trabajadores necesitan su propio partido para representar sus intereses. Unidos en solidaridad, podemos organizar un movimiento independiente para la lucha por una sociedad que ponga las necesidades de la gente por encima de las ganancias y de la conquista mundial—el socialismo.

Apoye la campaña Parker-Gutierrez. Y únase a un partido que represente sus intereses—un partido de los trabajadores—el Partido Mundo Obrero. □

# PEOPLE'S NEEDS BEFORE PROFITS

## Fight for workers' rights, not racist wars

### Money for human needs, not occupations in Iraq, Haiti, Palestine and Afghanistan

No more lies, no more torture, no more deaths of Iraqis and GIs. Withdraw U.S. troops immediately from all occupied countries. Support the right of the Iraqi people and all U.S.-occupied people to resist. Put the war makers on trial. Reparations from Big Oil and Wall Street for 14 years of war and genocidal sanctions against Iraq. Stop funding Israeli terror in Palestine. Use the Pentagon's \$442 billion budget (proposed for Fiscal Year 2005) to restore social services at home. End the economic draft by creating jobs and educational opportunities for working-class youths.

### U.S. hands off Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Korea and everywhere

**Globalize solidarity, not imperialist plunder**  
**Independence for Puerto Rico**  
End the "war on terror," an excuse for aggression against any country that tries to be independent of U.S. economic and political domination. Establish international relations based on mutual respect and worker solidarity. Cancel the debt of countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Dismantle the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Abolish exploitative trade agreements like NAFTA, FTAA and WTO.

### Union jobs or guaranteed income for all

**Raise the minimum wage to \$15.**  
**Thirty hours work for 40 hours pay**

Every worker has the right to join a union. Workers and communities should have

veto power over corporate decisions. Workers can occupy runaway factories and take over bankrupt businesses. The "jobless recovery" is a sham—the rich benefit while workers suffer. Declare a national jobs emergency and force Fortune 500 companies to rehire. Enact a moratorium on layoffs. Tax Big Business to provide a living-wage income for the unemployed and underemployed. Create a massive public works program to build and staff clinics, hospitals, schools, community centers and day care facilities. Guaranteed one-month paid vacation for all workers.

### Free, universal health care

Health care is a right, but at least 43.6 million people in the U.S. are without any medical insurance; in the last two years 82 million have been without coverage for some period. Replace the military-industrial complex with a national health care system. Nationalize the pharmaceutical industry and seize its profits to fund a worldwide campaign to conquer AIDS. Distribute HIV/AIDS drugs at low or no cost globally.

### End racism, police brutality & the death penalty

**Reparations and social justice for people of color and colonized nations**

Outlaw racism. Empower community organizations and unions to enforce ban on discrimination in hiring, housing, etc. Restore and expand affirmative action in

the workplace. Jail killer cops. Community control of the police. Independence for Puerto Rico. Self-determination for all oppressed peoples inside the U.S. Dismantle the prison-industrial complex: today over 2.1 million people are held in U.S. prisons and jails; 68 percent are people of color. End for-profit exploitation of prison labor. Capitalism was built by the unpaid labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants, and by the super-exploitation of other colonized and oppressed people. Genocide drove Native nations from lands shared in common. Reparations for their descendants would be an important step in acknowledging the lasting damage of these historic injustices.

### Same-sex marriage rights now!

**Equality for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans people**

Abolish all restrictions on legal marriage of LGBT couples. Equal benefits and protections for all married couples, as well as unmarried domestic partners of all sexes, genders and sexualities. Repeal all anti-gay and anti-trans laws. Equal rights for LGBT parents, including the right to adopt children. Ban discrimination in hiring, housing, etc. Support community efforts to stop gay- and trans-bashing. End "don't ask, don't tell."

### Defend women's rights

Defend the right of women and girls to choose. Provide access to safe, free

abortions on demand. No forced sterilizations. Repeal reactionary restrictions, including the "partial birth abortion" law. Defend women's health clinics. Women have a right to pre-natal care and all the resources necessary to raise healthy children. Free childcare for working parents. Equal pay for equal work or comparable work. A living wage for housework and childrearing.

### Full rights for immigrants

**Repeal the Patriot Act**  
**Free victims of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim repression**

Full rights for immigrant workers and their families. End deportations. Tear down the wall at the U.S./Mexico border. Defend bilingual education. Thousands of Arab, South Asian and Muslim men have been detained for long periods without charges under the so-called USA Patriot Act; many were summarily deported. We join with more than 300 U.S. cities in demanding the act's immediate repeal. Release those charged as "enemy combatants." Free the prisoners of war at Guantanamo and other top-secret facilities.

### Free Mumia, Leonard Peltier, the Cuban 5

**And all political prisoners**

Release the hundreds of political prisoners languishing in U.S. jails: Puerto Rican independence advocates, former Black Panthers and Black Liberation Army members, Young Lords and American Indian Movement warriors, white anti-imperialists and others. Black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal was framed for murder and put on Pennsylvania death row 22 years ago. Native leader Leonard Peltier has been in federal prison nearly three

# FOR SOCIALISM against capitalism

# BRING THE TROOPS HOME

## Money for jobs—not war

### **Abolish the Pentagon**

Money for housing, childcare and human needs, not occupations in Iraq, Haiti, Palestine & Afghanistan

### **U.S. hands off Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Korea & everywhere**

Globalize solidarity, not imperialist plunder  
Independence for Puerto Rico

### **Union jobs or guaranteed income**

Raise the minimum wage to \$15. Jobs not jails for youth

### **Free, universal health care for all**

Full reproductive rights for women

### **End racism, police brutality and the death penalty**

Reparations and social justice for people of color and colonized nations

### **Same-sex marriage rights now**

Equality for women and lesbians, gays, bi and transgender people

### **Full rights for all immigrants Repeal the Patriot Act**

Free victims of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim repression





## ● **Education is a right** **Restore affirmative action**

Lower the voting age to 16

● **Free Mumia, Leonard Peltier, the Cuban 5**  
and all political prisoners

● **Tax the rich**  
End corporate welfare  
Make corporate polluters pay to clean up our environment

Isn't it time workers spoke for themselves?

Every four years it's the same story. Millionaire/billionaire politicians funded by Big Business pose as friends of workers. But after the elections, no matter who wins, the results are the same: more war, more union busting, more racism and bigotry, more hardship for poor and working people. The choice between Republican and Democrat this year is a choice between the greater evil and the lesser evil.

## **Volunteers & donations needed!**

**WORKERS WORLD PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE**

National Office: 55 West. 17 St., 5 Fl., New York, NY 10011 212.627.2994



# **VOTE FOR PARKER & GUTIERREZ**

# **JOIN WORKERS WORLD PARTY**



**John Parker for president & Teresa Gutierrez for vice president**

# **People's needs before profits** **FOR SOCIALISM** **against capitalism**

Workers World Party runs in the elections, too.

But we're not in it to play the warmongers' game.

We're here to crash the elections.

And we have great candidates—John Parker for president and Teresa Gutierrez for vice president.

People of color. Workers. Anti-war activists.

Fighters for poor and working people's rights.

We have a message you won't hear anywhere else:

Bring the troops home now. Real change happens

through class struggles, not elections. Workers need

their own party to represent their interests. United

in solidarity, we can organize an independent move-

ment to fight for a society that puts people's needs

before profit and global conquest.

**www.vote4workers.org**

email: [vote4workers@workers.org](mailto:vote4workers@workers.org)

West Coast: 5274 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90019 213.936.1416



# **VOTE FOR PARKER & GUTIERREZ**

# **JOIN WORKERS WORLD PARTY**

## Introducing our candidates

### John Parker for president

John Parker was only 18 when he organized his first union election—at a small steel plant in New Jersey. An African American, he has worked at a variety of other jobs, including teaching at a public school in Newark.

Parker went to Sudan and visited that country's main pharmaceutical plant after it was demolished in 1998 by a U.S. missile strike. He has been to Iraq and seen the terrible effects of sanctions on the people there, especially children. He also did solidarity work in Cuba in 1997 with the Venceremos Brigade.

After moving to Los Angeles with his family several years ago, he became a leader in the anti-war movement there and helped organize and chair several large rallies against the U.S. war in Iraq, sponsored by the ANSWER Coalition.



**Parker speaks out for same sex marriage in Los Angeles. He demanded the Permanent Partner Immigration Act to eliminate double standards for bi-national same-sex couples and denounced Bush's attempt to prohibit same-sex marriage.**

sored by the ANSWER Coalition.

He worked hard to mobilize anti-war forces to support the 80,000 grocery workers on a strike/lockout against three giant southern California food chains.



