

MUNDO OBRERO

Expone encubrimiento de gobierno colombiano

12

IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN

Battling the empire

9

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WW BOOK REVIEW

Liberation Art of Palestine

10

Lesbian ♦ gay ♦ bi
and trans
PRIDE

PROGRESS & REGRESSION

Sex and gender in 1930s USSR

11

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Workers World Newspaper

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New threat to Middle East U.S. to give giant bombs to Israel

'Bunker busters' seen as targeting Iran

By Deirdre Griswold

Israel is to receive 5,000 new bombs from the U.S., including 500 of the huge "bunker busters" the Pentagon has used in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the authoritative Israeli daily, Haaretz. The transfer is to take place right after the U.S. elections in November.

News sources in all the imperialist capitals are interpreting this arms deal as a direct threat to yet another Middle Eastern country, Iran. They point out that "bunker busters" can penetrate 15 feet of concrete, making them a weapon of choice to destroy Iran's nuclear industry, now in development.

The bomb transfer is being called a "sale" worth \$319 million, but Washington is really giving the weapons to Israel, since it makes readily available to its client state both the money and the arms. Funding for the sale will come from U.S. military aid to Israel, the largest recipient of such aid in the world.

Israel has attacked its Muslim and Arab neighbors many times before in military aggressions coordinated with the secret services of its imperialist allies. In 1981, Israeli planes bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor, showing no concern for the possible nuclear contamination of the area. Israel is widely acknowledged by Western military authorities to secretly possess nuclear weapons itself, but has never been taken to task for it.

The transfer of these bombs points to a major escalation in the epic struggle between imperialism and the peoples of the Middle East, who are trying to finally take control over their own resources and wealth before the precious oil under their ground has all been siphoned off to the benefit of foreign capital. This struggle has been boiling in Iraq, where resistance to imperialist occupation and control is taking on both the old colonial power in London and the neocolonial superpower in Washington.

While the mood among the people in the imperialist West is against spilling "blood for oil," the capitalist-dominated political process euphemistically named democracy is insuring that the governments of the U.S. and Britain are ready to defend the oil companies' profits to the last drop of their young soldiers' blood.

These new bombs are also a direct threat to the continued struggle of the Palestinian people to retain their national identity and their land, which is being chipped away daily by new Israeli settlements. In addition to the 500 one-ton bunker busters, the deal includes 2,500 other one-ton bombs, 1,000 half-ton bombs and 500 quarter-ton bombs, Haaretz said.

This is just one more sign of things to come after the capitalist election. New and more urgent challenges lie ahead for the anti-war forces all over the world. □

LABOR ON THE MOVE



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

MILLION WORKER MARCH

Dockworkers' Clarence Thomas: 'War at home, abroad'

5

HISTORIC WIN

North Carolina farm workers

4

STRIKE VOTE!

Hotel workers ready to fight

5

HAYMARKET

Lessons of the massacre

4



This week ...

Anti-Cuba terror: Made in USA

Every time I think of Cuba, I think not only of the revolution, but of the counter-revolutionary "gusano" terrorists in this country, protected by our government. In 1976 those "gusanos," with the help of agents of the Chilean junta, murdered a friend of mine, Orlando Letelier, the leading Chilean freedom fighter in the U.S. at the time. I have never forgotten this, and soon, Pinochet may be going on trial for this crime, as well as many others.

What must be revealed in this country is the extent to which the "gusanos" committed acts of terrorism in this country, and got away with it.

— Elizabeth Miller, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Three strikes law

I am currently serving a 25-years-to-life sentence under the California Three Strikes Law for one count of felony drug possession which amounted to approximately \$5 worth of drugs. I have now served eight years for this non-violent, non-serious offense which will likely keep me in prison till 2021 at a minimum but more likely the rest of my natural life. This law has destroyed my life and is simply unjust, badly written and will in effect make me possibly die in prison as it is written now in the California Penal Code. I know first hand the devastation, destruction to prisoners, their families and of course the enormous expense to California taxpayers as well. The California Three Strikes law needs to be reformed, amended as it is barbaric in nature as it incarcerates

thousands of men and women for victimless, non-violent, petty crimes. Most of us will die in prison due to this mandatory minimum sentencing law in California.

If having \$5 of drugs, shoplifting or stealing a loaf of bread and pizza because you're hungry is equated with capital sentences, then something is wrong with the California Three Strikes Law and criminal justice system as well. Life sentences should never be applied to non-violent, petty crimes as they are every day in the California courts.

—Thomas M. Sherlock, California State Prisoner

Things must change

As I read your articles from the Workers.org it brought back memories of when I was in a union (United Steelworkers) when times were protected from this disease called the capitalist system. When you could speak up and not have fear of losing your job. I am taking an online course in criminal justice just to get a degree so I can fulfill my dream of being a teacher.

At 51 it's hard not only to get a job, but to just keep it. The criminal justice degree is because I get a little grant and some financial help, point being the job I have is at a country club and they treat you like crap, but I have very few choices.

I got your website off one of my classes and enjoyed reading about things I didn't think people cared about any more and the struggles that we have in America. I just wanted to E-mail you or whoever does these articles to tell you I will be looking and reading. Things must change and I am going to do my best to help.

—Freddy Knight



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★ National

- Commemoration of Haymarket 4
- N.C. farm workers win union contract 4
- Interview with Clarence Thomas on the MWM 5
- Hotel workers vote to authorize strike 5
- How greedy can bosses get? 5
- WWP campaign rally 6
- Gutierrez: 'Get out in the streets!' 6
- RNC arestees denounce mass sweeps 6
- Parker: 'A whiff of socialism' 7
- Dowell: 'U.S. hand in Haiti coup' 7
- N.C. anti-war protesters dog Bush 7
- Grieving mom heckles Laura Bush 7
- Coming to a city near you 7

★ International

- U.S. to give giant bombs to Israel. 1
- Brigadistas prepare new trips to Cuba 3
- U.S. withdraws phony charges against Havana. 3
- Chavez trip to UN canceled 3
- Citibank caught money laundering again 8
- Iraq, Afghanistan: Battling the empire. 9
- Review: Liberation Art of Palestine 10
- Sex and gender in 1930s USSR. 11

★ Editorials

- The poverty floods 10

★ Noticias En Español

- 3 colombiano sindicalistas asesinados. 12
- Trabajadores de los EE.UU. en lucha 12

WW CALENDAR

BOSTON

Thurs., Sept. 23
 WWP Candidates Forum. Hear Parker, Gutierrez and Dowell. 6:30 p.m. At 284 Armory St.. For info (617) 983-3836.

PROVIDENCE, R.I.

Fri., Sept. 24
 Hear Parker, Gutierrez and Dowell. For info (401) 726-2922.

VERMONT

Sponsored by Liberty Union Party. Hear John Parker, Teresa Gutierrez.

Sat., Sept. 25
 7 p.m. At the River Garden Main & High Streets intersection, Brattleboro.

Sun., Sept. 26
 7 p.m. At Socialist Labor Hall, Barre.

Workers World

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 Phone: (212) 627-2994
 Fax: (212) 675-7869
 E-mail: editor@workers.org
 Web: www.workers.org
 Vol. 46, No. 39 • Sept. 30, 2004
 Closing date: Sept. 22, 2004

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Workers World-WW (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

Selected articles are available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to wwnews-on@wwpublish.com.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World-WW, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.



Not deterred by tougher U.S. laws

Brigadistas prepare new trips to Cuba

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The U.S. government has recently intensified its attacks on Cuba. But supporters of that revolutionary country are breaking the U.S.-imposed economic and travel blockade in ever greater numbers. And the Venceremos Brigade is leading the way, as it has for the last 35 years.

On July 19, brigadistas who had traveled to Cuba defied the U.S. government once again, completing their trip by crossing the border with a march across the International Peace Bridge between Canada and Buffalo, N.Y.

Joined by activists from the African Awareness Association and the U.S. Cuba-Labor Exchange, brigadistas chanted, "Who's gonna break the travel ban? We're gonna break the travel ban!" and "Cuba sí, bloqueo no!"

The Brigade has never requested U.S. permission to travel to Cuba.

Immediately on their return, brigadistas began organizing for next year's trip. Regular meetings and committee structures are already in place. Interest in traveling with the Brigade is reaching an intensity not seen for decades.

Teresa Gutierrez, Workers World Party's vice-presidential candidate, was a Brigade member this year. She thinks the Bush administration's tightened restrictions are not working: "Instead of fostering fear, the U.S. threats are fostering resistance, and more are traveling than ever before."

The heightened travel ban now restricts Cubans living in the United States to visiting their family members in Cuba only once every three years. The ban also severely limits how much money those in

the United States can send to relatives and friends in Cuba.

These strangling new restrictions prohibit any significant contributions from people here to the Cuban victims of Hurricane Ivan, classified a Category 5 storm, the worst to hit the island in over 80 years. Despite this, defiant supporters of the revolution, like the Bay Area Cuban Alliance, are mobilizing to send help.

Of the increased interest in travel to Cuba, Brigade spokesperson Bonnie Massey says: "I think people are upset about the war in Iraq, about what's going on domestically—with women, with people of color, and with poor folks—so they are more willing to keep an open mind about the role that the U.S. is playing in the world. Also, the extreme measures that Bush has taken against Cuba and those of us who do travel there have definitely galvanized people."

Venceremos means "We will win!"

Formed in 1969, the Venceremos Brigade is the oldest Cuba solidarity organization in the world. Brigadistas travel to the island every year to show solidarity with Cubans by working alongside them, and also to challenge the economic blockade and travel ban imposed by the United States. In addition to work assignments, the brigadistas participate in educational and cultural visits.

Bonnie Massey comments: "Traveling with the Brigade gives you a chance to contextualize the things you see and hear—and there is also a tremendous sense of history. Cubans all over the island know about the Brigade, and repeatedly have expressed how important the work we do is to them.

This year, for instance, we were given the prestigious 'Distinguished Visitor to the City' award by the mayor of Santiago."

LeiLani Dowell, Workers World Party congressional candidate in California, also traveled on the 35th Brigade. She noted that participants this year spent a week in Santiago de Cuba and another week in Havana. Their mornings were filled with construction work on schools, and their afternoons with solidarity meetings.

They met the families of the Cuban Five, who are imprisoned in the United States, as well as artists from the Cuban Hip Hop movement and organizers from the Federation of Cuban Women. They visited several neighborhoods as guests of the local Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. These community-based organizations are legendary for uniting the daily lives of the Cuban people with the broader plans and hopes of the revolution.

Some participants spent time with Assata Shakur, a former Black Panther leader who escaped a U.S. prison in 1986 and sought asylum in Cuba.

More plans for strengthening support for the Cuban Revolution are under way. The National Network on Cuba, an umbrella group that opposes the U.S. travel ban and blockade and advocates "normalizing" U.S. relations with Cuba, will hold a conference in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 1-3. For more information, go to www.CubaSolidarity.com.

IFCO/Pastors for Peace provides ongoing support for Cuba as well. This includes the annual Friendship Caravans breaking the blockade to bring educational supplies, books, art materials, construction supplies and even vehicles like school buses and ambulances in solidarity to Cuba. For more information, see www.ifconews.org.

