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Teresa Gutierrez for vice president
LeiLani Dowell for 8th Congressional district, San Francisco

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Million Worker March reclaims labor's militant roots

D.C. protest calls for new movement

By Monica Moorehead
Washington, D.C.

Timely. Unifying. Forward moving. And most of all—necessary. These adjectives and many more describe the historic Million Worker March that took place at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 17.

For almost eight hours, workers, organized and unorganized, along with anti-war and community activists heard speeches and cultural presentations that emphasized the tremendous need to build a new, independent movement that will fight in the interests of working people.

The MWM was initiated by the Black leadership of Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in San Francisco. Clarence Thomas, a leader of Local 10 and a national co-convenor of the MWM, said at the rally: "The majority of working people in America are not doing well. With jobs being offshored, outsourced, privatized, our young people are looking at a much more dismal future."

People came in buses, vans and car caravans as well as by train and airplane from all over the country to get to the MWM. In New York City, from which most buses came, union locals like Transit Workers Local 100, Teamsters Local 808, Service Employees/1199 health care workers and AFSCME District Council 1707 mobilized sizable delegations of workers.

From Pennsylvania, delegations of workers represented Service Employees Local 668, International Electrical Union Local 119, the Federation of Government Employees and 1199C. Western Massachusetts was represented by Auto Workers Local 2322, the Graduate Employee Organization and Office of ALANA Affairs at UMass Amherst, and a Worcester carpenters' union, along with students from Mt. Holyoke, Smith and Hampshire colleges.

From Virginia, IUE Local 160 from Williamsburg along with the Richmond and Blacksburg Organizing Committees of the MWM were there. The Richmond Coalition for a Living Wage brought its members to MWM.

The Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice organized welfare rights and environmental activists for the MWM.

Steel Workers Local 8751, school bus drivers and monitors in Boston, mobilized. So did International Longshore Association Local 1422 in Charleston, S.C., and the North Carolina-based Black Workers for Justice. Haitian workers and activists also came.

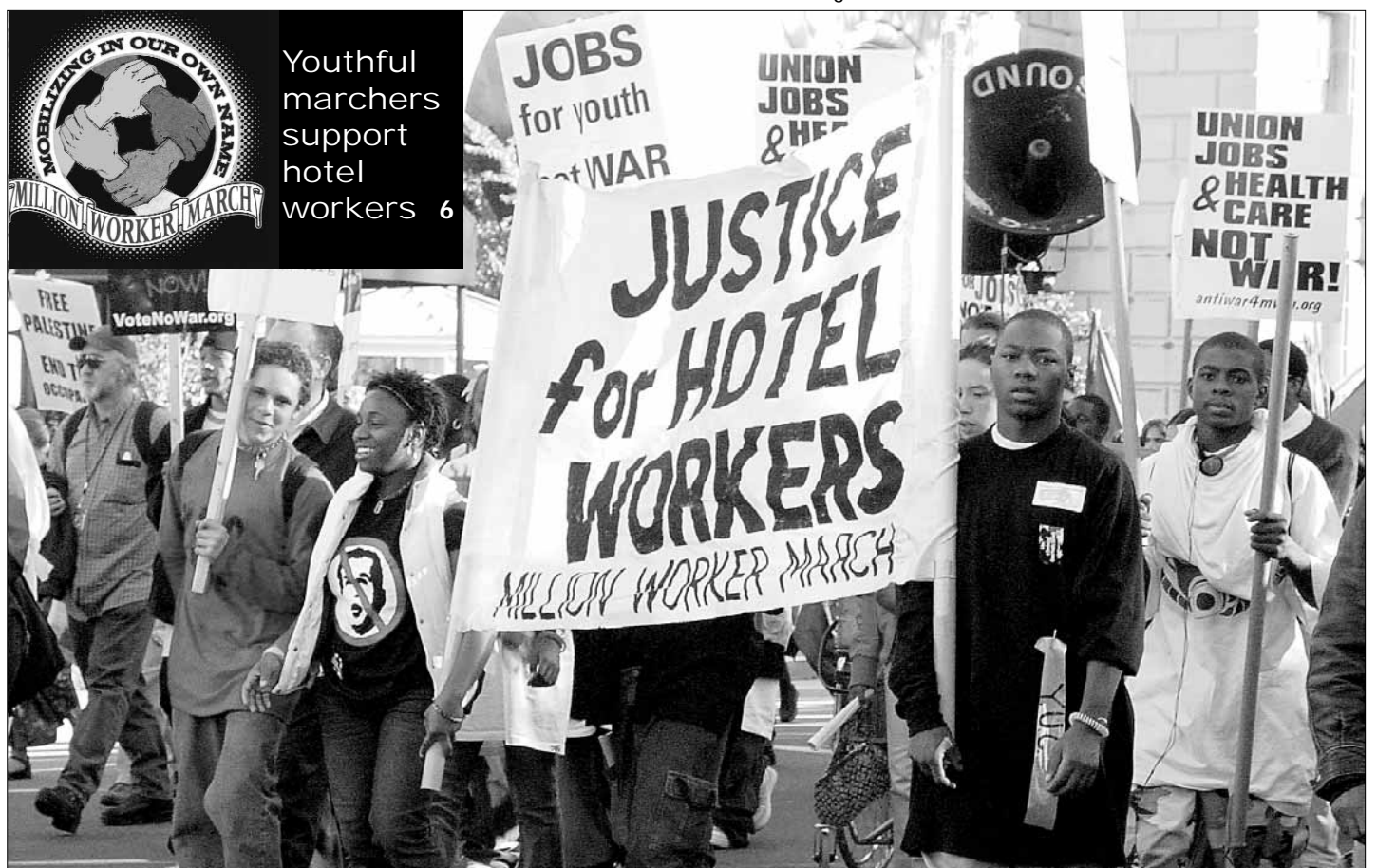
The police estimate of the crowd was 10,000, although some MWM organizers felt that the participation was as much as twice that number. Organizers reported that police had illegally