**Gutierrez presents a gift to Elian Gonzales dad, celebrating the child's return to Cuba**

### Teresa Gutierrez for vice president

Teresa Gutierrez became politically active in the Chican@ movement in Texas. She eventually moved to New York to be part of a multinational party that puts the

struggle against racism and national oppression at the top of its agenda, as an indispensable part of uniting the working class in the struggle to end capitalism and build a socialist society.

She brings consciousness on the need to combat sexist oppression to all her work. As a proud lesbian in a long-term relationship, Gutierrez has experienced the discrimination of being denied the equal benefits that would come with marriage, and is outraged that her 15-year relationship is not legally recognized.

As co-director of the International Action Center, Gutierrez has met with progressive forces in Colombia, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Mexico. She was part of a delegation to the Dominican Republic investigating the use of that country as a training ground for the paramilitaries who attacked Haiti and helped the U.S. depose its elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

She has visited Cuba many times in solidarity with that socialist country, and was a major organizer of the powerful 1992 "Peace for Cuba" rally at New York's Javits Convention Center.



**Dowell announces her campaign in San Francisco**

anti-racist work. She's spoken at major demonstrations against the occupation of Palestine, attacks on people of color, the war in Iraq, and the attacks on civil liberties that have characterized the so-called "war on terror." □

### LeiLani Dowell for Congress

LeiLani Dowell grew up in South Central Los Angeles. She earned an associates degree in Ethnic Studies at Santa Monica College before entering the Labor Studies program at San Francisco State University. Before moving to San Francisco, Dowell worked as a preschool teacher for children with developmental disabilities, a restaurant waiter and administrative assistant.

As a labor organizer Dowell helped lead contract negotiations at Oakland's recycling plant in 2001. She's participated in

solidarity and fact-finding delegations to El Salvador, Colombia and Venezuela.

Dowell helped organize a rally to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California, and was an organizer of the May 17th National Solidarity Actions for Same-Sex Marriage and Against All Forms of Discrimination, Bigotry and Racism.

Dowell has been a leading youth activist in the ANSWER coalition's anti-war and

# Join Workers World election Campaign

## Volunteer • Help us get on the ballot • Make a donation

Continued from page S1

decades although prosecutors don't know who shot the FBI agent he's convicted of killing. Five Cuban men are imprisoned here for defending their country by infiltrating U.S.-backed terrorist groups in Miami.

### Schools and jobs, not jails, for young people

### No draft, no way! Lower the voting age to 16

Free, quality public education is a right, including college. Restore affirmative action in higher education. Every student, youth and worker has the right to a computer and high-speed Internet access. Cancel student-loan debts. Abolish textbook fees and special fees for foreign students. Equal funding for public

schools in majority African American, Latin@ and other working-class communities. End re-segregation. Invest in new schools built with safe materials, adequate classrooms and supplies. Create a multicultural curriculum that respects the contributions and teaches the real history of all nationalities, genders, sexualities, gender expressions and the working class. Stop the war on youth and stu-

dents-police out of the schools. Abolish the "Pledge of Allegiance."

### Tax the rich End corporate welfare Make polluting companies pay for environmental cleanup

Repeal Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy. The bottom 90 percent pay the bill for wars abroad and repression at home while the White House and Congress give away subsidies to Big Business—\$93 billion in 2002, not including military contracts. End income taxes on people with low or moderate incomes. Tax corporate profits, stock transactions and the super-rich. End government/corporate environmental racism. Take emergency measures to develop clean renewable energy sources. Expand public transportation. End corporate encroachment on public protected lands. Abide by international environmental regulations. Develop and share new environmentally friendly technology with developing countries. Safe, healthy food is a right. □

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# Koreans from north and south meet at Incheon

By Deirdre Griswold  
New York

Over 100 people from North Korea were able to fly directly to South Korea on June 15. They went to Incheon, where they met with Koreans from the south as well as from overseas. The occasion was the fourth anniversary of the North-South Joint Declaration that pledged to increase contacts between the two halves of Korea. The Joint Declaration was signed by Kim Jong Il for the DPRK and then-president Kim Dae-jung for South Korea.

Yoomi Jeong of New York, Deputy Secretary General of the Korea Truth Commission, attended the events. She described them as "very emotional" to a forum here organized by Workers World Party on June 18.

The events included a mini-marathon and a concert. Koreans from north, south and overseas drew applause as they ran through the streets of Incheon. Later, 20,000 South Koreans attended a concert with their compatriots from the north and cheered for reunification.

Jeong told Workers World that among the delegates from the north was the daughter of Ri In Mo, a journalist who

was captured by the south during the Korean War and held in prison for nearly 40 years. In 1993, several years after being released, he was finally allowed to return to the north, where he received a hero's welcome from hundreds of thousands of Korean people and from the legendary liberation leader of the nation, Kim Il Sung.

Now in his late eighties, Ri In Mo has recovered his health, which deteriorated almost to the point of death during his prison ordeal.

On this trip, Ri's daughter was finally able to meet with his adopted son, who lives in South Korea. Former cellmates of Ri In Mo who still live in the south also attended the celebrations.

"The participation of many former long-time political prisoners in these events," said Jeong, "shows how much the political climate has changed in the south. Such a thing used to be impossible. Any contact between them and people from the north would have meant their immediate arrest."

The setting for this event has deep significance for the Korean people.

When the Korean War broke out in 1950, at the height of the Cold War,



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Yoomi Jeong addresses June 18  
Workers World meeting in New York.

70,000 U.S. Marines invaded at Incheon to keep the socialist north from reunifying the country. Even though the two states share the same peninsula and the Korean people have a 5,000-year history, they have been divided ever since the U.S. occupied the south at the end of World War II. To this day, the U.S. refuses to

sign or even negotiate a peace treaty with the north, and maintains nearly 40,000 troops in South Korea, poised to attack the north at any moment.

It took more than half a century of struggle by the Korean people for reunification for such a simple thing as a direct flight between the two halves of Korea to take place.

For decades, a National Security Law in South Korea has made it illegal for southerners to visit the north—even to find members of their divided families—or even to possess the writings of Kim Il Sung. While still on the books, the effectiveness of the law is finally fading.

Kim Il Sung was the leader of the Korean struggle for liberation from Japanese colonialism and founder of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Under his leadership, a revolutionary insurrection in the north at the end of World War II broke the power of the landlords and capitalists who had collaborated with Japanese rule, opening the road to socialist reconstruction. Every step of the way, however, has been made extremely difficult by the enforced division of the country and continued military occupation by the U.S. □

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

### Haiti: 5,000 march to demand Aristide's return

Over 5,000 demonstrators marched June 18 from Bel Air, a poor neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, to the Presidential Palace in order to press their demands for the return of Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and for open and fair elections.

Aristide, who was forced from Haiti in a coup planned and implemented by the U.S. government, is currently living in exile in South Africa. The de-facto government currently in control is recognized only by the United States.

A similar demonstration held on May 18, Haitian Flag Day, was met by gunfire from Haitian police, backed up by U.S. Marines, that killed at least two protesters. However, police refrained from attacking the June 18 demonstration. The protesters exchanged insults with U.S. Marines guarding the walls of the presidential palace and urged them to leave the country.

"If they want to kill us all, that's OK, but we will not rest until Aristide is returned," Lesly Gustave, one of the demonstration organizers, told a German press agency.

U.S. Marines were supposed to leave by June 20 and be replaced by a collection of UN soldiers from countries that are former colonial possessions or neocolonies. This maneuver would allow U.S. imperialism to operate behind a Third World screen while extending its control into the rural areas of Haiti.

But it appears that U.S. troops are going to continue enforcing the control of key areas like the Presidential Palace.

—G. Dunkel

### U.S. Navy 'operations' in Africa

Much of the worldwide progressive movement is very aware of the long-time

bloody U.S. imperialist role in the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. Less is known about U.S. designs on Africa, but that may soon change.

The U.S. Navy has initiated "Operation Summer Pulse '04," which entails sending U.S. battleships off the coasts of Nigeria, Sao Tome, Equatorial Guinea and other African oil-producing countries. According to the Pentagon's website, "Beginning this week and continuing through August, the Navy will exercise the full range of skills involved in simultaneously deploying and employing carrier strike groups around the world... Summer Pulse '04 will include scheduled deployments, surge operations, joint and international exercises, and other advanced training and port visits."