Contingent forming now

Massey urges people who wish to travel with the Brigade to apply soon, saying, "Crossing the border as a brigadista, doing a travel challenge, has been one of the most politically fulfilling experiences I've had."

The Brigade actively organizes contingents that are diverse in many ways, including a wide range of ages, nationalities, socioeconomic classes and sexual orientations. It is currently accepting applications for the 36th Contingent, tentatively scheduled for July 17-Aug. 1, 2005. Scholarships are available, depending on the success of fundraising efforts.

Completed applications received by the Brigade no later than Dec. 31 will get a \$100 deduction off the total cost of the trip.

For more information about costs and schedule, contact the Brigade web site at www.venceremosbrigade.org, send an email to vbrigade@aol.com, phone (212) 560-4360 or send a letter to Venceremos Brigade, P.O. Box 5202, Englewood, NJ 07631-5202. □

Chavez trip to UN canceled

By Berta Joubert Ceci
New York

As activists were busy getting ready for the expected visit of Hugo Chávez, president of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to the United Nations on Sept. 20, a news release from the Venezuelan government stopped them in their tracks: "President Chávez will not be able to attend."

The statement from the Ministry of Communication and Information read in part: "The office of the President informs the public, both nationally and internationally, that the visit of citizen president Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías to the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations to have taken place in New York has been cancelled due to an untimely occurrence."

The reason given for the cancellation was the failure of the left motor of the presidential aircraft right before the president was about to board his plane.

The statement highlighted a meeting that had been planned for the afternoon of the 20th, initiated by Brazilian President Luis Ignacio "Lula" da Silva to discuss Latin American development and the fight against hunger and poverty—a topic at the heart of President Chávez's work.

Through the Ministry of Information, Chávez sent his apologies to world leaders who were to join him in the meeting, saying, "It is an important event for the future of our nations and for the integration of Latin America." In place of the president, Minister of Foreign Relations Jesús Arnaldo Pérez was to attend the UN meetings and deliver a message from the Bolivarian

Venezuelan government of peace, solidarity and unity.

President Chávez was also to have spoken at a public event the night of his arrival. The International Action Center had donated space and resources like telephones, fax and printing facilities to help this important event and was the hub of preparations for the rally. Members of the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle in New York spent countless hours, day and night, doing outreach in the days before Sept. 20.

Many groups in the city and Bolivarian Circles from nearby states joined in the organizing. The spirit of Simón Bolívar was not only south of the Río Grande. Young and old of different nationalities and sexual preferences came by or called to try to reserve tickets to see Chávez. At one point, there were more than 1,400 requests for only 690 seats—an impossible task, yet a very heartening one.

The meeting had been planned for Harlem's Mount Olivet Baptist Church. After the cancellation, many of the organizers went there to explain the situation to anyone who hadn't yet heard the news. A group of elderly women and men dressed in their Sunday best were waiting, saying, "We are from the church and we want to see Chávez."

The Bolivarian Revolution process is taking place not only in Venezuela.

Berta Joubert is one of the many activists who helped in organizing and outreach for the rally.



Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez

U.S. withdraws phony charges against Cuba

By Monica Moorehead

Every U.S. administration dating back to the days when Dwight D. Eisenhower was president has attempted to paint a bogey-man image of Cuba as a security threat to the United States. How ludicrous!

For more than 40 years, these false depictions have been created mainly for the benefit of the U.S. public to help justify a Pentagon military intervention like the one against Iraq.

The Pentagon orchestrated the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. During that invasion, CIA-trained Cuban right-wing mercenary forces were repelled by Cuba's people's militias, resulting in a humiliating defeat for U.S. imperialism.

So it is very rare for U.S. intelligence agencies to publicly raise doubts about an outright lie against a revolutionary socialist government like Cuba's. But such a rarity happened on Sept. 17.

The CIA and other intelligence agencies backed off earlier charges that Cuba has been developing an offensive biological program and sharing it with what the U.S. government describes as other "rogue" states. In 2002, President George W. Bush had declared Iran, Syria, North Korea and Cuba to be "rogue" states.

These charges arose in 1999, during the Clinton administration, with the issuing of a National Intelligence Estimate report. Later, Bush administration officials made further allegations claiming that Cuba posed a "terrorist" threat to the United States. More specifically, the United States accused Cuba of producing and exporting "dual-use" items, meaning technology that can be used for both civilian and military objectives.

The original 1999 report claimed that Cuba "had at least a limited, developmental biological weapons research and

development effort." (New York Times, Sept. 18)

In the post-Sept. 11 period, the U.S. government is reviewing a number of intelligence reports that made accusations against certain countries and governments. This review comes in light of the widespread knowledge that Bush used lies to justify attacking and occupying Iraq, especially the claim that Iraq was hiding "weapons of mass destruction."

In the spring of 2002 the U.S. government claimed that Cuba's pharmaceutical industry was producing germs for biological terror. The Cuban government dispelled this anti-communist slander.

What the United States will not freely admit is that Cuba is known worldwide for its scientific advances in medical research and cures, because its health-care system is based on prevention and need, not profits.

Besides providing all its people with free medical care, socialist Cuba has an advanced pharmaceutical industry. It sells many vaccines that it has developed to other countries, especially poor ones, at lower prices than the capitalist, profit-driven pharmaceutical companies charge.

The biological and chemical weaponry threat does not come from Cuba. It is home grown.

The only attack with biological weapons in the United States was in 2001, when letters filled with deadly anthrax were mailed to several public figures. The anthrax was proven to have come from U.S. stockpiles. To this day, no one has been arrested, even though several postal workers died.

Even though the updated NIE does not go far enough in vindicating Cuba, it is nevertheless a political setback for the warmongering Bush administration, which wants very badly to once again make Cuba a colonial possession. □

At commemoration of Haymarket

The struggle comes up, again and again

By Milt Neidenberg

On Sept. 14, a monument was erected in Chicago at the site of the Haymarket Massacre. The area, desolate for years, is set between two superhighways. A plaque and a statue of life-sized, faceless figures were erected, supposedly to memorialize four anarchist/socialist leaders who were framed and hanged for the May 4, 1886, deaths of seven police officers.

The radical leaders were accused of being responsible, through their revolutionary agitation, for the bomb someone threw at the cops in the middle of a big crowd of peaceful protesters. The four leaders had been speaking from a wagon at the time and could not have thrown the bomb themselves.

The police violence that followed is the lesson of the Haymarket Massacre.

Indignation over the frame-up was so great that Illinois Gov. John Peter Altgeld was finally forced to pardon the accused—but not until after four had already been executed and one had died in prison, an apparent suicide.

This year's large sculpture and the celebration that followed were a total misrepresentation of the heroic class struggle that led to the Haymarket Massacre. This was a whitewash, a cover-up of the bosses' brutal response in collusion with the repressive capitalist state.

It took two years of discussion by a committee composed of labor officials, police brass, capitalist historians and city bureaucrats to agree to a theme. According to Tim Samuelson, a historian and a member of the committee, "The unifying theme is it's a tragedy—a human

tragedy of people under difficult circumstances—reacting to something beyond their control."

The circumstances were not "beyond their control." It had been a planned, unprovoked police attack. The Chicago police, under orders, fired wildly into the crowd from different directions.

The dead included at least four workers and seven police, most of the latter probably killed in their own crossfire. Many workers, women and men, as well as children, were wounded—clubbed, crushed and trampled in the melee.

In an inflamed atmosphere of anti-union violence, there followed widespread arrests of class-conscious workers, anarchists and socialists, who had been rallying to support a bitter strike caused by a lockout by the McCormick Harvester Works Corp. The New York Tribune the next day trumpeted this monstrous lie: "The mob appeared crazed with a frantic desire for blood and holding its ground, poured volley after volley into the midst of the officers."

Ruling-class violence was on the agenda even before the Haymarket police riot. The bosses and the city had mobilized the National Guard, increased the number of anti-labor Pinkerton thugs, and deputized special police and provocateurs to infiltrate the trade unions and the anarchist and socialist movements.

They were trying to destroy the growing militancy that was moving toward a general strike in favor of the eight-hour day.

It grew into a national reign of terror. Any strike or struggle for shorter hours, better wages and working conditions was

met with widespread arrests, conspiracy charges and long-term imprisonment of the leaders and class-conscious militants.

Haymarket, a century of conflict

A few years after the bomb was thrown into the crowd, a statue of a cop was erected in Chicago. It was damaged three times and finally removed to the protected courtyard of the city's police academy. In 1970, a plaque placed by class-conscious forces honoring the executed martyrs was stolen.

At this year's Sept. 14 commemoration, a conflict broke out over the interpretation of the statue and the plaque. The faceless statues were an effort to include the police among the victims. The sculptor who won the assignment commented that her abstract creation intended to send a message that "the violence didn't seem important, because this event was made up of much bigger ideas than one particular incident." Engraved on the plaque were references to free speech, public assembly, the fight for the eight-hour day, and the right of every human being to pursue an equitable and prosperous life.

A group of anarchists carrying black flags and banners correctly protested this as a betrayal of what Haymarket represents.

One of the anarchists challenged the project: "Those men who were hanged are being presented as social democrats or liberal reformers, when in fact they dedicated their whole lives to anarchy and social revolution. If they were here today, they'd be denouncing this project and everyone involved in it." (New York Times, Sept. 14)

That's true. There cannot be any compromise or unifying theme on the meaning of the Haymarket events. It was the culmination of a decade of capitalist repression, class struggle and revolutionary activity.

At the ceremony, the true story of the bosses' violence against the workers in collusion with the capitalist state was buried under the symbolism of class collaboration. This is unacceptable.

Only through revolutionary struggle will the workers and the oppressed nationalities begin to present the true history of the war for liberation from capitalist exploitation.

On Oct. 9, 1886, as the sentence of death by hanging was announced, the martyrs eloquently expressed dedication to the class struggle, not class collaboration.

August Spies, one of the defendants and a leader well loved and respected, an inspiration to the laboring masses, spoke to the packed court. Looking up defiantly at hanging Judge Eldridge Gary, he said: "If you think by hanging us you can stamp out the labor movement ... the movement from which the down-trodden millions, the millions who toil in want and misery, expect salvation—if this is your opinion then hang us! Here you will tread upon a spark, but there and there, behind you and in front of you and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out."

Material for this article came from "Labor's Untold Story" by Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais, published by the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE).

Historic victory for undocumented

N.C. farm workers win union contract

By Peter Gilbert
Raleigh, N.C.

Ending a long, bitter struggle and a five-year boycott, undocumented Mexican farm workers in North Carolina have won a union contract with the Mt. Olive Pickle Company and the North Carolina Growers Association. The contract covers the most workers of any in North Carolina's history—and it is the first union contract in the United States to specifically cover undocumented farm laborers.

About 8,000 workers, representing almost all the states of Mexico, will now be represented by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, a longtime progressive union that is currently an endorser of the Million Worker March.

The negotiations culminated in two separate contracts, both signed in mid-September. One is with the growers' asso-

ciation to recognize the union and its specific demands. A separate contract obligates Mt. Olive, the biggest purchaser and the wealthiest party, to increase the price it pays growers by 10 percent over three years. Under the contract this price increase will be passed along as a 10-percent wage increase to the workers. Mt. Olive will also pay 3 percent more to growers who provide workers' compensation.