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WW PHOTOS: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Hotel Washington workers welcome marchers.



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Youthful marchers support hotel workers 6

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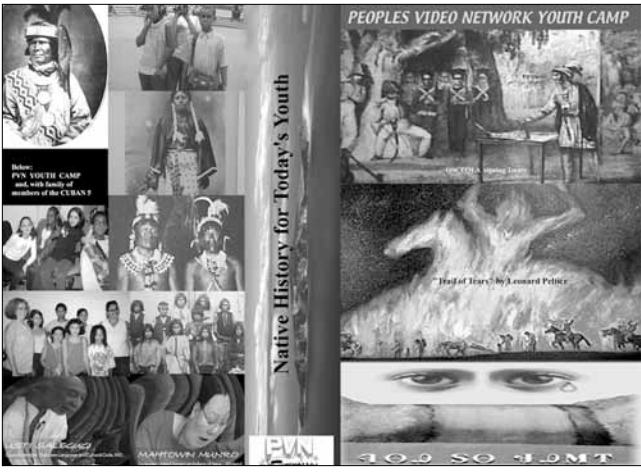
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Above, PVN video "Native History for today's youth." Trip participants at the memorial in Tulsa, Okla.



PHOTOS: PVN



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People's Video Network Youth trips Oklahoma visit teaches young people Native history

Special to Workers World

Workers World interviewed Sara Catalinotto, one of the parents who helps organize the People's Video Network Youth Camp, about the group's activities, including the summer 2004 trip to Oklahoma.

WW: What is the PVN Youth Camp?

SC: The People's Video Network Youth Camp consists of activist families taking summer vacations—and some smaller field trips—together since 2001. The youth learn video skills, and everyone learns some of the struggle history of each place we visit. We have had participants from eight cities so far.

Why Oklahoma?

Oklahoma was the ending point of the forced relocation of Native and other peoples who had been living and often prospering in the southeastern U.S. in the 1830s. This relocation is also known as the "Trail of Tears."

The PVN Youth Campers had been studying Native history for the past year. Plus we had some exposure to Seminole history around our 2001 trip to the Gullah Islands off Georgia. This was a way to learn more, and to break media stereotypes about the West by seeing for ourselves Native institutions, Black cowboys and cowgirls, and more.

What were the most interesting moments of the trip?