What is the underlying reason for the U.S. bolstering its military presence throughout a particular region in the most underdeveloped continent? This "show of force" is an attempt on behalf of U.S. big oil interests to control and exploit the huge, untapped oil reserves in Africa. This military scheme grows out of skyrocketing fuel prices inside the U.S. and the deepening geopolitical instability that the Pentagon faces in the Middle East, especially Iraq.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for African Affairs Charles Snyder said in a speech on April 13: "A lot of this new oil is actually offshore. There is no one to protect it unless we build up African coastal fleets... The United States has real interests in Africa. We ignore the continent at our peril. Africa will provide up to 30 percent of U.S. oil in the next 10 years."

Did the Navy brass even bother to consult with any African leader about their plans to dominate the mineral wealth with armed ships? Of course not. Imperialism is not a policy based on cooperation or defending the rights of colonized peoples. Imperialism is a predatory economic system that feeds off the plunder and super-exploitation of the resources and labor of oppressed countries.

The African peoples have a glorious his-

tory of anti-colonial and pro-independence struggle. But now, more than ever, they need to feel a strong hand of international solidarity, especially from movements within the larger imperialist countries. This solidarity includes demanding from the U.S. and other rich capitalist economies billions of dollars in reparations for real economic development and national liberation for all African peoples.

—Monica Moorehead

### Fidel Castro offers free health care to 3,000 U.S. poor

Fidel Castro, in yet another example showing the Cuban Revolution can "think outside the box," has pledged that the Cuban health care system will provide free medical care to up to 3,000 U.S. people who need such care and cannot obtain it inside the United States. The Cuban president was speaking on June 21 to 200,000 in Havana who were demonstrating solidarity against the threat of military intervention from U.S. imperialism.

Castro challenged U.S. President George Bush to allow the poor people needing medical care to travel to Cuba. The Bush administration had recently tightened rules against U.S. residents visiting Cuba, even those who were born in Cuba and have relatives there.

The Cuban revolutionary leader called attention to the 44 million U.S. residents who have no medical insurance and to the thousands who die each year because they are unable to afford available medical care. These, he pointed out, are many more than the 3,000 who died in the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001. He said he hoped his offer would lead to saving 3,000 lives.

Castro expressed Cuba's solidarity with the people of the United States, even as he spoke of the Cuban people's determination to defend their country and its socialist system against any possible attack.

### BOLIVIA

### Corrupt mayor hung in rebellion

In mid-June, a community uprising of Indigenous people in Ayo Ayo, an extremely poor town of about 7,000 people 55 miles from the capital, executed Mayor Benjamin Altamirano. The people accused him of corruption. They later burned his corpse. This was part of an ongoing rebellion of poor people, mostly Aymara and Quechua, whose uprising last October threw out former President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada and replaced him with Carlos Mesa. Before that uprising succeeded, the Bolivian army and police killed 66 of the people taking part in the unarmed rebellion and wounded many more.

The main issues behind last fall's uprising involved the plunder of Bolivian resources, especially natural gas, by mostly U.S.-based corporations like Enron, and the poverty imposed on most Bolivians by the privatization policies in force the last 10 years. The current unrest is a reaction to Mesa's failure to change these policies, especially to take steps aiding the impoverished Bolivians.

Ruling-class media and many government officials condemned the community's execution. But Econoticias Bolivia reported June 16 that the action received support. Felipe Quispe, the leader of the Unified Trade Union Confederation of Farm Workers of Bolivia (CSUTCB), said "I believe that if it was a community action, the CSUTCB will defend the community, because the community is not the ones guilty (of the killing). The guilty ones are those who manage the laws, those who administer the laws... those who leave unpunished and without blame those who steal from the people."

Quispe is an Indigenous ex-guerrilla who in early June renounced his role as an elected deputy to "be in the struggle on the side of his people and not get corrupted by parliamentarism."

—John Catalinotto

# Sexual freedom vs. fascism in Germany

By Leslie Feinberg

Decades of left-wing political activism, agitation and education ushered in the short-lived era of the "Golden Twenties" in Germany. Berlin rivaled Paris for its flourishing gay and lesbian cultures—which included transgender expression. The movement had forced the police to issue certificates to trans people, allowing them to "cross-dress" without threat of arrest.

Turn-of-the-century independent struggles for sexual reform, including the movement for women's right to vote—which had held its first large protest in Berlin in 1894—were coalescing into a broad political alliance between the women's emancipation movement and the gay, trans and lesbian movement.

The most prominent organization in that political coalition was the League for the Protection of Maternity and Sexual Reform, founded in 1905. Its leader, Dr. Helene Stoecker, became a director of the Scientific Humanitarian Committee headed by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, a leader of the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement.

The First Congress for Sexual Reform convened in Berlin Sept. 15-20, 1921. The gathering met at the Institute of Sexual Science—the international center of the movement for sexual emancipation. Experts traveled to Germany from around the world for this ground-breaking discussion about sexology, genetics and the law.

In his book "The Pink Triangle," Richard Plant—a later refugee from Nazi Germany—noted that "The congress was such a success that Hirschfeld was emboldened to create the World League for Sexual Reform, which at its height claimed a membership of 130,000."

In 1923 there were at least 25 gay/trans/lesbian organizations in Germany. And the movement was debating the formation of a national homosexual political party.

## Early targets of fascism

German fascism targeted the gay/trans/lesbian and the women's rights movements even before anti-Jewish and anti-gay laws, codified in 1934-35, officially marked the unleashing of the widespread campaign of terror.

Magnus Hirschfeld was an easy target for the Nazis because he was Jewish and gay, as well as a movement leader and socialist. In 1920 Nazis beat him up as he spoke at a meeting in Munich. Again in Munich, in 1921, his skull was fractured and the fascists left him for dead. In Vienna two years later, Nazis hurled stink bombs and then opened fire on a meeting where he was speaking.

On May 6, 1933, fascist youth were organized to march on the Institute for Sexual Science, accompanied by a brass band. They trashed the international archive, making a mountain of the many thousands of books and journals, photographs and charts—at that time the largest collection in world history. Storm troopers showed up and took over the ransacking. Four days later, the enormous heap of archive materials was publicly burned on Opera Square. The Nazis threw a bust of Hirschfeld on the pyre.

Hirschfeld was abroad on a worldwide speaking tour that had taken him to the United States, China, Palestine, India, Indonesia and Japan. He later died in exile.

After 1933 the Nazis forcibly dismantled all independent youth organizations, even the Catholic ones, by denouncing their leaders as "homosexual degenerates."

"By the summer of 1933," Plant wrote, "Ernst Roehm's SA [Sturm Abteilung]

goons were raiding gay bars throughout Germany. Many were closed, but others didn't shutter their doors until 1935. That was the year when the campaign against homosexuals shifted into high gear and the new Nazi laws banning such gathering places and outlawing homosexuals as 'sexual vagrants' went into effect."

Roehm was himself an openly gay leader of the fascist storm troopers—the "brown shirt" militias used as a weapon of violent repression against the progressive and revolutionary political movements.

To some, it might seem a contradiction that a gay man led raids on gay bars. But there are gay and lesbian, bisexual and trans people in every economic class in capitalist society. When the class struggle is raging, the real question is, as the timeless U.S. labor union song demands, "Which side are you on?"

Roehm's role in attempting to crush the liberation movements that sought to overturn capitalism is no more paradoxical than the reactionary J. Edgar Hoover—reportedly a gay cross-dresser—laying siege to the left-wing struggles, including gay liberation, in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s

What is ironic is that Roehm drowned in his own ideological current.

In 1934, Roehm was purged from the Nazi Party and shot. His homosexuality was the political flashpoint. But his violent removal resulted from internal rivalries and Roehm's struggle to supplant the standing army with his own fascist militia, which ran counter to Hitler's attempts to appease the military brass.

Plant concludes, "The Night of the Long Knives"—the popular phrase for the [internal] bloodbath that began on June 28 and lasted until July 3, 1934—saw Adolph Hitler wreck the SA militia and order the shooting of its chief, Ernst Roehm, the man who, since 1919, had been Hitler's sponsor and faithful second-in-command."

Roehm's purge was the harbinger of a storm of violence against left-wing movements for sexual, gender and sex liberation.

A harsh new anti-gay edict was publicly issued one year to the day after the Night of the Long Knives began—June 28, 1935. Paragraph 175A criminalized kisses, embraces, even homosexual fantasies. The law gave the fascist state license to carry out arrests and internment in camps with impunity under the mantle of "criminally indecent activities between men." Plant estimated that between 50,000 and 63,000 males were convicted of homosexuality from 1933 to 1944, of which nearly 4,000 were juveniles.

Although laws against lesbianism had not been codified, German women were snared in the state web, as well—rounded up in SS raids on lesbian bars, sentenced by the Gestapo and sent to concentration camps where they faced horrific brutality.