The workers are hired in Mexico by the NCGA under the federal H-2A temporary work visa program, with the promise of \$8.06-an-hour wages and about three months of work. They live in unsanitary work camps on about 1,000 cucumber farms. There's a shortage of bathrooms and no kitchens at all; all food must be purchased at the company store.

Several workers have died in these camps and in the fields in recent years from heat exhaustion and exposure to pesticides. Injured and sick workers are fired with no compensation. The conditions of these camps vary little from the experience of sharecroppers a century ago or of the slaves earlier.

The new contract provides for FLOC to have a union hiring hall and union representatives in Mexico to oversee



PHOTO: ELENA EVERETT

Members and community supporters are briefed: "Know your rights if the police stop you."

the hiring process and to implement a new seniority system. In the past, union supporters' names have been kept on a list of workers to be barred from these jobs. Now union membership, coupled with seniority, will move workers to the top of the hiring list.

While the newly signed contracts do not remedy all the problems these workers face, the union allows them to address these issues from a position of strength. FLOC has already begun meeting with the company and the growers' association to demand improvements in housing and health care for the workers, full disclosure and education on the use of pesticides, and moves to end the criminal actions of

Mexican police who work with the recruiters. A grievance procedure and union representatives in all the work camps will further help improve conditions.

The significance of this victory cannot be overstated. Organizing undocumented migrant farm labor in a Southern "right-to-work" state had seemed like an impossible task. But the spirit of the workers and the community's demands for justice overcame the obstacles.

The wage increase will also apply to Mt. Olive workers in Ohio, who are already FLOC members. Improvements in conditions at these work camps and increasing pressure on the growers' association will also affect conditions at other farm labor camps across the South.

FLOC President Baldemar Velasquez said: "This agreement will set an important standard to the rest of the agricultural industry. Everyone else almost exclusively utilizes undocumented workers and the conditions of those workers are tragic and shameful."

Many of these workers, after the three-month cucumber season, move on to Florida to pick tomatoes, more cucumbers and citrus, and work the cane fields. Currently farm labor in Florida, another "right-to-work" state, is not organized. Now FLOC has a ready-made organizing committee among the Mt. Olive workers. □



Community support for strikers

PHOTO: FLOC

Interview with Clarence Thomas on the MWM

'There is a war at home as well as abroad'

Clarence Thomas of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 on the West Coast, is a co-convenor of the Million Worker March, set for Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C. In late July, while Thomas was in Boston for demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention, he spoke to *WW* correspondent Bryan G. Pfeifer about the conditions leading up to the decision to call the MWM.

CLARENCE THOMAS: A resolution was passed at the beginning of the year 2004 by the ILWU Local 10 executive board. That resolution was introduced and passed because working people are under unprecedented attack. It's an attack that has not just started with the Bush administration but it's the culmination of decades of policies that basically have been about putting profits before people.

If you look at the Reagan years, you probably could pinpoint that as an era when there was intensification of policies that had to do with off-shoring jobs, creating tax breaks for the rich, increasing Social Security taxation on working people. But, more importantly, it's an era that brings to mind constructive engagement, when the Bush/Reagan administration defined that as the policy of the United States with regards to South Africa. And many people in the labor movement really do not understand that the anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s was a reflection of the stake that American workers had in the off-shoring issue. Because at that time there were a number of jobs that were being off-shored to South Africa. Auto plants were being shut down here in the United

States and they were being opened in South Africa.

And so it is for that reason that ILWU Local 10 boycotted a ship by the name of the Nedloyd Kimberly in 1984 for several days. And that set into motion the very intense labor solidarity around the Free South Africa movement.

But I bring that up because I think that many people put too much focus on what is happening with the Bush administration. What's going on right now is not only a neoconservative agenda but it is also an agenda that is supported by both the Republican and Democratic Party. Congress has been complicit in everything that the Bush administration is doing and all we have to do is look at the record.

To make a long story short, the reason for the Million Worker March is that we are organizing the march in our own name because of the fact that the only time that working people gain any concessions from the system is when we organize independently from the Democratic and Republican Party. If you look at the Civil Rights movement, it was organized outside the scope of the Democratic and Republican Party. And Black people did not get to vote by voting. Black people got to vote by organizing in their own name. You look at the anti-war movement of the 1960s as well as the anti-war movement of today. The same thing could be said of that, as well as the women's movement.

So this is long overdue. This is about workers coming together, putting forth an agenda that speaks directly to our needs: national health care, cutting the military budget. There is no way we can have guns and butter. In other words, if

there's going to be any change in terms of the domestic policies of the United States government, that military budget has to be cut because that's where the money to pay for the needed social services and the rebuilding of the infrastructure of the United States is going to come from—from that military budget.

The other thing is no matter what the expectations are of people towards the national elections, we have to hold all elected officials accountable. And that means that this Million Worker March isn't going to stop after the march is

Continued on page 8



WW PHOTO: LIZA GREEN
Clarence Thomas, longshore workers' leader.

Most are oppressed immigrant women

Hotel workers vote to authorize strike

By Steven Ceci
Baltimore

Hotel workers represented by the union UNITE HERE in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C., have overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike. The possible strike would involve 2,800 workers in Local 11 in Los Angeles, 3,500 workers in Local 25 in D.C. and 3,200 workers in Local 2 in San Francisco—almost 10,000 workers in all. The "yes" vote was 85 percent in Los Angeles, 94 percent in D.C. and 97 percent in San Francisco.

The workers in all three cities are demanding respect, dignity, better working conditions, fair work loads, higher wages, improved pensions, immigrant rights and affirmative-action rehiring.

They are mostly women and oppressed immigrants. They include housekeepers, bell attendants, room-service attendants, cooks, waiters, dishwashers and maintenance staff. Many have to work second jobs to make ends meet.

These courageous workers understand that to achieve their demands they must join with their fellow hotel employees in other cities who work for the same transnational hotel chains. Since some contracts expire in 2006, the workers want to negotiate two-year contracts with all the hotels.

This is evident in the sentiment of Kim Murray, a housekeeper who has been working at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill for nine years: "We need to be together in 2006 with other hotel workers who work for the big companies like Hyatt. Then workers will have more power to make the hotels take us seriously about issues like work load."

"I voted yes on Sept. 13 for the strike authorization because we need management to respect us and negotiate with us before they make changes that affect our work load."

Big hotel chains like Marriott, Hilton, Starwood and Hyatt used the Sept. 11

Continued on page 8

Before you even think about giving your vote to one or the other millionaire—

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Judith Leiber handbags sell for as much as \$6,000 apiece. Every U.S. president's wife since Nancy Reagan has HAD to have one. The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum says they are "works of art."

Problem is, the mostly Latina and Asian women who make them barely get minimum wage. So 188 members of UFCW Local 342 are now on strike in New York. The company is offering them an increase of 35/35/50—that's CENTS each year over a three-year contract. But even minimum wages are too much for this profit-hungry company. It has been cutting jobs and downsizing, opened a plant in South Africa and now is threatening to move to China. It's demanding the workers here make bigger co-payments on benefits—out of their sweatshop wages. The workers say they'll stay on the picket lines until they win a decent contract. Now, that's a work of art.

—Photo and story by Anne Pruden

WWP CAMPAIGN RALLY

Talking about fightback & revolution

By Leslie Feinberg
New York

The message of the Sept. 18 campaign rally came through loud and clear: Workers World Party is using the podium of the 2004 presidential elections to build the revolutionary struggle against capitalism and resistance to Washington's war of occupation in Iraq.

The rally here brought together the three candidates, all leaders in Workers World Party. WWP candidates John Parker for president and Teresa Gutierrez for vice president; and LeiLani Dowell, Peace & Freedom Party candidate for Eight Congressional District, San Francisco.

The ease and warmth with which each of the candidates articulate their party's political program of battling imperialist war and economic exploitation, racism and bigotry demonstrated how widely they are getting out into the working class and oppressed communities to talk to people about fightback and revolution. [See related boxes]

WWP campaign managers Monica Moorehead and Greg Butterfield co-chaired the rally.

Moorehead stressed, "Our candidates will be agitating about the need to take the struggle to the streets to wrest important concessions for our class to help to alleviate some of the immediate suffering. Our candidates will also be talking about a long-term solution to the ills of capitalism and that is socialism—a system that puts human needs before profit greed. So we hope that this rally will not only excite you about our candidates, but will motivate you to check out our party after the elections."

Butterfield explained, "After today's rally our candidates begin an ambitious national tour for the next six weeks that will take them to at least two dozen cities—

Teresa Gutierrez:



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

from New England to the Midwest, to the West Coast to the Deep South. But all that traveling takes money. We rely on contributions from workers—like you and me."

'A cry of freedom for the workers'

Larry Holmes, a member of WWP's Secretariat and a former party candidate, said, "We knew it would be difficult to run an election campaign this time because the party is fighting on numerous fronts simultaneously. But it was the right decision. It's absolutely necessary to have revolutionary communists in the 2004 election campaign. Our campaign is a cry of freedom for the workers."

Holmes invited all those in attendance to take part in Workers World Party's Nov. 13-14 conference in New York City. "It will give us time after the election to analyze and assess everything that has happened."

'We hold NYC accountable'

RNC arrestees denounce mass sweeps

By Dustin Langley
New York

During the week of the Republican National Convention here, New York police arrested more than 2,000 peaceful demonstrators. They held some as long as 50 hours. Many were held for hours at Pier 57, a former bus depot.

The floors of the pier were covered with a thick oily sludge and, according to the Sept. 16 Newsday, conditions at the pier posed a variety of health and safety risks, including the presence of asbestos.

Many of the arrested protesters have joined an ad hoc organization, RNC Arrestees Fight Back, to hold the city accountable. They are determined not to be silenced by the New York Police Department assault on dissent.

On Sept. 16 they held a news conference to denounce the NYPD's tactics during the RNC. In front of a packed room, protesters discussed the circumstances of their arrests and the conditions at Pier 57.

Deepa Majmudar explained that she had been arrested "just for shopping." She was coming out of a bookstore when she was caught up in a mass arrest.

She explained that her experience had

turned her from a bystander to an activist. "I was not a protester then, but I am one now," she said.

On Sept. 18, the RNC Arrestees demonstrated across the street from Pier 57. They carried signs reading, "Dissent is not a crime, occupation is not liberation" and "Killing Iraqi children is a crime! Protest is not!"

They demanded the closing of Pier 57, complete amnesty for all 2,000 protesters arrested during the RNC, and an investigation into the NYPD's behavior during the week.

Gregg Ross explained that he was arrested and held for more than 50 hours even though he had violated no law.

Imani Henry of the International Action Center spoke of the need to stand in solidarity with the Arab and Muslim communities and with communities of color "who face police repression every day."

Alley Ernst, who was held for 48 hours, said: "After 9/11 they held noncombatant Arabs and Muslims without due process, and nobody said anything. Now they are doing it again to American citizens. It is a flagrant misuse of the Constitution. Who are they going to do this to next?" □

'Get out in the streets!'

This year will forever be marked as the infamous Anybody But Bush year. The fear that George W. Bush evokes is regrettably propelling some sectors in the movement and in the working class once again toward the Democratic Party.