We met Louis Johnson, a leader in maintaining the Seminole culture, who led us in a tour of their museum in Wewoka. The links between Native and Black people on both ends of the "Trail of Tears" were emphasized throughout the tour—and in fact, three of this year's campers had African and Seminole ancestors.

We met four generations of a Black family in Muskogee who run a restaurant but also do their own farming, metal work, blacksmithing, etc. We interviewed Marcus, a young member of this family who rides horses and bulls for work and for sport. On his advice, we went to a Saturday night rodeo in the historic all-Black town of Tullahassee.

We visited two other museums: the Museum of the Five Civilized Tribes, which has a lot of information and artwork submitted by the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, Seminole and Creek Nations; and the Greenwood Cultural Center in Tulsa. The Greenwood

area was known as "Black Wall Street" until jealous racists burned it down and murdered many residents in 1921.

And one camper got to see a play about the Trail of Tears, at the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, done by a predominantly Native cast with a woman director.

In our travels we met and learned of cultural organizations that have done or will be doing video work to raise the consciousness of school children, similar to what we do.

What do you think the young people learned from the trip?

Eighteen-year-old Eliyaas said, "They didn't teach us anything about Native Americans in high school." He later concluded, "All of 'American history' is a lie."

Lobi RedHawk, a PVN Youth teacher who is of Choctaw heritage, noticed that the highway signs had Native names for every little town and creek. She knew that these names in many cases must have been tribes or leaders who were destroyed by colonialism.

On the other hand the local Indian newspapers we read showed that the struggle continues. Issues of sovereignty and calls for freedom for political prisoner Leonard Peltier made headlines. Enterprises to create jobs, all social services including government-funded programs, and in one case a bank providing home loans—these are run by the Nations themselves. There are tribal courts that handle criminal and civil matters.

What is the PVN Youth Camp doing to follow up on this trip?

We hope to bring out what we experienced and learned in a new short video. In New York City we will be having a multi-media presentation on Nov. 6 at 39 W. 14 St., Room 206, at 6:30 p.m. Your readers can check the Web site www.wvpvnyouth.homestead.com or call 212-633-6646, extension 24.

We are asking our campers to come out to National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, Mass., on Nov. 25, sponsored by United American Indians of New England. And we're still promoting the video "Native History for Today's Youth." To order, see PVN Youth Web site.

What are your plans for future summers?

In 2005, the PVN Youth Camp goal is Egypt. Then, some other year, we definitely want to go back to Oklahoma. □

WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Sat., Nov. 6
No matter who wins the election—Bring the troops home now! Protest the war and colonial occupation in Iraq, Palestine, Haiti and everywhere! Gather at noon at CNN Bldg at Wilcox & Sunset Blvd. March through Hollywood to military recruiting station at Sunset and LaBrea. Initiated by the International Action Center, phone (323) 936-7266 for information and to volunteer.

NEW YORK

Sat.-Sun., Nov. 13-14
A National Fightback Conference, sponsored by Workers World Party. After the elections, no matter who wins—How can the struggle move forward? Do you want to really end the war, bring the troops home, fight for workers' rights, and build a movement against capitalism and racism? Then come to a serious discussion on strategies. In New York City. For info go to www.workers.org.

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

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Community honors leader of slave uprising

By Phil Wilayto
Richmond, Va.

It was just after sundown on Oct. 10 when marchers appeared at the top of the hill on East Broad Street in downtown Richmond, Va. Nearly 200 strong, they were headed for the site of the old city gallows, just a few blocks from the Virginia Capitol designed by slave-owning President Thomas Jefferson.

The banner they walked behind read "Liberty or Death!"

According to court testimony of the time, that was the slogan that the great slave rebellion leader Gabriel had planned to inscribe on a piece of cloth as he led his followers in a bid to seize the Capitol and demand that Gov. James Monroe declare an end to slavery in the state.

What came to be known as Gabriel's Rebellion was foiled on Aug. 30, 1800, when a terrible rainstorm hit the Richmond region, washing out roads and bridges. At least 26 of the conspirators, including Gabriel, paid for their heroic effort with their lives. Hundreds more were sold into even harsher servitude on the steaming plantations of the Deep South.