Estimates of the total number of lesbian/gay/trans prisoners forced to wear the pink triangle on their uniforms in Nazi concentration camps range from 100,000 to 600,000.

## Learning from the mistakes

Communists and socialists of all sexualities and genders fought the Nazi attacks on the gay/trans/lesbian and women's struggles.

Yet was there backwardness about homosexuality on the part of socialists and communists in the German left? Yes.

"The Left" was not politically monolithic. Frequently even activist historians lump together the German communists and social democrats as "the left," "the socialists." But like a fast-moving river, political movements are made up of many currents.

Before World War I, the Social Democratic Party was the party of revolutionaries. But after its cowardly capitulation at the outbreak of World War I—the overwhelming majority supported their own capitalist class in that inter-imperialist rivalry for colonies—the party lost its revolutionary character. After the war and the Russian Revolution, those who had opposed the capitulation formed a new communist party.

Revolutionaries must constantly be working to shed centuries of ruling class indoctrination that serves to divide and conquer the vast laboring class. Every form of bigotry and backwardness holds back unity and progress in a revolutionary struggle of all sexualities, genders and sexes to abolish capitalism and liberate humanity.

However, some in the Social Democratic and Communist parties in Germany—and in the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, which by then had retreated from some of its earlier, more revolutionary positions—took easy political advantage, especially immediately after the purge of Roehm in the Nazi Party, by gay-baiting the fascists.

That was a serious political error. It was like a striking worker shouting an anti-gay epithet at scabs or police attacking the picket line. Anti-gay bigotry goes against the workers' own class interests.

The U.S. and British imperialist bosses were gay-baiting the Nazis, too. But in that case it actually did serve the interests of their side of the class barricades.

## Error vs. ideology

There is a profound difference, however, between political error and political ideology.

In the heat of the struggle, the actual positions the German Communist Party and the Nazi Party took on homosexuality and on abortion demonstrate class objectives as different as night and day.

In 1928 gay publisher Adolf Brand, a founding member of an elitist and male chauvinist German gay group called the Community of the Special, polled the political parties of Germany about their position on Paragraph 175.

After the Second International collapsed following its surrender to the inter-imperialist chauvinism of World War I, German revolutionary elements joined the Communist Party. As the Communist

Party became strong, it responded to the call by the gay/trans/lesbian movement for support against Paragraph 175.

The Communist Party replied that it had "taken a stand for the repeal of Paragraph 175 at every available opportunity. There is no need to emphasize that we will continue to wage the most resolute struggle for the repeal of these laws in the future."

Communist lawyer Felix Halle, a co-worker in the Coalition for Reform of the Sexual Crimes Code, provided this formulation of the German Communist Party's stance:

"The class-conscious proletariat, uninfluenced by the ideology of property and freed from the ideology of the churches, approaches the question of sex life and also the problem of homosexuality with a lack of prejudice afforded by an understanding of the overall social structure. ... In accordance with the scientific insights of modern times, the proletariat regards these relations as a special form of sexual gratification and demands the same freedom and restrictions for these forms of sex life as for intercourse between the sexes, i.e., protection of the sexually immature from attacks, ... control over one's own body, and finally respect for the rights of non-involved parties."

The Nazis deliberately hid the fascist nature of their party by calling themselves "National Socialists." But their response to the poll shows that their program was just the opposite of a communist workers' party. The Nazi reply included this succinct sentence: "Anyone who even thinks of homosexual love is our enemy."

Some theorists have explained this ferocious enmity as part of the Nazi effort to build a "Rambo" fighting machine. That's true. But the fact that the fascists despised and destroyed the movements for sexuality, gender and sexual freedom was also rooted in their entire political ideology and the capitalist class objective it served.

## Imperialists laid groundwork for fascism

Today understanding the class basis of German fascism and the strengths and weaknesses of the communist resistance to it are especially important because governing ideologues in the U.S.—the expanding imperial empire of capital—have fashioned their own "bad-guys-good-guys" version of the rise and demise of German fascism.

In that version, fascism and communism are evil twins. And the great democratic U.S. imperialism, with a few imperialist powers in its posse, rode in and saved the day.

But in reality, the banking and industrial class of the United States and its imperialist allies had laid the basis for the growth and development of the Nazi regime with the Versailles Treaty that formally ended WWI.

The U.S., England and France redrew the map of Europe and re-carved Germany in a way that was designed to arouse national hatreds and pit peoples against each other in order to preclude internationalist working-class solidarity.

That gave the right wing parties in Germany, especially the Nazis, the opportunity to fan the flames of national chauvinism.

The victorious Allies also ordered defeated Germany to pay reparations for the war, with a provisional payment of 20,000,000,000 Marks. The bankers and politicians who had started the war were not the ones to be bled to death by these payments. The workers and middle class

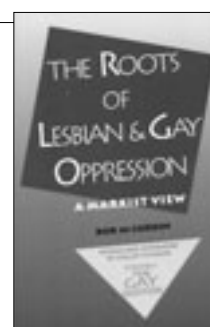
*Continued on page 14*

Lesbian ♦ gay ♦ bi  
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## 'Pride in unity, pride in struggle'

# Transgender lesbian activist Leslie Feinberg tours Italy

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The lesbian, gay, bi and trans movement of Italy showed the spectacular breadth and depth of the colors of its rainbow flag as it hosted transgender lesbian activist and author Leslie Feinberg from June 2-6 in a week of special events. Workers World Managing Editor Feinberg spoke at local meetings in the northern cities of Milan, Bologna and Turin, and traveled south to address gatherings in Florence and Rome.

Leaders in diverse sectors of the Italian LGBT movement invited Feinberg because this is a historic moment in which they are trying to develop greater unity in their struggle. As the trip unfolded, that solidarity began to emerge, visible to all.

The tour coincided with the publication of the Italian edition of Feinberg's "Stone Butch Blues," a novel set in pre-Stonewall gay drag bars of working-class Buffalo in upstate New York. The gender journey of the protagonist, Jess Goldberg, explores the relationship of the struggle against oppression based on sex, gender and sexuality with other battles against racism and war, and with the working-class struggle for liberation.

The novel's Italian translators were Margharita Giacobino, a feminist writer and author of "Pride and Privilege: the Heroic Journal of Lesbian Literature," and Davide Tolu, a leading FTM [female-to-male] transsexual activist and author of "The Journey of Arnold: Story of a Man Born as Woman."

Francesca Polo, of Il Dito e La Luna, publisher of the Italian edition of "Stone Butch Blues," told Workers World, "I think that Feinberg's tour was important in particular because it brought together lesbians and transgender people. I believe that Leslie/Jess can be the missing link in this relationship and be instrumental in arriving at a better understanding."

The Coordinamento Nazionale Trans FTM, a group established for the purpose of organizing Feinberg's tour, and Il Dito e La Luna coordinated the events, together with local LGBT groups in Milan, Turin, Bologna and Rome, and a national lesbian caucus arranged a conference in Florence for 2004 National Pride in Italy.

Marco Geremia, of sponsoring group Antagonismo Gay Bologna, evaluated the current state of the Italian LGBT movement. "Since the early 1990s, the mainstream Italian homosexual movement downsized the scope of its criticism by expressing mere 'integrationist' political demands. That resulted in the marginalization of entire groups, such as the trans sisters, the lesbian feminists, radical gays and others." He stressed, however, that the anti-globalization movement, beginning with struggles in 2000, had re-invigorated connections between groups.

"In this context Leslie's words 'catalyzed' our efforts by confronting them with the insights of a transgender warrior, a workers' representative, an American communist."

For Monica Romano, an MTF leader of Crisalide Azione Trans Milano, the meetings were opportunities for building unity: "In my opinion, the Italian LGBT movement can do great things. It has a great potential for changing society. Its weak point is its internal divisions. Leslie's message drew attention to the necessity of

fighting together for our common goals."

### Milan: 'At home with red flag!'

The historic Milan meeting on June 2 marked the first occasion of this national cooperation between lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Italian groups. It was held in the local headquarters of the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) in a working-class section of town. Participants entered through a courtyard draped with red banners and rainbow peace flags.

The LGBT caucus of the Milan PRC hosted the meeting, along with Arci-Lesbica Zami, Centro di Iniziativa Gay (CIG), Crisalide Azione Trans Milano, CoDS Diritti E Liberta' Autonomia Tematica DS and Linea Lesbica Amica.

A panel, assembled to give an Italian context for the ideas in "Stone Butch Blues," included Francesca Polo, Monica Romano and Marco Romelli, also from Crisalide Azione Trans Milano.