[But] it's not about which rich white man is in the White House this year. Both capitalist parties want to occupy Iraq and the Middle East. Both want U.S. imperialism to dominate the area, control the oil and to get rid of the leaders for self-determination.

History proves that it's about who's in the streets that makes fundamental change in society. It is class consciousness that is decisive, not dependency on the capitalist machine.

[T]he real difference between John Kerry and George Bush is merely tactical. One may represent a certain sector of the ruling class, another a wider sector, but they both represent the ruling class. It shows that what we have to fight is the capitalist system.

That's why we run in this election: to point out that for the last 200 years, the role of both parties is to ... put a brake on the struggle of the working class against the ruling class.

The most revolutionary thing we can do in this climate, until the workers and oppressed are ready to not only break with the capitalist parties but to abolish the system altogether, is to instill in the people that it is they who have the power to change things ... □

Workers World newspaper editor and the party's first presidential candidate, Deirdre Griswold, told the rally, "Our election campaign is just one tactic WWP uses to advance the struggle of the workers and oppressed for qualitative social change. Our first campaign was in 1980, when Reagan ran against Carter. Since then, we have participated in almost all the presidential elections, not because the vote is going to change conditions, but in order to mobilize on a broader basis."

A dynamic young Dominican activist and organizer explained to those gathered that as an undocumented worker, she was not allowed to cast her vote in the Nov. 2 election. But if she could, she declared, "I would vote for John Parker, Teresa Gutierrez and LeiLani Dowell."

Julie Fry, a founder of FIST—Fight Imperialism Stand Together—vowed to

work to bring even more youth into participation in the struggle campaign of Parker, Gutierrez and Dowell. She concluded that youth need an independent, revolutionary fightback movement to stop the attacks on their lives and this campaign, she concluded, is just that kind of militant vehicle for activism.

The candidates' support for the upcoming Million Worker March was woven into several of the talks.

To find out when the candidates will be in your town, or for more information about how you can become a part of the Workers World Party campaign, contact: Workers World Party Presidential Campaign Committee National Office, 55 West 17th St., 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011. Call (212) 627-2994; email vote4workers@workers.org; or visit www.vote4workers.org. □

Dustin Langley at
Pier 57 protest.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Arrestees at news
conference in International
Action Center office.

WW PHOTO: SARA FLOUNDERS



PARKER-GUTIERREZ-DOWELL

Coming to a city near you!

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Workers World Party candidates John Parker, Teresa Gutierrez and LeiLani Dowell may be speaking in your community this fall.

Following the Sept. 18 campaign kick-off rally in **New York City**, the candidates will swing through **New England**: **Hartford, Conn.**, Sept. 22; **Boston**, Sept. 23; **Providence, R.I.**, Sept. 24; **Brattleboro, Vt.**, Sept. 25; **Barre, Vt.**, Sept. 26; and **Chatham, N.Y.**, Sept. 27.

Congressional candidate LeiLani Dowell, running on the Peace & Freedom Party ticket in the Eighth Congressional District, will speak at a Peace & Freedom meeting for local candidates in **San Francisco** on Sept. 25 and at a Radical Women meeting in San Francisco on Sept. 28 and Oct. 1 on the struggle against the U.S. invasion and coup in Haiti.

There will be candidate appearances in the **Midwest**, including **Cleveland** Oct. 5, in conjunction with the vice-presidential debates at Case Western Reserve University.

All the candidates will appear in Los Angeles at a Workers World Party forum Oct. 9, and will go on to San Francisco Oct. 13, **Chula Vista** on Oct. 14 and **San Diego** Oct. 15. They will join the march for immigrants' rights in **Los Angeles** Oct. 16 before flying to **Washington, D.C.**, for the Million Worker March Oct. 17.

Beginning Oct. 18, a **Southern tour** will take them to **Richmond, Va.**, followed by **Raleigh, N.C.**, Oct. 19, Winthrop College in **Rock Hill, S.C.**, Oct. 20, **Charlotte, N.C.**, Oct. 21 and **Atlanta** Oct. 23. Southern tour be wrapped up in **Houston** and in **Southwest, Albuquerque**, dates to be announced.

They will speak at rallies in **Chicago** on Oct. 28 and **Detroit** on October 30.

They will be in the **Mid-Atlantic** cities **Washington, D.C.**, **Baltimore** and **Philadelphia** and other cities in mid-late October.

Campaign representatives will take part in Third-Party presidential debate on Oct. 9, **Washington University, St. Louis**,

John Parker:



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

LeiLani Dowell:



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

MO, on Oct. 15, in **Johnson City, TN**, and on Oct. 29 at **Swarthmore College, PA**.

For updates, visit the campaign Website at www.vote4workers.org or call the campaign office in New York at (212) 627-2994 or Los Angeles at (323) 936-1416. □

'A whiff of socialism'

Something smells very bad in here, in Los Angeles and all over the country—it's capitalism.

We've all been made aware about many of the evils of this society we live in since childhood, including the fact that there are people, including children, living in the midst of daily poverty, starvation and war. However, we're told that this is the way it has always been and there's nothing we can do about it.

No, in fact, if you took a yardstick as a representative measure of the time humanity has been on this planet you would need only one inch to represent the amount of time class society has existed—which includes capitalism, only one stage in that inch. Most of our existence was under communal and matriarchal societies.

So forgive me for asking you to open

your noses and allow the stench of capitalism in so we can analyze it. ...

Fighting back as workers means building a movement. Building and joining unions is part of that fight back; protests in the streets and occupying factories and offices are another. But the primary tool we workers have is our ability to forge unity amongst all sectors of the working class.

So we're here to talk about why you should be a proponent of socialism. And many ask: What does socialism look like? Socialism is something that you can get a whiff of simply by subtracting all of the evils necessary to maintain capitalism—like racism, repression and the profit system.

Our campaign is all about the struggle to build the movement. Won't you join us? □

'U.S. hand in Haiti coup'

From Sept. 3-6, I participated in a fact-finding delegation to Haiti with 11 other activists from both coasts of the United States.

Now I want to take every opportunity I can get to raise the situation in Haiti; it's my responsibility, given the hand of the United States in the coup.

We heard reports of detainees being transported and transferred in U.S. vehicles, and U.S. officials directing activities in Haitian jails.

The complicity of U.S. corporations was also pointed out by representatives we worked with.

So in the face of outright U.S. complicity in the terror being perpetuated in Haiti, what are the Democrats saying?

Well, Kerry issued a statement condemning Bush for not supporting Aristide during the time of the coup. At the same time, the solution he offers involves more intervention.

Our campaign says: Power and reparations to the Haitian people, not the handpicked representatives of the transnational banks and corporations!

The next step in the struggle here is not Nov. 2.

On the trip to Haiti, when we told the president of the Confederation of Haitian Workers about the Million Worker March on Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C., he expressed interest in having a simultaneous protest in Haiti.

Momentum for the march is gathering and we'll be there to raise the banner of Haiti, along with other issues. □

Grieving mom heckles Laura Bush

As casualties among the Iraqi people and U.S. soldiers continue to mount, campaigners for President George W. Bush are finding it hard to escape public criticism. On Sept. 17, Sue Niederer of Hopewell, N.J., interrupted Laura Bush during a campaign speech. Niederer's son, 24-year-old Seth Dvorin, had been killed in Iraq in February of this year while trying to disarm a bomb.

As a member of Military Families Speak Out, Niederer has come out against the war and occupation in Iraq since her son's death, from Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., to Dover Air Force base in Delaware and the Republican National Convention earlier this month in New York.

At the Laura Bush event, Niederer wore a shirt bearing a photo of her son, with the words "President Bush, you killed my son." She was arrested after she questioned Bush as to why it was working-class children like hers, and not the children of politicians, who are sent to combat. Charges against Niederer were later dropped.

While both candidates say they'll maintain a large U.S. troop presence in Iraq, the anti-war movement continues to speak out and resist, demanding "Bring the troops home now."

—LeiLani Dowell

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

Anti-war protesters dog Bush

By David Dixon
Charlotte, N.C.

On Sept. 17, President George W. Bush made two campaign stops in this Southern city. He was greeted by anti-war protesters at both.

The first stop was at the Charlotte Merchandise Mart for a "Forum on Women's Issues." A heavy police presence kept all but a half-dozen protesters from reaching the front of the shopping center. The police wouldn't allow those trying to get to the protest to cross the street, and refused to tell them where they could get through.

Many people later told the Action Center for Justice, a local International Action Center affiliate and organizer of the protest, that they gave up after feeling it was impossible to get to the planned gathering area.

The handful who did make it braved a pouring rain, the remnants of Hurricane Ivan, to make sure their opposition was noted. Their placards read, "Bush is a war criminal," "Bush lied! Thousands died!" and "W is not for women."

The protesters were particularly vocal when Bush's motorcade passed directly in front of them.

Bush supporters leaving the forum showed their true colors by shouting obscenities and holding up their middle fingers at the protesters. But when they rolled down their windows, shouts of "End the occupation! Peace now!" drowned out their name calling.

From the slow-moving traffic on the outbound four lanes of East Independence Boulevard came supporting honks, waves, peace signs and shouts of approval for the protest.

Later in the afternoon Bush held a fundraiser in Charlotte's wealthy Eastover neighborhood, at the house of the richest person in North Carolina, C.D. "Dick" Spangler Jr. Protesters gathered in front of Eastover Park, where the Republican attendees had parked to be shuttled to Spangler's mansion.

The protesters marched to within a few houses of the fundraiser before cops blocked them from going any further. After a short time the protest moved back to the front of the park, where pass-

ing motorists again showed much support.

When Bush supporters began leaving, with no choice but to drive by the protest, they again shouted obscenities and gave the finger. Several protesters heckled them back.

To everyone's disbelief, a Bush supporter drove his car up onto the sidewalk directly at protester Alex Kramer, ramming him and throwing him up onto the hood.

The driver accelerated, then slammed on the brakes and reversed, throwing Kramer onto the ground, where he was almost hit as the car sped off.

Some in the crowd got the license number and reported the incident to the police. Kramer went to the hospital with bruises but is okay.

In all, 26 people participated at the afternoon protest and let Bush know what they thought of him. Plans were made for the next event: a reception for the candidates of Workers World Party (www.vote4workers.org) when they come to Charlotte on Oct. 21. □

Japan closes four offices

Citibank caught money laundering again

By Deirdre Griswold

The Japanese government's Financial Services Agency has taken the unusual step of shutting down four key offices of Citibank Japan that have catered to wealthy customers.

The FSA charges Citibank with a multitude of violations of laws and regulations, including providing money to clients who were subsequently prosecuted for stock price manipulation; defrauding customers of more than 1.8 billion yen in foreign currency deposits; lending money to beef up documents to borrow public funds from a municipality; and taking customers' passwords out of the office.

"As to why Citibank made such repeated abuses, [an FSA] official said New York headquarters imposed unrealistically high targets for private banking operations in Japan. The bank tied salaries closely to sales performance, giving incentive to managers and employees to break rules if it meant large profits, he said." (Japan Times, Sept. 18)

Reuters news agency reported that regulators charged the bank with "failing to prevent suspected money laundering."

This move by Japan will undoubtedly cause shock waves in the world of high finance. It gives the public a glimpse of the venomous competition going on among imperialist financial institutions to be top dog in a world economy that is becoming increasingly unstable and polarized between rich and poor.

Citibank has been caught before courting big depositors, no matter how nefari-

ous their operations may be. On Oct. 30, 1998, the General Accounting Office issued a report giving detailed information showing that the bank ignored the law and its own internal procedures in assisting Raul Salinas, brother of the former president of Mexico, to move between \$90 million and \$100 million of suspected drug money out of Mexico.

This happened in 1995 while Salinas was in jail on a murder charge. His brother, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, was the Mexican president who had gotten his country to go along with NAFTA, the U.S.-sponsored trade agreement.

Any worker who has ever tried to open a checking account will be shocked at the special treatment accorded Salinas. At a time when he was in prison on a murder charge, Citibank opened an account for him in the name of his fiancée. It accepted a double-endorsed check that wasn't even made out to her real name.

Had the check been for \$100, the bank would have told her to take a hike. But the checks she used to open the account added up to \$100 million. So she got special treatment—from Citibank's offices in Mexico City, New York, Zurich and London—and was able to open an offshore account in the Cayman Islands.

Money laundering, it seems, is as "American" as apple pie. In 1986, during the supposedly "tough on crime" Reagan administration, some of the biggest banks—including Bank of America, First Boston Corp., Chase Manhattan, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, Chemical, Crocker National and Irving Trust—paid

civil penalties, some in the millions of dollars, because of money laundering. The New York Times of Jan. 22, 1986, reported that Bank of America, which was fined \$4.75 million, had failed to report 17,000 large cash transactions.

But no criminal charges were brought against the banks or any of their officers by the Reagan government.

Then on Oct. 4, 1989, Salvatore R. Martoche, an official of the Bush administration, admitted in testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations that U.S. banks were laundering \$110 billion a year.

The drug laws of the United States have made it so easy to incarcerate people for possession of small amounts of controlled substances that the rate of imprisonment here is the highest in the world and the jails are bursting. You would have to look hard to find any bankers behind walls, however.

What are banks? Why do they yield so consistently to temptation? And why are they so untouchable by the state?

The first thing to understand is that these are capitalist banks. If the workers controlled the state, banks would merely be socially-owned repositories for the money-wealth created through labor, whose use is being deferred for future projects. But when owned by the capitalist class, they are controlling institutions at the very pinnacle of the process of capitalist exploitation and accumulation of wealth.

Every day the moneyed class draws into

its coffers the surplus wealth created by the working class. They plow most of it back into production in order to gather in even more next year, more the year after that, and so on.

There is a constant struggle among the capitalists to survive by growing larger and larger, thus beating out the competition. They are not born greedy. The system makes them greedy by consigning the less greedy to failure.

Karl Marx, quoting an economist of his day, wrote in "Capital" that there is nothing capitalists would not do to get a higher return on their investments than their rivals. The slave trade in the Western Hemisphere, after all, was to feed labor to capitalist enterprises producing cotton and sugar for a growing market. If human slavery is acceptable to the capitalist—and it was until technological advances in agriculture made it counter-productive—then why not drug-money laundering?

Driving the capitalists to take ever more risks is their fear that the system stands on the edge of a precipice. When a boom period shows signs of going bust, everyone wants cash. A bank's assets dwindle as many of those who have borrowed its money go bankrupt. Credit collapses. Only cash will do.

So what's better than all those accounts funneling large amounts of cash into the bank? And so what if it comes in brown paper bags? To paraphrase the words of one Nixon administration crook, the bankers will walk over their own grandmothers to get their hands on the loot. □

Interview with Clarence Thomas on the MWM

Continued from page 5

over. Those demands mean something and we want action taken on those things. The Democratic Party for a number of years has enjoyed support from the Black community, even though they are not representing the Black community. And so we think that there has to be a decision made on the part of working people to support the status quo or to support those issues and programs that are in their best interests.

There's been a tremendous amount of opposition to the Million Worker March by business unionists throughout the country who believe that the Democratic Party is the party of working people, which it is not. And they also think that there should not be any movement to empower working people before the election. In my opinion, I think they believe that to be the case even after the election.

So when we look at the elections of Bill Clinton in his first and second terms, people who are defined as being liberal said let's give Bill a chance. Well, Bill had his chance—two terms—and what did we get? We got NAFTA. We got GATT. We got welfare reform. We received the WTO and just an endless number of examples that show his actual contempt for working people, even though he was a very able campaigner who, because of his working-class origins, was able to translate that into a great deal of admiration,

especially from the Black community. But the reality of the situation is that Bill Clinton's years were years that were very damaging to working people.

If you look at the Carter years, for example, when Carter came into office he increased the military budget. Carter also gave tax breaks for the rich on capital gains and he increased the Social Security tax on working people. He bailed out Chrysler, which set into motion a whole trend of concessionary bargaining on the part of unions. Not only that, but he invoked Taft-Hartley on the miners, who struck from 1977 to 1978.

So those are just some of the examples from recent history of the kinds of adverse policies that have been implemented during a Democratic administration.

So we say the reason for that is because the Democratic Party does not represent the interests of working people. They represent the corporate agenda. The rhetoric may be somewhat different but the policies are the same. ...

I was in Iraq as part of an international labor delegation in October 2003 organized through U.S. Labor Against the War. But I can tell you that there is a war at home as well as the war abroad. When you look at the companies that are benefiting from the war in Iraq, companies such as the Stevedoring Services of America, which is one of our employers, they were one of the most belligerent segments of the Pacific Maritime

Association during our contract negotiations and they have received the contract to operate the port of Umpasa.

The kinds of policies that have been enacted upon Iraqi workers since the invasion are such that ... Iraqi workers don't have the right to organize because they're enforcing laws passed by Saddam Hussein which prohibit the organizing of workers in the so-called public sector. Those are the workers that were employed by the state.

But I think that the bottom line is that the war on Iraq and the war on working people in America are connected and it's very important that we come together, the anti-war movement and the labor movement, to oppose the war, bring the troops home now and push for a workers' agenda. □

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Hotel workers vote

Continued from page 5

attack as an excuse to increase the work load by laying off thousand of workers, in the process increasing their own profits. The hotel chains cried crocodile tears about lost revenue and higher vacancy rates after Sept. 11, but the facts paint a different picture.

A report prepared by Bear Stearns—a global investment banking, securities trading and brokerage firm—admitted that the average hotel needs to fill only 47 percent of its rooms to break even, down from 65 percent in 1986. (Global Hotels, Vol. 2, Sept. 2002) Another Wall Street analyst, Smith Barney, expects the Big 3 hotel companies to surpass \$1 billion in after-tax profits this year.

Bosses at the greedy hotel chains understand very well that divide-and-conquer has been the best tool to keep wages down, work loads heavy and benefits few. But if the hotel chains have to negotiate a master contract across the country, the workers are in a much stronger position to flex their muscles together and make gains at the bargaining table.

Workers and the oppressed everywhere have a stake in this battle. In the coming days they should prepare to act in solidarity with UNITE HERE, the merged union of garment, textile, hotel and restaurant workers. □

Bush and Kerry on the stump:

Lofty words to justify down and dirty wars

By Leslie Feinberg

The Bush administration is coming under fire for its handling of the military occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but none of its bourgeois critics are demanding “Bring the troops home now.”

Bush hunkered down during his Sept. 21 address to the United Nations, vowing to stay the course in Iraq. His speech, emphasizing that “a coalition of nations” invaded Iraq, was crafted to answer UN Secretary General Kofi Annan’s statement a week earlier to a BBC journalist that the U.S.-led war against Iraq was “illegal” because it violated the UN charter.

Annan was greeted with strong applause in the chamber as he opened the annual General Assembly with a speech obviously aimed at Washington. It spoke of Iraqi “civilians massacred in cold blood” and “Iraqi prisoners disgracefully abused.”

Numerous media sources commented that Bush received only a tepid response when he retorted in his speech, “The proper response to difficulty is not to retreat; it is to prevail.” He lectured his audience: “The UN and its member nations must respond to [Iraqi] Prime Minister Allawi’s request and do more to help build an Iraq that is secure, democratic, federal and free.”

Ayad Allawi—Washington’s hand-picked head of the Iraqi government—had been dispatched to the U.S. and Britain after Annan characterized the invasion of Iraq as “illegal.” On this hasty tour, Allawi has painted a rosy picture of the current situation in Iraq, claiming, “We are squeezing out the insurgency.”

British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Allawi jointly urged the UN and its members to commit troops to battle the Iraqi insurgency—which both men described as the “second Iraq War.”

Blair’s reference to a “new conflict” raging in Iraq was seen as “partly designed to prepare voters for the deployment of more British troops to the region to fight this new war—and with no obvious time limit.” (BBC, Sept. 20) A poll for the British newspaper *The Guardian* found 71 percent wanted Blair to set a date to bring the troops home from Iraq, a big jump from a similar poll in May.

In the U.S., however, Democratic and Republican leaders seemed to be looking past the Nov. 2 elections as they pressed the need to channel more military forces and more money into Iraq.

Elephants break ranks

Both George W. Bush and John Kerry made numerous “major policy addresses” about the Iraq War in New York on Sept. 20-21. But when all the political fog of campaign demagoguery burned off, neither of them had presented a program to end the occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan. Quite the contrary.

On Sept. 20, as Kerry was about to deliver a major speech about the occupation of Iraq, Bush readied to defend his administration’s war drive, characterizing Iraq and Afghanistan as “marching toward freedom.”

Nevertheless, only a day before, senators from both big-business parties were on television undercutting his assertions that the U.S. is “winning the war.” They urged the Bush administration to “make a realistic assessment of the situation in Iraq and adjust its policies aimed at paci-

fying the country.” (AP, Sept. 20)

The senior Republicans were senators Richard G. Lugar of Indiana, Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina.

McCain told “Fox News Sunday” on Sept. 19 that the Bush administration had made a mistake from the outset. By illegally invading Iraq? Heavens, no. By not putting in more GIs. “You’ve got to send our troops in there on the ground,” said McCain.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Lugar blamed the glaring failures in Iraq on “incompetence” in the administration.

Hagel—who also sits on the influential foreign relations committee and who heads Bush’s Nebraska election campaign—said he doesn’t believe the U.S. is winning the war. “A crisp, sharp analysis of our policies are required,” he told CBS “Face the Nation” on Sept. 20. “We didn’t do that in Vietnam and we saw 11 years of casualties mount to the point where we finally lost ... The fact is, we’re in trouble, we’re in deep trouble in Iraq.”

Bush did enjoy public support from at least one quarter—from his own “yes man.” As Allawi headed for a visit to the White House, the Sept. 20 *Toronto Star* wrote, “Iraqi interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi has begun a blitz to shore up support for U.S. President George W. Bush’s war in his country, saying a recent surge in violence there shows insurgents are becoming ‘more desperate,’ not stronger.”

Allawi publicly predicted to an incredulous media that the Jan. 31 “Iraqi elections”—the fig leaf of sovereignty the U.S. and Britain so desperately need in order to entice other imperialists to get on board the occupation—would go ahead “on track” as scheduled.