"When I see these red flags I feel at home," Feinberg told the standing-room-only audience. She gave a Marxist overview of human history, pointing out the long period of matrilineal cooperative societies around the world in which sex/gender/sexuality variance was more accepted and respected.

Feinberg pointed to evidence that patriarchal partitioning of the sexes and state enforcement of heterosexuality and gender expression became components of the development of the nuclear family as a transmission belt of wealth, property and title as societies cleaved into exploiting and exploited classes.

She stressed that ultimately the liberation of sexuality and gender and sex is a revolutionary task that cannot be accomplished without the overthrow of capitalist private ownership and its replacement with world communism—a society in which production is planned to meet the needs and wants of all. That goal of a classless society, she argued, cannot be won without building class unity today by bringing together the LGBT and women's struggle, the battle against racism and imperialist war, and the defense of immigrant rights as key elements in a united front.

She celebrated the building of bridges between the people in that meeting hall—an audience that represented the broadest political, sexual and gender spectrum—as well as working-class people from the neighborhood who came because they saw the posters. Some participants had just come from an anti-war demonstration of thousands in Milan where the U.S. flag was burned.

### Turin and 'Red' Bologna

Two meetings were held in Turin on June 3—an afternoon panel presentation on transgender, and an evening discussion of "Stone Butch Blues." Both were sponsored by the Coordinamento Gay Lesbiche Transessuali di Torino, hosted by the Turin Public Library, and supported by

the city administration. The panel emphasized social and historical aspects of transgender.

Panelists in the afternoon roundtable included Feinberg; Porpora Marcasciano of MIT Nazionale (Movimento Identità Transessuale) Bologna; Diana Nardacchione of Arcitrans; Mery Nicotra of Associazione Donne in Viaggio; Merella Izzo of Crisalide Azione Trans Genova; and Cigi Malaroda, Marco Pustianaz, Roberta Padovano, all of Coordinamento GLT Torino.

The evening presentation featured Feinberg, with translator Margherita Giacobino and Christian Ballarin of Gruppo Transessuali Luna. The audience packed the meeting room, staying past midnight for the question-and-answer format program with Feinberg.

When asked if U.S. police are still as brutal towards oppressed people as they are depicted in her novel, Feinberg pointed to the torture of Iraqi and Afghan prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. "This racist dehumanization also demonstrates the violently anti-trans, anti-gay and anti-woman character of the state machinery of repression," she emphasized. "And some of these Pentagon torturers are cops and prison guards in the U.S., too."

In Bologna, openly trans candidate Marcella de Folco—running from the party Communisti Italiani for European Parliament—held a reception for Feinberg at the city's trans community center.

That evening, the June 4 meeting was held at the Cassero Gay/Lesbian Center inside the massive Porta San Stefano. Activists have for four years been illegally occupying the ancient structure that has survived from the walled feudal city. The building could not hold all who came, the majority of whom identified themselves as communists.

Bologna is called a "red" city for its tradition of being in the most pro-communist region of Italy.

The meeting went long into the night. Feinberg stressed the importance of establishing strong bonds of unity on shared principles between communists around the world in the battle against capitalism and imperialism.

Porpora Marcasciano, who is from Bologna, told Workers World, "In the past years we've been trying to move a step across the tight borders of identities and we've started to meet up and work together on issues like sexuality, gender, globalization, war."

Marcasciano observed about the June 4 meeting: "In Bologna four groups cooperated: MIT Movimento di Identità Transgender, Antagonismo Gay, Arci-Lesbica, and LUO Libera Università Omosessuale.

"We can say that for the first time a synergic work was established between local and national association/groups which share political, social and cultural strategies which belong to the radical left tradi-

tion. I believe this tour has represented a point of arrival with respect to the LGBT debate, fights and strategies in Italy, but especially a starting point for a new political and cultural elaboration."

Marcasciano led everyone in song at the close of the evening, with fists raised in a pledge to continue the struggle. All sang together the famous "Bella Ciao," anthem of the Italian partisans who fought against the Nazis and liberated many parts of Italy, including the north, before the Allied troops landed at the close of World War II. This was especially meaningful, since U.S. President George W. Bush had just arrived as part of D-Day commemorations, boasting that the U.S. had liberated Italy, in order to boost his current claim that he is "liberating" Iraq.

### Florence and Rome

National coalitions organized events in Florence on June 5—LesPride and Coordinamento Nazionale FTM—as part of a three-day conference of LGBT culture.

Participants crowded the Polispaio Queer, a former convent, for a panel on FTM transsexual experience. Speakers included Christian Ballarin, Simone Cangelosi, Adriana Godano, Matteo Manetti, Stefano Alberto Maselli, Saveria Ricci, Monica Romano, and Liana Borghi, one of the organizers of the conference.

In an evening lecture, Feinberg drew historic lessons from the 19th-century North American movement to abolish slavery and the early women's rights movement about the necessity to stand up together against white supremacy, women's and trans oppression.

Her remarks were followed by what Marco Geremia of Antagonismo Gay characterized as "a vital, strong and even tense confrontation between FTM trans/transgender people and lesbian feminists on a long-unexpressed question," the issue of feminist analysis of patriarchy and the fact of FTM transition to male gender.

When asked to conclude the debate Feinberg asked all those "who feel the weight of oppression on your backs, who feel compassion for others who are oppressed, even if you do not understand that experience and that pain, all who are willing to work to build a movement based on solidarity—knowing full well that the task of building unity is difficult—to stand with me now."

Virtually the entire audience of hundreds rose to their feet in an ovation.

Geremia said that as a gay man, "what was enriching for me was the contribution that Leslie, as a transgender warrior, and other FTM trans gave to the work of deconstruction of male identity. A contribution that had much of re-construction in it. In fact, we've welcomed with enthusiasm the urge to analyze what having masculine resemblance means."

Rome was the final stop in this marathon of political meetings, with a panel sponsored by all five of the city's major LGBT groups: ArciLesbica Roma, Arcitrans Libellula, Di'GayProject Onlus, Gruppo GayRoma.it, and Circolo di Cultura Omosessuale Mario Mieli.

The meeting was held in the Women's Building. Exhilaration was the mood of the evening as the meeting, which featured speakers from each of the organizations, including Helena Velena, the MTF host of the television show "Gay Rome,"

### STONE BUTCH BLUES, by Leslie Feinberg

Winner of the American Library Association Gay & Lesbian Book Award and the Lambda Literary Award

Woman or man? This internationally acclaimed novel looks at the world through the eyes of Jess Goldberg, a masculine girl growing up the "Ozzie and Harriet" McCarthy ear and coming out as a young butch lesbian in the pre-Stonewall gay drag bars of a blue-collar town.



This book retails for \$14.95 but a Leftbooks.com it's 15% off, only \$12.95!

Continued on page 15



## Don't get used to it

A recent study by Glasgow University on what the British public knows about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict turned up some damning answers. The majority thought that the Palestinians were occupying Israeli land instead of the reality, which is the other way around. Some 80 percent of the British people get their news through television, which has prompted a look at how television news ends up disinforming the public.

We predict that if a similar study were made in the U.S., it would show similar results. The media here, if anything, is even more deceptive in concealing the roots of the longest-running conflict in the Middle East. That's because Washington has an even bigger stake in the struggle than London, having funded Israel's militaristic growth and expansion almost single-handedly. Similarly, in Anglo-U.S. domination of the region's oil resources, it is Wall Street that now holds by far the lion's share.

It is only the stubborn resistance of the Palestinian people themselves that has brought this widespread media bias to light. They now are struggling to keep Ariel Sharon's apartheid wall from so fragmenting their communities that the people could be forced to leave their homes and land for lack of jobs and access to schools, hospitals and other necessary services. Every day Palestinian workers, students and people seeking medical help have to spend hours at Israeli checkpoints before they can reach destinations only a short distance from their homes—but now on the other side of the wall.

This is how Sharon and the Israeli right expect to continue Israel's expansion and land grab at the expense of the Palestinians.

The results of this British study recall once again how the capitalist media here have warped public perception of the U.S. role in Iraq. Up through last year,

most people in the U.S. thought Iraq was somehow deeply implicated in 9/11. The media had drummed into them as fact the sly innuendoes the Bush administration used to justify a war intended to bring that country to its knees. Many a young soldier went to war against Iraq thinking he/she was defending this country against terrorism. Only when it became clear that the Iraqi people weren't going to succumb to U.S. domination did enough reality get into the media to bring down the poll results.

But, then, wasn't it said a century ago that truth is the first casualty of war? That should be taught in every high school history class.

Truth in class society is usually what the ruling class wants it to be. In the days of U.S. slavery, the "truth" that was spouted from every pulpit, every newspaper and every political tribune in the slave states was that owning human beings of African descent, forcing them to exist in inhumane shacks, selling their children and loved ones when the market for slaves was profitable, and working them half to death were all part of the so-called God-given natural order. It took the huge social upheaval culminating in the Civil War to bring the real class truth to the fore.

Today's ruling class truth says there will always be extremely rich and extremely poor nations and individuals, there will always be exploitation and profit, there will always be discrimination and oppression based on national origins, sex, gender expression, sexuality or disability. So get used to it.

The Palestinian people refuse to get used to it. So do the Iraqis. As the U.S. imperialists over-reach around the world, more and more people are rejecting the worsening status quo and deciding to sacrifice and struggle for a better world. Our movement is growing. Let the ruling classes get used to it. □

## Sexual freedom vs. fascism in Germany

*Continued from page 12*

were saddled with the bill. However, the decision on reparation payments was postponed until 1921 in order to give the capitalist class of Germany the chance to destroy the rising revolutionary struggle of the workers.

The economic dislocation that followed World War I was staggering. In the face of the reparations and penalties imposed on Germany, the government began printing money to meet expenses, resulting in runaway inflation. The financial system was in a tailspin.

Only when the bankers and industrialists abroad realized that a ferocious class struggle in Germany was raging did they begin to relent somewhat on their economic bloodletting. But this was only a way of stifling the growing revolutionary working class movement in Germany.

### Capitalist counter-revolution

By the late 1920s, the fascist movement—with its base in the economically devastated middle class—began to win the backing of a sector of German industrialists and bankers to carry out the dirty job of counter-revolution. State repression of sexuality, gender and sex to enforce the

capitalist economic unit of the patriarchal nuclear family was a key plank in the fascist platform.

The progressive movements were battling the state to decriminalize variance in sexuality and gender. And they were trying to free the lives of women of all sexualities and genders that were tightly corseted by lack of basic social and economic rights.

These modest but vital goals, raised during a period of working-class struggle and capitalist economic depression, made these movements enemies of the Nazis.

Nazi campaigns focused on eradicating homosexuality and abortion, mandating procreation, and sharply restricting women's rights and role in society, in addition to vicious racism and national chauvinism.

However, in 1931, a militant battle broke out against passage of the fascist Paragraph 128 of the Criminal Code that banned abortion.

Feminist historian Atina Grossmann provided a valuable account of this struggle in her essay "Abortion and Economic Crisis: The 1931 Campaign Against Paragraph 218":

"The 1931 arrests of two physicians and

# Reagan and today's Kerry-Bush struggle

By Fred Goldstein

*Introduction to a series.*

In order to put the electoral struggle between Kerry and Bush, between the Democratic Party and the Republicans, into proper perspective, an analysis of Reagan's development and what it meant for the orientation of the U.S. ruling class and the entire political establishment is indispensable. Its consequences are operating today, both in the ruling class and within the movement.

For large sections of the progressive, labor and civil rights movements, the Democratic Party has been regarded as the party of concessions, the party that will give back something to the masses—the party that will balance the interests of big business with the interests of the workers, of the poor, of Black, Latino, Asian and Native people, of women, of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, of immigrants, of the disabled and of all who suffer under the oppressive capitalist system. The Republican Party is the party of big business, the party of take-back, the party of reaction, repression, militarism and war—the unmitigated enemy of the masses.

The political logic of this analysis is that, no matter how bad the Democrats are, to gain concessions you must vote for them as a way to gain some modicum of security against big business, the military-industrial complex and political reaction.

But the actual history of U.S. politics in the past century does not bear this out at all. Concessions have come only from the struggle, when the ruling class has been forced back—by the workers' struggle, the Black struggle and the civil rights movement, by the advance of the liberation movements and the socialist camp.

Concessions have come from both parties in times of struggle and they have been taken back by both parties in times of political reaction when the ruling class, the exploiting capitalist class, is on the offensive and is able to push back the workers and the oppressed.

The fact that the Democratic Party has been in office at the time of concessions, such as during the Franklin Roosevelt period in the 1930s when the labor movement made giant strides, or during the presidency of Lyndon Johnson when civil rights were finally conceded by the ruling class a century after slavery, is a reflection not of the beneficent nature of the Democratic Party, but rather of the division of labor within capitalist politics.

It has been the historic role of the Democrats to rein in, redirect and tame the struggle of the masses when it threatens the social stability and foundations of the capitalist system.

The Democratic Party has assumed this role since the 1930s because since then its primary base has been in the working class, among Black people and in the pro-

gressive middle class. It attained its reputation during the New Deal era when the working class in the U.S., under the impact of the Great Depression, was in a pre-revolutionary mood and carrying out heroic class battles. Roosevelt carried out his mission to save capitalism by conceding progressive reforms.

In this respect the Democratic Party is analogous to and a milder version of the Social Democratic parties of Europe that took the stage after the Bolshevik Revolution. They were an instrument of the capitalist class to stave off impending socialist revolution by capturing the working class movement with socialist demagoguery and redirecting it within the confines of capitalism.

### How concessions are won

Since the 1930s, the myth has been assiduously propagated that the Democratic Party is a progressive institution that the masses should look to for at least a partial solution to their problems. The truth is quite the opposite. It is the struggle of the masses that has brought about any betterment of life under the racist, sexist, bigoted system of capitalist exploitation. The Democratic Party became useful to the ruling class in times of upheaval for its ability to coopt, limit and then take credit for the concessions that have been won by blood and sacrifice in the struggle.

The key point is that the ability to bring about concessions, or the ability of the ruling class to take back concessions, is not determined by which party is in office. It depends on the outcome of the struggle, either when the people take the offensive against the ruling class, the ruling class takes the offensive against the people, or there is some sort of temporary equilibrium.

Roosevelt made concessions to the workers, but he then took back as much as he could under cover of war preparations. Eisenhower, a Republican, during the height of the Cold War was forced to send troops to Little Rock, Ark., to push back the racists, who were trying to block desegregation. He acted because the ruling class feared the impact of the civil rights movement that had emerged in the midst of the world-wide decolonization movement in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Richard Nixon, who took office at the height of the struggle of the 1960s, had to sign on to *Roe v. Wade* and affirmative action, signed a peace treaty with Vietnam, and made various economic concessions to the poor.

The capitalist class, which owns the media and totally dominates the political parties, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, by virtue of its ownership of the means of production and all the financial institutions, can compel the most reactionary politicians to make concessions when it fears for the stability of its system.

It can also compel politicians striving to maintain a progressive facade to make the most reactionary decisions when the bosses feel they can get away with it or are in a desperate crisis and must take the offensive against the workers and oppressed at home and abroad. Bill Clinton's destruction of welfare is a case in point of the latter.

It is in this light that we must understand the advent of Reaganism and its significance for the struggle today.

*Next: The crisis of U.S. imperialism that gave rise to Reagan.*

Sex Reform activists on charges of having performed illegal abortions sparked a storm of protest from feminists, Communists, and Socialists. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, they organized an extraordinary coalition campaign for the legalization of abortion."

*Next: The dual role of the Soviet bureaucracy; lesbian/trans/gay and women: political setbacks in the Soviet Union, gains in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).*

## 'Operation New Dawn'

# New name, new face, same old occupation

By Fred Goldstein

June 22—As the June 30 deadline approaches for the great turnover of "sovereignty" in Iraq to the puppet government selected by Washington, the Bush administration is struggling on a number of fronts.

It is trying to shed the appearance of occupier while maintaining 138,000 troops in the country. The U.S. military chiefs are preparing for "Operation New Dawn," in which they will try to maintain a low profile during the period of the "handover."

But regardless of appearances, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz was forced to admit in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, when pressed by Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, that U.S. troops could be there "a good number of years."

Wolfowitz had just returned from a five-day visit in which he spent considerable time with the former CIA agent turned prime minister, Ayad Allawi.

Wolfowitz has been the prime advocate of using the establishment of democracy as a cover for the invasion and takeover of Iraq. Shortly after Wolfowitz concluded his conversations with Allawi, the puppet prime minister announced that he was considering the declaration of martial law in regions where the resistance is strongest, like Falluja, Najaf, Karbala and other areas. Allawi got further instructions from Wolfowitz on reorganizing the puppet Civil Defense Forces and so-called Iraqi Army into a counter-revolutionary force to combat the resistance.

But considering the inability of 150,000 imperialist occupation forces to subdue the growing resistance, the prospects for Washington's puppet forces to take over the job seem difficult to impossible. And every Iraqi who aids or associates with the occupation regime becomes a target as an instrument of colonial oppression.