Presto change-o, from hawk to dove

None of these critics are calling for an end to the imperialist occupation. And neither is presidential hopeful John Kerry.

In fact, Richard Holbrooke—a top foreign policy adviser to Kerry—said on Sept. 19 CBS’s “Face the Nation,” “The current course within the current resources is not achievable. If you want to achieve that course, you’re going to have to talk about additional forces, and they’re not going to come from our allies, or you’re going to have to look for a way to get the political settlement.”

The next day, Kerry carried out an almost overnight transformation unheard of in the aviary realm: He turned from a hawk into a dove. He even turned up on the David Letterman show to try out his new persona.

But he offered no program to end the war. He did say that Bush should get more international support for the occupation. He didn’t suggest from where. The same day, in a special session with ambassadors from 26 allied nations, NATO envoys failed again to secure an agreement to even expand the alliance’s military training of Iraqi soldiers. Significantly, France, Belgium, Germany and Spain refused. (KATV, Sept. 20)

The fact is that the occupation of Iraq is going badly for imperialism on the ground, and the capitalist class in whose interests the war for empire is being carried out knows this.

The *New York Times* leaked a classified

Rising Iraqi resistance had senators from both big-business parties undercutting Bush’s assertions that the U.S. is ‘winning the war.’ But none called to bring the troops home.

CIA National Intelligence Estimate on Sept. 16: “The estimate, summarizing the views of major American intelligence agencies, projects three possible outcomes for Iraq: achievement of a tenuous stability by the end of next year; increased extremism and the fragmentation of Iraqi society; and civil war.”

Rather than ask for a huge infusion of money to shore up the occupation—not a proposal either aisle of Congress wants to make prior to the elections—U.S. ambassador in Baghdad John Negroponte has suggested diverting \$3.6 billion of the \$18 billion already approved by Republicans and Democrats from construction on the infrastructure to the immediate requirements for security.

Facts on the ground

In the week Allawi claimed the resistance was being “squeezed out,” the insurgency struck imperialist forces more than 50 times a day, killed or wounded scores of occupation troops and hundreds of Iraqi puppet forces, and maintained its liberation of numerous cities and towns.

Here’s a cursory overview of the onslaught by the U.S. military and the strength of the resistance in Iraq just days before Bush and Kerry made their “major policy addresses” about the occupation:

- Sept. 17: An explosive-packed vehicle detonated a row of police cars in Baghdad, leaving at least three dead. The police vehicles were sealing off an area where Pentagon troops were carrying out raids. Just days earlier a car bomb near a police station in Baghdad had killed at least 44.

- Sept. 18: U.S. military vehicles were set ablaze by a car bomb in Baghdad, wounding three U.S. troops. A car bomb explosion outside the Iraqi National Guard headquarters in the northern city of Kirkut kills at least 21 and wounds 67, mostly would-be recruits. It was the third attack on the Iraqi puppet forces there. Mohammed Zibari, senior official of the imperialist-run North Oil Co., barely survived an assassination attempt near Mosul. A convoy carrying the governor of Salahuddin province was hit by resistance fighters. And the body of Anbar province’s deputy governor was found.

- Sept. 19: Pentagon offensive in Ramadi; airstrikes, firefight in Falluja; GIs raid Baghdad homes of al-Sadr officials. U.S. troop casualties include three near Baghdad airport; two killed, eight wounded in Baghdad.

As many as 12 truck drivers for a U.S.-Turkish firm were killed in a series of attacks in Iraq on the main highway between Baghdad and Mosul. The night before, six other drivers for the firm were either killed or abducted.

- Sept. 20-21: Pentagon airstrikes on Falluja and Sadr City, Baghdad. Fighting in Sadr City and Samarra with heavy Iraqi casualties. U.S. troops raid cleric Moqtada al-Sadr’s offices in Najaf. Two Marines killed in al-Anbar province; one U.S. soldier killed near Tikrit; four wounded near Baghdad. Pentagon helicopter downed near Nassiriyah; three crew members wounded. Two U.S. “private contractors”

executed after Pentagon refuses to release Iraqi women prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Umm Qasr prisons.

- Sept. 22: U.S. fighter planes and attack helicopters bomb densely populated Sadr City. Car bomb kills at least two and wounds 40.

The *Christian Science Monitor* online posted a Sept. 21 dispatch about “disaffection” towards the war in GI ranks.

“We shouldn’t be here,” one Marine said. “There was no reason for invading this country in the first place. We just came here and angered people and killed a lot of innocent people. I don’t enjoy killing women and children. It’s not my thing.”

Iraqi casualties are independently estimated in the tens of thousands. On Sept. 16 and 17, hundreds of Iraqi men dug mass graves to bury those who died after U.S. war planes continued to drop ordnance on the city of Falluja.

Mahmoud Sheil told a reporter, “They [the Americans] say that Saddam is the man of mass graves, but they are the ones responsible for these mass graves.” (KATV News, Sept. 20)

Sheik Faisal Jalab, a tribal chief described as having felt “joy” at the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, told KATV, “Things have gone too far for middle ground now.”

His son concluded, “How can you blame me for hating the Americans after they killed so many innocent Iraqis and forced their way into our homes? You cannot even blame me if I become a suicide bomber.”

And then there’s Afghanistan

The U.S.-led occupation is not secure in Afghanistan, either. Another 1,100 U.S. soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division have just been sent over, and there is talk of sending more before the Afghan “elections” scheduled for Oct. 9.

Much of the south and east of the country is in the hands of forces resisting imperialist occupation.

The U.S.-appointed “vice president,” Nematullah Shahrani, survived an assassination attempt on Sept. 20 when a remote-controlled bomb detonated near the convoy he and other cabinet members were traveling in near the province of Kunduz.

Four days earlier, on his first election campaign trip outside the capital of Kabul, “president” Hamid Karzai escaped yet another brush with death after militants fired a rocket at his U.S. military helicopter. Karzai, scornfully dubbed “the mayor of Kabul” because he cannot travel safely anywhere in the country, immediately returned to the capital. Private U.S. mercenaries work with Pentagon troops to keep Karzai alive.

Two U.S. soldiers were killed in a gun battle in the province of Paktika in southeastern Afghanistan, the BBC reported Sept. 20. Two other U.S. troops and six Afghan soldiers were also wounded.

The number of U.S. troops occupying this impoverished country is now close to 20,000. □



The poverty floods

As the flood waters from Tropical Storm Jeanne begin to recede in Haiti, the death toll in that impoverished country has risen to more than 700. Relief workers fear the number of lives lost may be even higher because Gonaives—a city of 200,000 on the northern coast—and many villages are still filled with mud and water. No accurate estimates of all storm-related injuries and illnesses can yet be compiled, either.

The catastrophic floods and mudslides are being reported by the U.S. big-business media as a natural disaster. But in fact, it's been 200 years of colonial and imperialist gales that have left Haiti so ravaged.

The storm was so devastating because most of Haiti has no trees left to hold back the water, although at one time it was as forested as all the rest of the Caribbean. The reason for it is extreme poverty. Imagine for a moment that virtually the entire population of Washington, D.C., was so desperately poor that people had no electricity, no gas or oil stoves, and had to cook all their food on small wood or charcoal fires. Would the surrounding countryside be so lush and verdant, or would it be treeless and barren, like Haiti today?

That's how the tempest of neocolonialism has deforested the landscape of Haiti.

The poverty and suffering have increased since the U.S.-backed coup last spring that overthrew the popularly elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and installed a much more repressive but "business-friendly" regime. This only underscores that imperialism's interests in Haiti have nothing to do with helping the people there in any way, shape or form.

Just two centuries ago Haiti's revolutionaries defeated Napoleon's army to form the first free Black republic. But that republic, from the very beginning, was embargoed by hostile European colonial powers and by the United States, which may have trumpeted its love of independence but still profited off the slave labor of African people in more than half its territory.

The U.S. ruling class has always feared the inspiration that a strong Black nation in the Western Hemisphere would give to the millions on this side of the world who still endure racist oppression. Successive interventions by Washington and Wall Street have been aimed at preventing the Haitian people from fighting to complete their liberation from the shackles of exploitation and forced underdevelopment.

On Oct. 17, the demand to end the U.S. occupation of Haiti will be raised by workers of all nationalities in the Million Worker March in Washington, D.C. A simultaneous demonstration will be taking place in the streets of Port-au-Prince on Oct. 17—the anniversary of the 1806 assassination of Haitian leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who led the former plantation slaves in their struggle to gain control over the land they had worked.

As workers in the belly of the beast—immigrant and U.S.-born, undocumented and documented—close ranks in solidarity with the workers and oppressed of Haiti, Iraq, Palestine and around the world, new storm clouds will gather over the imperialist capital. They are the harbinger of the inevitable flood of resistance needed to wash away exploitation, oppression and war for empire. □

Trabajadores en lucha

Continúa de página 12

laboral incluso algunos Republicanos votaron contra las nuevas reglas propuestas, las cuáles harían a aproximadamente seis millones de trabajadores no elegibles de cobrar por el tiempo extra que trabajaron.

Las reglas propuestas por Bush le quitan fuerza y protección al Acta de Estandartes Justos Laborales que fue ganada por luchas militantes en 1938.

Pero la lucha no se ha acabado de ninguna manera. La administración de Bush está resuelta a enriquecer los bolsillos de los patrones robando lo que por derecho pertenece a los trabajadores. Y el Senador John Kerry no dice nada contra esta política ni está haciendo de esta cuestión una prioridad en su campaña. Lo único que puede impedir que se logre este robo y que anime a los trabajadores por todos lados para luchar por sus derechos — es una presencia masiva en la Marcha de Un Millón Trabajadores el 17 de octubre.

El proyecto del AFL-CIO sobre inmigrantes

La organización sindicalista estadounidense, AFL-CIO, votó en la reunión de su concilio ejecutivo que tuvo lugar en agosto, establecer el Proyecto Trabajador/a Inmigrante para tratar sobre las necesidades especiales de trabajadores inmigrantes. La directora recientemente nombrada al puesto, Ana Avendano-Denier, comentó que ésta es la primera vez que la federación se ha comprometido a trabajar por los intereses de los inmigrantes.

Avendano-Denier dijo que se propone trabajar de cerca con otros grupos como el Concilio Nacional de La Raza, el Centro Nacional de la Ayuda Legal para Inmigrantes, y el Foro Nacional de Inmigración. También dijo que la meta verdadera del proyecto es "mejorar la vida de los inmigrantes". Un programa ya en marcha busca encontrar una medida para que los trabajadores inmigrantes puedan enviar dinero a sus familias a un costo mínimo. Avendano-Denier dijo que trabajadores inmigrantes envían aproximadamente \$32 billones al año a sus familias en sus países de origen. □

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BOOK REVIEW

LIBERATION ART OF PALESTINE

By G. Dunkel

So much of art in the imperialist countries is sterile, self-indulgent commodities to decorate the homes of rich patrons or provide them with another avenue for investing their money when stocks are falling.

Art in Palestine, however, is part of the liberation struggle. Samia A. Halaby in her book "Liberation Art of Palestine" puts this art in context, explains its symbols, development and historical roots, and gives important insights into one of the conflicts shaking the world today.