Four U.S. Marines were killed in Ramadi on June 20 when their patrol was ambushed. Two U.S. soldiers were killed and one wounded in Balad, north of Baghdad. On the same day two Iraqis working with the occupation were killed and one wounded on the road to the Baghdad airport. Also five Iraqis who worked for a foreign company were killed and two were wounded south of Mosul when their convoy hit a roadside bomb. Six Iraqi police were wounded when a mortar hit near the central bank in Baghdad. The head of the city council of Ramadi was assassinated. Dozens of officials have been assassinated recently.

### Collaborators with U.S. hide behind armed guards

The occupation has appointed an elaborate network of local councils. But these councils are viewed more and more as mechanisms of the colonizers. The June 22 Washington Post described the growing resistance to this U.S.-imposed structure.

"For months, the Rashid district council avoided the violence that had plagued other groups. In the district as a whole, five neighborhood council members have been assassinated this year. In Sadr City, a large Shiite slum, the chairman of the district council was killed and strung from a pole. A sign hanging from his neck accused him of being an American spy.

"Local council members who once welcomed constituents into their homes now keep armed guards at the front gate. Leaders of the national government travel in armored vehicles and work inside Baghdad's fortified Green Zone, an area off-limits to ordinary Iraqis. Many foreign contractors hired by the U.S. government to promote democracy have either relocated to Kuwait or hunkered down in protected compounds.

"Despite these precautions," continued the Post, "over the past two weeks, the deputy foreign minister and a senior offi-

cial in the Education Ministry have been assassinated. On Sunday, masked gunmen shot and killed the council chairman of Baghdad's Rusafa district and his deputy."

While much of the capitalist media show their discontent and disillusionment with the Bush-Pentagon occupation and bombard the occupation authority with criticism, they are walking a careful line not to make the growing U.S. casualties and the widening resistance into major headlines whenever they can avoid it.

The big business media and the entire ruling-class political establishment are torn between wanting to criticize and wanting to help the transition to the puppet regime succeed.

Above all, the media have toned down their reporting of U.S. casualties. While they used to report almost daily the number of U.S. troops killed in action, they rarely announce the body count now that the official number is approaching 850.

The main thrust against the Bush administration is the exposure of torture. The revelation of the Justice Department's memo of last April, which basically declared that the president has the right to order torture, has created a storm. The Bush administration's answer has been to release a pile of documents that did not order torture—which is the classical form of subterfuge. It reveals nothing about what was ordered, in writing or by other means.

### Korean people oppose participating in occupation

Washington's effort to dragoon the South Korean military into its colonial war was dealt a political blow with the seizure of Kim Sun Il, a Korean translator working with the occupation in Falluja. The incident has provoked a storm of outrage among the people of South Korea against both the U.S. and their own government. The South Korean people are overwhelm-

ingly opposed to participating in the colonial occupation force.

The Korean Democratic Labor Party, the voice of the growing anti-U.S. political opposition in South Korean society, called upon the government to revoke its decision to send troops, declaring it would be an "outrage to the nation if they insist on the military deployment while seeing a citizen's life at stake." (Al Jazeera, June 21)

In addition, the Korean Network Against Dispatching Troops to Iraq, a network of 365 Korean organizations, lent its weight to the demand against deployment, stating that "The Korean people are well aware of the fact the U.S. invaded Iraq for domination and oil, and not for the freedom and peace of the Iraqi people."

It declared that while "threatening a private citizen with death ... will not contribute to Iraqi peace ... the Iraqi people are right to resist the U.S.'s unjust invasion, occupation and carnage."

Meanwhile, in the U.S., while the quagmire deepened, the House of Representatives quietly and without fanfare handed over \$417 billion to the Pentagon by a vote of 403-17. This exceeds the combined military spending of the 10 next-highest countries.

While the Democratic Party has denounced the Bush administration's strategy for war and occupation as inept and disastrous, the vast majority of Democrats in Congress have voted to fund the occupation they have criticized.

Thus the Democrats have proven once again that, when push comes to shove and it's time to ante up for war, they are as loyal to U.S. imperialism, its military establishment and its struggle for colonial domination as are the Republicans.

The best way to end the war in Iraq is not to vote for John Kerry but to vote in the streets and in the struggle—against both Bush and the Democrats, who want to fix the mess that imperialism has gotten itself into by making the occupation work. □

## Transgender lesbian activist Leslie Feinberg tours Italy

Continued from page 13

whose earlier interview with Feinberg had gone out to 200,000 viewers.

Feinberg talked about the historical threads of evidence of ancient trans expression apparently rooted in early matrilineal communal societies that she had discovered on her trip through Italy. She saluted the organizers of the evening's gathering that represented many political currents. "That's the kind of unity necessary to build a strong revolutionary movement," she said.

The audience burst into applause when Feinberg recalled the Chinese proverb: "Those who say it cannot be done should get out of the way of those who are doing it."

Of the lively discussion that followed, Monica Romano of Crisalide Azione Trans Milano said she was struck by "the strong interest expressed by people there, especially by the youngest ones. They were enthusiastic, determined to open their minds and listen. Nobody was left indifferent to what had been said during the meeting. In my experience, this doesn't happen very often during political debates or cultural events."

Throughout the tour, Romano noticed there was "a great excitement and a real interest in going deep into the subjects that emerged during the meetings. There's a wish for talking, exchanging experiences and knowing each other better beyond our differences. This is great." She believes that the people who read "Stone Butch Blues" and attended the meetings now "feel more free to express themselves and their identity. And this is saying something!"

### Building bridges

Davide Tolu believes the series of political meetings had a positive impact on building unity among the various segments of the LGBT movement in Italy. He feels that there are now "new, stronger bonds amongst individuals and also amongst different associations," as well as new "bridges amongst groups discriminated [against] for their gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, race, religion, political convictions," with Feinberg's speeches serving as an inspiration on "how to cross those bridges and overcome our differences to build a stronger unique group."

Publisher Francesca Polo also affirmed the success of cooperation among LGBT groups: "This was an excellent occasion to try out if working together is possible. I think that the results were positive: if the aim is shared, the co-operation among different groups is not only possible, but even quite effective."

Porpora Marcasciano added, "All of this happened in the days of Pride and at the same time as the visit of G.W. Bush in Italy, and therefore the actions, initiatives and experiences it gave had a strong political meaning."

Speaking for Antagonismo Gay, Marco Geremia observed that the meetings had

been in "the spirit of the early LGBT liberation movement." He concluded, "Meeting Leslie Feinberg has been a great honor and an exciting experience, which we'll bring as a gift within the European LGBT Forum."

*Minnie Bruce Pratt gave talks in Florence and Rome on the connections between women's liberation and sex and gender diversity. She was interviewed on "Gay Roma," and spoke as a representative of the International Action Center-New York/ANSWER at the massive June 4 demonstration that drew 200,000 to Rome to protest against Bush and the U.S. war on Iraq.*

ARMED

♀

Dangerous

by Rebeca Toledo

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Author Rebeca Toledo lays bare the real meaning of the fight for gay rights in the armed forces—and shows why it's a key battle in the ongoing struggle to end oppression, exploitation and war itself.

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# MUNDO★OBRERO

## Candidat@s del Partido Mundo Obrero:

# LGBT en camino hacia el socialismo

¡Saludo de orgullo para tod@s!

Estamos marchando con ustedes para celebrar la Rebelión de Stonewall que inició el actual movimiento de liberación en los Estados Unidos de las lesbianas, homosexuales, bisexuales y transgénero@s en 1969. Estamos aquí para saludar las grandes victorias en contra de la opresión del estado que fueron logradas el año pasado: el caso Lawrence que finalmente des criminalizó las vidas de lesbianas y gays y la decisión de la Corte Suprema de Massachussets legalizando la unión nupcial entre personas del mismo sexo.

Pero estas victorias, logradas por los años de lucha, son solo una parte de lo que queremos. Nosotros queremos más que el cese de las multas legales y los estigmas sociales. ¡Queremos un futuro donde la gente LGBT y todos tengamos cuidados de salud, educación, cuidados infantiles y de ancianos gratis, vivienda a bajo costo y empleos con derecho a vacaciones!

Queremos una sociedad con igualdad para todos—queremos el Socialismo. El Socialismo significa la liberación de más grande aparato mundial de producción que fue creado por medio de la labor colectiva para la propiedad privada y la organización de la producción para satisfacer las necesidades humanas.

Nosotros somos luchadores desde mucho tiempo por la liberación de

LGBT—dos de nosotras como lesbianas y el otro como un aliado que ha estado junto a la gente LGBT por toda su vida política.