Creative artists—either in occupied Palestine, Gaza and the West Bank, or in refugee centers in countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Syria—face immense practical problems. Hannah Safieh, one of Palestine's leading photographers, had most of his equipment and significant negatives stolen by Israeli soldiers in the 1948 war. In the 1967 war, his studio in Jerusalem was looted.

On July 2, 1982, Israeli planes bombed the Museum of Solidarity with Palestine in the Shatila refugee camp, which previously had held a very successful and warmly received exhibition. Much of the art in the museum was destroyed. In September of that year, Israeli forces instigated a massacre at Shatila and the neighboring Sabra camp.

Mustafa Al Hallaj, one of Palestine's most famous graphic artists, lost 25,000 of his prints in the Israeli attacks on Beirut but managed to save the wood and masonry cuts he used to make them.

A number of painters, like Fathi Ghaban, have done time in Israeli jails for including the colors of the Palestinian flag—not a depiction of the flag itself—in their art.

Material conditions sometimes made traditional art materials hard to find, so artists turned to using bits of exploded shell casings, leather and parts of houses destroyed by the Israeli army in their compositions.

Still, for all the repression and attacks, Palestinian artists persisted. Abdul Rahman Al Mozayen is a fighter as well as an artist, who practiced his art both in Lebanon and during the first Intifada. He explained the connection between the Palestinian people and their artists, saying, "When we draw the tragedies we experience, we must not depress our people. We must help them to recover and renew their resolve to fight for liberation."

Halaby focuses her book on two broad movements of Palestinian art. One grew up in the liberation movement in Lebanon during the 1970s and the other drew its impulse from the first Intifada. She puts them in their Arab context, since the



Rabin policy breaking bones, 1988, by Fayez Sersawi.

Palestinians are an Arab people, and shows their relation to the visual forms produced by Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism and the Mexican mural tradition, all of which reflect a revolutionary base.

The use of certain symbols in Palestinian art—the cactus, the eye, the horse, the mother—is explained by Halaby in clear and illuminating detail. Full-color plates in the back of the book represent the work of many of the artists discussed, who are carefully put in their cultural and political context.

The whole point of this book is to illustrate and explain that the true art of Palestine "rests on the Palestinian struggle for liberation."

Samia A. Halaby's life and courage are reflected in this book. She was born in Jerusalem, Palestine, in 1936. In 1948, Israeli aggression forced her family to move to Beirut, Lebanon. From there her family emigrated to the United States.

After formal training in American universities, she taught art for 18 years, ending with 10 years at the Yale School of Art. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is in many museum collections—among them the Guggenheim in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

She is active with Al-Awda NY-NJ, the Al-Jisser Working Group and the Defend Palestine Committee. Not just active. On Sept. 23, 2001, the day that New York officials were holding a memorial service in Yankee Stadium for the victims of 9/11, Halaby helped organize and served as a spokesperson for a meeting in solidarity with the Muslims in the United States.

This book costs \$50 and is available from HTTB Publications, Samia A. Halaby, 103 Franklin St., New York, NY 10013, USA. □

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Progress and regression

Sex and gender in 1930s USSR

By Leslie Feinberg

The question of when male homosexuality was re-criminalized in the Soviet Union is easy to determine: 1933-1934. Why such a regressive move occurred is, while politically indefensible, not inexplicable.

The czarist anti-homosexual legislation had been removed by the revolutionary Bolshevik leaders immediately after the October 1917 Revolution. When the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic first codified its own laws in 1922 and 1926, no anti-gay laws were written.

As late as 1929, the top medical body in the Soviet Union—the Expert Medical Council of the Commissariat of Health—held a conference to take up questions of homosexuality, cross-dressing, transsexuality and intersexuality (referred to as “hermaphroditism”).

These deliberations did not demonstrate a uniform view, nor were they devoid of the prejudices or limitations on understanding of that era, but they were taken up with genuine scientific concentration. And the impact of, and respect for, the work of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld—a leader of the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement—was still apparent in the USSR.

Prominent clinical psychiatrist P. B. Gannushkin said that he “constantly encountered” requests for surgical sex change.

Biologist N. K. Kol'tsov asserted, ahead of his time, “Of course, there is no intermediate sex, but rather an infinite quantity of intermediate sexes.”

Some doctors defended cross-dressing females, described as very masculine, and proposed that they have a right to marry women. Kol'tsov, showing his confines of consciousness, disputed this, saying a law should be written to block a cross-dressed female from wedding a woman.

But historian Dan Healey notes in his book “Sexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia” that “the minutes record no support from colleagues,” and Kol'tsov's suggestion didn't find its way into the final conference resolution.

However, the two-line struggle taking place in the USSR at the time—“nature” vs. “nurture”—was visible even during the 1929 deliberations. And this ideological battle would have great bearing on subsequent official views of homosexuality and transgender.

A strong current of scientists looked favorably on cross-dressing, masculine females believed to be lesbians. Their condition was seen as biologically based. They were considered strong and loyal to the workers' state, particularly those in the Red Army.

But they considered feminine, cross-dressing males, presumed to all be homosexual, a dangerous weakness in the ranks of the military. And this form of self-expression and sexuality was seen to be a problem of *byt* or social life.

This nature vs. nurture debate at the 1929 conference later emerged more visibly as a two-line struggle that reshaped the direction of the scientific and political approach to questions of same-sex love.

The 1930 Great Soviet Encyclopedia extended strong support to Hirschfeld's Homosexual Emancipation Movement. “In 1930, Sereiskii's Great Soviet Encyclopedia article on the same topic linked the endocrinological hypothesis to a robust endorsement of Hirschfeld's campaign for homosexual emancipation and

for the integration of the alienated homosexual ‘into the new collective,’” Healey notes.

The encyclopedia entry stressed that criminalizing homosexual men was an illustration of the cruel and irrational acts of bourgeois jurists.

But an “ethnographic sketch,” included by the editors as an appendix penned by P. Preobrashenskii about “homosexual love” among the peoples of the Far North—the Chuchki, Koriaki and Kamchadal—and in the Islamic cultures in the Soviet Republics revealed the fault line.

Preobrashenskii argued that the origins of the widespread expression of same-sex love in these cultures, enjoying ancient acceptance, was not biologically based but “to a significant extent bear a social character.”

Historian Laura Engelstein in “Soviet Policy” explains that by the second edition of the 1930 encyclopedia, the editors “denounced homosexuality as a feature of capitalist society, in which, they asserted, homosexuality was left ‘de facto unpenalized.’”

The question is why. In what soil were these changes rooted?

Economic, military pressure cooker

Famine, and military and economic warfare by world capital, were burning the revolutionary fuel of the population and the left wing of the Bolshevik Party at a rapid rate in the 1920s. The subsequent need to build an industrial base with the speed of lightning—at the sacrifice of civilian goods and services for the vast tens of millions—was requisite in order to defend the USSR militarily and lay the foundation for a rise in the overall living standard.

The industrial component of the first five-year plan—steel and machinery production, coal mines and oil fields—exceeded expectations. Begun in 1929, the goals were met in 1932, before the plan's end date. A second plan was set in motion in 1934.

The transportation network grew, beginning to link the vast country, canals were dug and the Moscow Metro began running in 1935.

This industrial boom and its accomplishments in the planned Soviet economy shone against the chaos of the Great Depression in the capitalist countries.

But everything is relative. The USSR, the only workers' state in the world, was trying to pull itself up out of extreme material underdevelopment and at the same time advance from semi-feudal social relations to ones more advanced than in the capitalist countries. This would have been a huge task even in times of peace. But, while the depression in the West gave the USSR a breathing space for a few years, by 1933 it was clear that the revolutionary potential of the proletariat in Western Europe had been crushed and that German imperialism was on the road to military expansion once again.

By 1938, when Britain signed the

Munich Pact with Germany, Italy and France, it was because the “democratic” imperialists in Europe were giving Germany the go-ahead to expand eastward. Another war was on the horizon. The Soviet Union had to industrialize at breakneck speed, much of it channeled into military defense of the workers' state.

In the face of relative scarcity and economic inequality, and an urgent need for the skills acquired during the czarist era in order to build the economic and military infrastructure, more conservative elements gained ascendancy on the shop floor and in the Bolshevik Party. The working class was increasingly politically disenfranchised and the worker democracy that Lenin and the left-wing Bolsheviks had tried to foster—even during war-time conditions—suffered.

The state did not, could not, wither away. In fact, military spending and social prioritizing took its toll on efforts to build socialism and advance revolutionary consciousness-building.

In this economic, military and political pressure cooker, official attitudes shifted, bolstering old prejudices against women and reinforcing ideals of gender expression.

‘Masculine professions’ movement

Economic underdevelopment and the need to free men for military defense had spurred the massive recruitment of women into the process of rapid industrialization as early as the first five-year plan.

To do so required confronting gender stereotyping of skilled work. Acquired skills were viewed as socially “masculine.”

The temporary reintroduction of some capitalist relations within the planned economy in 1921—known as the New Economic Policy—was designed to help stimulate the economy. Lenin had warned of the risks inherent in the measure.

One result of the NEP was the emboldening of male managers and skilled workers who had acquired their trade during the czarist period. As they regained some shop-floor predominance, they tried to block women from gaining these skills, defining mechanical ability as a “masculine trait.”

However, notes historian Thomas T. Shrand: “As the USSR began mobilizing for war with Poland and Finland in September 1939, the party instructed union, Komsomol and industrial organizations to support the so-called ‘masculine professions’ movement, which aimed to recruit women into fields that had previously been considered too skilled or physically demanding for women. In anticipation of a military crisis that would drain off skilled male workers, industrial officials began encouraging women to work as locomotive engineers, engine machinists, open-hearth furnace workers, and to enter other occupations from which they had previously been excluded.”

But rather than emphasizing the need to employ women as part of the revolu-

tionary process of liberating them, the official explanation now was that recruiting women workers would free men to defend the socialist state.

The military motto used to describe this industrial shift was “work that strengthens the rear of production, which assures the uninterrupted and precise work of production itself.”

The slogan also elevated a tactic to a theory—and one that contained a theoretical error, at that.

In reality, as important as the front lines of armed defense of the workers' state were, they were not producing goods and services. Workers in the industries of the USSR—more than 10 million of them women—were the front lines of production.

Gender contradiction: old alongside the new

During the Second Five-Year Plan, 1932-1937, an estimated 82 percent of all new workers joining industry was female. The birth rate was dropping.

On the one hand, old patriarchal “family values” re-emerged against this backdrop of economic and social upheaval.

During the 1930s, health studies and legislation protecting industrial laborers focused on the impact specific jobs involving heavy lifting or tractor driving had on women's reproductive capacities. While this shows a concern for women workers, similar studies were not done on the hazards of jobs, no matter how dangerous, on men's reproductive capabilities.

This trend towards encouraging all women to be mothers reached its zenith in 1936 when abortion and the sale of contraceptives were banned. Women received economic incentives and medals for bearing seven or more children.

Pravda criticized “so-called free love” and “all disorderly sex life.”

Femininity was upheld as a virtue. However, Healey noted, women viewed as masculine or lesbian were not demonized or pathologized.