Somos también trabajadores, gente de color, partidari@s del movimiento laboral, contra la guerra y activistas contra el imperialismo.

Y estamos aquí como miembr@s del Partido Mundo Obrero—un partido revolucionario que ha marchado en el desfile de Orgullo desde 1970, llevando la bandera que dice ¡“Stonewall significa lucha”!

Nuestro partido ha hecho importante contribuciones para el entendimiento de cómo la opresión basada en la sexualidad, el género y sexo surgió históricamente. Pero también sabemos que no solo se trata de entender al mundo. Sino de cambiarle. Por eso en cada lucha política siempre ponemos al frente la lucha por la liberación de la gente de LGBT.

Sabemos que esta lucha está conectada a la lucha contra el racismo, la lucha de la gente con dificultades físicas, la lucha de la gente que hace el trabajo en todo el mundo—que todas las liberaciones están conectadas.

### ¿Porqué participar en una campaña electoral?

¿Porqué estamos participando ahora en la campaña electoral? Queremos llevar adelante la lucha para la liberación de la

gente LGBT durante este año de elecciones —y sabemos que ni Bush ni Kerry van a avanzar a nuestra causa.

Bush quiere hacer que el matrimonio entre parejas del mismo género sea ilegal a nivel nacional. Kerry prefería que lo hicieran ilegal por estado. Pero su posición sobre el matrimonio es nada más una señal, un mensaje a los derechistas que ninguno de ellos tiene la intención de defender a la gente LGBT.

Kerry ni siquiera se molesta fingir una simpatía como Clinton, que habló con interés durante su campaña electoral, pero entonces se entregó a los generales con su política de “no diga nada, no pregunta nada”.

Clinton fingió ser defensor nuestro, y entonces hizo una alianza con el ultra reaccionario senador Jesse Helms para promulgar la ley antihomosexual Ley Defensor del Matrimonio (DOMA por las siglas en inglés). Pero Kerry ni siquiera finge ser partidario de los derechos de la gente LGBT.

Bush y Kerry están a favor de continuar la guerra brutal en Irak. Como gente LGBT podemos sentirnos orgullosos de que el primer soldado en rehusar su participación en la guerra fue un marino de reserva filipino y homosexual, Stephen Funk.

Sabemos que la gente LGBT está por

todos lados—en la fuerza laboral, en la lucha para derechos inmigrantes, por el cuidado de la salud y una cura a la plaga del SIDA, para mantener la salud de la mujer, por el custodio de nuestros hij@s y por las guarderías infantiles, y como jóvenes que somos much@s de nosotr@s, en contra de reclutamiento militar forzado.

Es por eso que es crucial en este año de elecciones que tenemos nuestro propio movimiento independiente a favor del poder popular. No tenemos la menor intención de entregar nuestro poder a los Republicanos ni los Demócratas. Estamos librando una campaña educativa y de lucha para llevar el mensaje al mundo que la única vía en adelante para l@s trabajadores y la gente oprimida esta de unirnos y luchar en nuestros propios intereses por un futuro socialista.

**Teresa Gutiérrez y John Parker**  
Candidat@s del Partido Mundo Obrero (Workers World Party) por vicepresidente y presidente

**Leilani Dowell**  
Miembr@ de PMO y candidata del Partido Paz y Libertad (Peace and Freedom Party) en el Octavo Distrito Congresional de San Francisco

## Candidat@s socialistas:

### la solidaridad es la fuerza de la labor organizada

# Fondos para empleos, cuidados de la salud, escuelas—no para la guerra

¿Acaso no es hora ya que l@s obrer@s hablen por sí mismos?

Nosotros creemos que sí. Nosotros somos obrer@s, gente de color, partidari@s del movimiento laboral por mucho tiempo y socialistas—y desafiamos al monopolio que la “América” empresarial tiene sobre las elecciones presidenciales con una campaña electoral independiente y obrera.

La campaña de John Parker y Teresa Gutiérrez del Workers World Party/ Partido Mundo Obrero defiende los empleos con sindicatos para tod@s con un salario justo, cuidados de salud gratis para tod@s y un fin al racismo y a la opresión nacional, el derecho a las uniones nupciales entre los mismos sexos, el retiro inmediato de las tropas estadounidenses de Irak, Haití y Afganistán y mucho más.

L@s obrer@s y oprimid@s unid@s tienen el poder de sacar a Bush y sus socios. Pero no votando en contra de Bush versus John Kerry.

Este es el momento de actuar en la construcción de una movilización militante unidos el movimiento laboral y las comunidades, como la que se forjó en California durante la huelga de l@s obrer@s de los supermercados a comienzos de este año, sin también en una escala nacional e internacional.

La Marcha de un Millón de Obrer@s propuesta para el 16 de octubre, iniciada por el sindicato internacional el Inter-

national Longshore & Warehouse Union, es un paso hacia esa dirección. Como lo afirma en su declaración, la marcha dice, “Solo nuestra movilización independiente de obrer@s en toda América puede abrir el paso a tomar hacia nuestras necesidades y nuestra agenda.”

L@s trabajadores de las tiendas—que reciben bajos salarios, son un 60% mujeres, la mayoría son gente de color y much@s son inmigrantes—lucharon heroicamente contra tres poderosas tiendas de supermercados. Ell@s buscaron la ayuda de la comunidad y lograron que esta l@s apoyara. A pesar de grande obstáculos, l@s trabajadores pudieron repeler los ataques de los empresarios logrando que estos pudieran poner todo el peso de los beneficios de la salud sobre l@s trabajadores.

En cuanto al aumento de los pagos de seguros de salud, los empresarios quieren hacer eso mismo—hacer que l@s trabajadores paguen por esto.. Más de 43 millones de personas viven sin seguro de salud. Nosotros apoyamos el trabajo del movimiento laboral sobre este asunto, incluyendo las protestas del 19 de junio “Cuidados de Salud para Todos” en 100 ciudades iniciadas por l@s emplead@s de servicios.

### L@s trabajadores pagando por una guerra injusta

Hay un gorila en los salones de trabajo organizado: la sangrienta guerra de con-

quista y la ocupación de Irak.

Desde el 1 de junio, la Oficina de Presupuesto para el Congreso estima que la guerra de Irak ha costado \$119.4 mil millones de dólares. Esta cuenta crece en \$5 mil millones de dólares por mes.

El costo militar para los años fiscales de los años 2003 y 2004, incluyendo “los suplementarios” para guerra contra Irak dan un total de \$882 mil millones de dólares o \$3.041 por cada persona en los Estados Unidos.

L@s trabajadores—no los ricos y las corporaciones cuyos impuestos han sido recortados—son l@s que están pagando por la guerra contra Irak. Los empresarios se benefician ampliamente de los contratos militares. El Presidente George W. Bush ha propuesto un presupuesto récord de \$402 mil millones para el Pentágono para el año 2005—sin incluir los costos extras de la ocupación y el desarrollo de nuevos sistemas armas.

Cuántas cosas se podrían hacer con estos miles de millones de dólares si los sindicatos estuvieran en las decisiones. El dinero podría ser utilizado para crear un sistema de salud nacional, la construcción de viviendas a bajo costo, o crear millones de empleos con salarios buenos para el desempleado y l@s jóvenes.

### Ese dinero pertenece a l@s trabajadores

La ocupación militar de Irak también

está matando a cientos de jóvenes de la clase trabajadora en las fuerzas armadas, junto a miles de sus hermanas y hermanos iraquíes que nada más desean ser dejados en paz, libres de la dominación extranjera.

Sindicatos desde el Local 1199 de los empleados de los hospitales de Nueva York hasta los estibadores de la costa pacífica han protestado, demandando que devuelvan las tropas a casa. Nosotros saludamos a ellas, igual que a coaliciones independientes de sindicalistas como Trabajo de los EE.UU. en Contra de la Guerra, por sus buenos esfuerzos para juntar al movimiento sindical con el movimiento en contra de la guerra.

¿No está mucho más allá del momento cuando la AFL-CIO debía haber tomado una posición clara en contra de la guerra?

### En contra del ‘mal menor’

Muchos sindicalistas temen otro período presidencial de Bush. Y con buena razón. Bush es en contra del trabajo, es racista, antifeminista, y un fanático anti-homosexual. Su administración explotó las ansiedades de l@s trabajadores después del 11 de septiembre para llevar a cabo represalias terribles en contra de inmigrantes acá y costosas guerras de agresión en Irak y en Afganistán.

¿Pero es la estrategia antigua de votar por el candidato “menos mal” la respuesta mejor a esta amenaza? No lo creemos.

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