In political educational campaigns, soldiers were portrayed as masculine heroes, women as feminine producers and reproducers. From a class standpoint, the working class as a whole was portrayed as masculine and the peasantry as feminine.

However, even as old thinking was regenerated, new and profound social changes were breaking like waves.

Healey writes that as women peasants, collective farmers and urban workers were called up in massive numbers during the 1930s to enter public life and wage labor, “Women in these spheres were compelled and encouraged to emancipate themselves from patriarchal fathers and husbands, who were not to stand in the way of their progress towards careers beyond the home.”

But specifically and concretely, how and why did these social, economic and military conditions specifically warp a sector of official attitude regarding homosexuality, beginning in 1933?

These questions have vital meaning today, because this political backsliding is held up by virtually all anti-communist historians of the period as “proof” that socialism is not viable to liberate human sexuality from state regulation.

It's time for the communist movement as a whole to become expert on these developments and to lay claim to the historical lessons in order to fortify its own revolutionary analysis.

Next: 1930s struggle—‘Can a homosexual be a member of the Party?’

Lesbian ♦ gay ♦ bi
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PRIDE

SERIES
PART
15

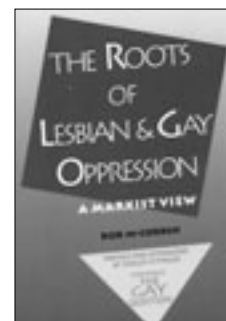
The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression:

A MARXIST VIEW By Bob McCubbin

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

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

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3 sindicalistas asesinados, pero

La Comisión de Verificación expone encubrimiento de gobierno colombiano

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El 7 de septiembre el periódico colombiano El Tiempo publicó un artículo titulado, “Fiscalía ordenó captura de tres militares por la muerte de tres sindicalistas en Arauca”. Ya que es bien sabido en el movimiento laboral internacional que Colombia es el lugar más peligroso para líderes sindicales, el contenido del artículo no debía sorprender. Todo lo contrario, debería ser la consecuencia lógica de las investigaciones de los asesinatos y violaciones a los derechos humanos perpetrados en contra de estos sindicalistas. Pero no es lo normal en Colombia, donde casi un 98 por ciento de las violaciones de los derechos humanos no solamente quedan impunes, sino que ni siquiera son investigados.

“Bogotá dice que el Ejército mató a líderes sindicalistas”, señala un artículo publicado en el New York Times y en el segundo párrafo: “El anuncio del fiscal general se produjo días después de que el Secretario de Estado Colin Powell advirtió al gobierno de Colombia que tiene que reducir las violaciones a los derechos humanos o arriesgará la pérdida de ayuda” —un recordatorio de quién es realmente la autoridad en Colombia.

¿Qué pasó?

Según la versión “oficial” previa de los acontecimientos ofrecida por el gobierno colombiano, el Comandante de las Fuerzas Militares Carlos Alberto Ospina dijo que en Saravena, Arauca, los líderes sindicales Jorge Prieto, Leonel Goyeneche y Héctor Alirio Martínez dispararon contra efectivos del Ejército con una arma de 9 milímetros y tenían una cantidad de dinamita en su poder. El General Luis Fabio García, comandante de la 2ª División del Ejército declaró que “estas tres personas murieron en combate con

los soldados cuando fueron sorprendidos mientras se reunían con guerrilleros del Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN)”. El Ministro de Defensa Jorge Alberto Uribe también justificó los asesinatos.

Pero lo que realmente ocurrió fue un episodio escalofriante repetido demasiadas veces en ese sufrido país. La descripción que sigue de lo ocurrido fue producida por la Comisión Independiente de Verificación sobre la ejecución de los sindicalistas de Arauca.

En la mañana del 5 de agosto, soldados del grupo Reveis Pizarro de la Brigada 18 en Saravena irrumpieron en la casa del jefe sindical Jorge Prieto, forzándolo a él y a su compañera a salir descalzos, sin ni siquiera la oportunidad de vestirse. Testigos oculares reportaron que Prieto, Leonel Goyeneche y el líder campesino Héctor Alirio Martínez fueron sacados de sus casas con las manos en alto, forzados a arrodillarse, y baleados estilo ejecución.

Prieto era presidente de la Asociación Nacional de Trabajadores de Hospitales y Clínicas (ANTHOC) en Arauca. Goyeneche era tesorero de la Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) en Arauca. Alirio Martínez era ex presidente de la Asociación Departamental de Usuarios Campesinos (ADUC). Los tres eran muy activos en la comunidad y elocuentes en sus denuncias de las violaciones a los derechos humanos, las políticas económicas y el programa de Seguridad Democrática del Presidente Álvaro Uribe, los cuales han devastado a los pobres y a la población de clase trabajadora de Colombia.

Según Gloria Flórez, presidenta de la Asociación para la Promoción de una Alternativa Social (MINGA), los tres estaban supuestamente bajo la protección del gobierno colombiano a pedido de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos de la OEA.

En la misma redada militar, el presidente del CUT-Arauca, Samuel Morales Flores, y la líder de la Asociación de Maestros, María Raquel Castro, fueron detenidos y encarcelados.

Comisión de Verificación contraataca

La diligencia e intervención de varios grupos, a nivel nacional e internacional, y la movilización del pueblo en Arauca fueron los factores decisivos que llevaron la “advertencia” de Powell al gobierno colombiano y la retracción de las acusaciones del gobierno.

Dos días luego de los asesinatos, una Comisión de Verificación compuesta por representantes de organizaciones no gubernamentales de derechos humanos y otras organizaciones sociales fueron a Arauca. Entre ellas fueron el Comité en Solidaridad con Presos Políticos; Humanidad Actual; el Proceso de Comunidades Negras; Justicia y Paz; el Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo; la Red de Comunidades en Resistencia y Ruptura-RECORRE; la Red Europea de Fraternidad con Colombia; la Coordinadora Nacional Agraria; el Comité de Derechos Humanos de la Unión Sindical de Obreros; y las Brigadas Internacionales por la Paz.

La Comisión de Verificación obligó al gobierno a enviar un fiscal y un patólogo de Bogotá, la capital de la nación, para trabajar con varios especialistas de medicina forense en Saravena. Sin embargo, consistente con el desprecio que mantiene el gobierno frente al pueblo, la oficina del fiscal inició la exhumación de los cadáveres sin el consentimiento o conocimiento de los familiares o representantes legales de los difuntos.

La Comisión de Verificación también condujo varias entrevistas con testigos. Así los mismos miembros de la comisión

se volvieron testigos —testigos al valor y determinación de l@s campesin@s y trabajador@s de Arauca que valientemente testificaron y se unieron durante este período de duelo, con una feroz determinación de seguir en la lucha.

Arauca, está ubicada en el noreste del país, fronteriza con Venezuela, el segundo socio comercial más grande de Colombia. Esta región es ahora el “laboratorio de guerra” del Presidente Uribe, conformando la parte más militarizada del país.

El junio de este año esta reportera formó parte de la Caravana Internacional por la Vida de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras Colombianas que viajó a esta región. Manejando entre las ciudades de Arauca y Pueblo Nuevo, una corta distancia, encontramos 14 retenes militares donde los conductores tenían que detenerse, los soldados apuntaban los nombres de todos, el carro era revisado y a veces algunos artículos eran confiscados. Manejando una docena de kilómetros puede tomar horas.

Siendo una región ganadera y de cultivo agrícola, Arauca tiene un alto nivel de biodiversidad. Pero el descubrimiento de petróleo ha llevado consigo gran devastación para el pueblo. La exploración y explotación de las corporaciones transnacionales de la “Sangre de la Madre Tierra” —como refiere el pueblo indígena U’wa al petróleo— ha convertido esta parte del país en una colonia virtual de los Estados Unidos.

El oleoducto Caño Limón pasa por esta región, alimentando los cofres de las empresas petroleras a detrimento del pueblo araucanas. El emblema cosido en las mangas de los uniformes de los soldados de la brigada del Ejército de Colombia en Arauca muestra un pozo petrolero.

Los Estados Unidos mantiene la Brigada 18 del Ejército de Colombia —la brigada responsable por el asesinato de los tres líderes de Arauca.

Desde que el socio menor de Washington, Uribe, asumió la presidencia, ha habido un número mayor de violaciones a los derechos humanos, incluso detenciones arbitrarias masivas, allanamientos sin orden judicial, torturas y ejecuciones extrajudiciales. Los escuadrones de la muerte paramilitares se han vuelto más activos y agresivos, patrullando permanentemente las calles en algunas áreas, como la municipalidad de Tame en la región de Arauca. El 20 de mayo pasado, 11 campesinos fueron masacrados en Tame por estos criminales.

Muchos de los actos violentos perpetrados contra activistas sindicales o de justicia social ocurren cerca de las facilidades policiales o militares quienes miran para otro lado, mostrando la estrecha relación entre estas fuerzas gubernamentales y los paramilitares. Testigos oculares que presenten testimonios arriesgan volverse ellos mismos en víctimas.

Estas condiciones violentas han desplazados cerca de cuatro millones de personas indígenas y campesinas en Colombia. □

Trabajadores de los EE.UU. en lucha:

‘En el plantón’

Por Sue Davis

¡Que regresen los soldados ya!

El 31 de agosto, en su convención anual en Anaheim, California, los 1,400 delegados del Sindicato de Trabajadores de Comunicaciones (CWU), el cual tiene 700,000 miembros, votaron casi unánimemente en pro de una resolución que exige que las tropas estadounidenses sean vueltas “ahora a los EEUU con toda seguridad”.

La primera versión de esta resolución sin embargo, no incluía esta frase. Después de que una rectificación a la resolución surgió de la asamblea señalando que se acabara con la ocupación militar estadounidense en Irak, más de 50 delegados hicieron cola para hablar a su favor. No hubo ninguno que hablara

en contra de la resolución final.

En la convención anual del Sindicato de los Trabajadores de Correos a fines de agosto, los delegados afirmaron una resolución que exige “el fin de la ocupación estadounidense de Irak, la implementación de un plan que devuelva lo más pronto posible la soberanía de su país al pueblo iraquí, y el regreso de las tropas estadounidenses a sus familias y hogares”.

El Sindicato de los Carteros y la Federación de Trabajo del Estado de Washington promulgaron resoluciones semejantes a fines de agosto. También la organización Labor Estadounidense Contra la Guerra dice que la Alianza de Labor Estadounidense Asiático-Pacífico, el Concilio Laboral para el Progreso Latinoamericano, la Coalición de Mujeres Sindicalistas, y la organización

Orgullo en el Trabajo — organizaciones aliadas al AFL-CIO — votaron el mes pasado para oponerse a la guerra y exigir el regreso inmediato de las tropas estadounidenses. Durante el año pasado docenas de concilios laborales, asambleas laborales regionales, sindicatos locales, y otras organizaciones laborales han planteado semejantes medidas contra la guerra.

Nuevas reglas

Bajo la gran presión de la organización laboral de los Estados Unidos, el AFL-CIO, los Representantes Congressionales votaron el 10 de septiembre impedir a la administración de Bush implementar cambios en las reglas que tienen que ver con el pago de sobretiempo. Al percibir esta presión

Continúa a página 10