Gabriel was the last to hang, on Oct. 10, 1800.

Now, exactly 204 years after that infamous day, Black and white Richmonders were marching together in a symbolic re-enactment of Gabriel's Rebellion.

When they arrived at the site of the former gallows, they cheered as Dr. Haskell Bingham, a one-time Mississippi field organizer for the NAACP and great-great-grandson of Gabriel, removed an African

print cloth from the newly minted state historical highway marker titled "Execution of Gabriel."

The marker, a project of the Richmond organization Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality, is the first official physical recognition of Gabriel's Rebellion in the city of Richmond.

It is also the only marker of any kind that acknowledges the existence of the Burial Ground for Negroes, the city's first public cemetery for Black people. The graveyard, over 200 years old, now lies abandoned under a private parking lot



WW PHOTO: PHIL WILAYTO

just north of the marker.

The Defenders, along with a growing number of other organizations and individuals, have vowed to reclaim and properly memorialize the site of the graveyard. They also seek to prevent the proposed construction of a commercial baseball stadium on the downtown property that once was a major slave-trading area.

Also participating in the unveiling ceremony were members of the Elegba Folklore Society, who performed a traditional African libation ceremony; the Rev. Delores McQuinn, Richmond's vice mayor and chairwoman of the city's Slave Trail Commission; Dr. M. Catherine Slusser of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources; and Defenders spokeswoman Ana Edwards, a Los Angeles-born artist who counts among her ancestors two women who were sold from Richmond auction houses in the 1840s.

Before the march, more than 150 people attended an educational seminar sponsored by the Defenders at Centenary United Methodist Church in downtown Richmond.

The two-hour seminar, titled "Slavery in Virginia, Richmond's Role in the U.S. Slave Trade and Gabriel's Rebellion," included presentations by Dr. Bingham, Ana Edwards, Dr. Douglas Egerton, author of "Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802," and Dr. Michael Blakey, the former Howard University anthropologist who directed the investigation into the African Burial Ground in New York City. □

Pro-police-state 'experts' picketed at forum

Special to Workers World
Hartford, Conn.

Is Hartford the next social experiment for the police "experts" who have been intensifying police brutality and racism under the guise of "homeland security"?

That's the question activists are asking after an Oct. 12 "public forum" sponsored by the pro-business Hartford Courant newspaper. While protesters picketed outside, the invited guests talked about ways to make the Hartford Police Department a more effective instrument of repression.

A particularly unsavory trio addressed the forum.

Hartford's new police chief, Patrick Harnett, was first. Harnett is notorious for writing a defense of the New York police officers who murdered Amadou Diallo in 1999. He compared the hail of bullets that killed Diallo to a surgeon's mistake during an operation.

Miami Police Chief Joseph Timoney was second. Timoney won applause from corporate America for his use of police riots against peaceful demonstrators during the Free Trade Area of the Americas protests a year ago.

Third up was Heather MacDonald, an editor for City Journal, a magazine that boasts of having been the "idea factory" for the right-wing Rudolph Giuliani administration in New York City. MacDonald's articles attack undocumented workers, criminalize people of color, and defend racial profiling.

Only two days before the forum, the Courant had given extensive coverage to the three in its Sunday edition. Now it was putting them forward as experts to address the question, "Is Hartford safe?"

Local activists weren't fooled by the rhetoric about "safety." Members of the Hartford Bring the Troops Home Now Committee, the anti-racist group Create Change, and the Hartford Independent Media Center turned out to picket the panel. They chanted, "No justice, no peace, no racist police." They carried signs opposing racial profiling and vowing to remember Amadou Diallo.

When Josh Blanchfield of the Independent Media Center tried to enter the hall in order to question the panelists, cops immediately barred his way into the so-called public forum.

Hartford's population is majority people of color. There are large African-

American, West Indian and Puerto Rican communities. It is also a city with a 30-percent poverty rate, ringed by affluent suburbs.

Even though the speakers all conceded that violent crime rates in Hartford have gone down, they argued for "reorganizing" the scandal-ridden Hartford Police Department.

No, they don't want to get rid of racist cops like Lt. Stephen Miele, who was recently accused of ordering officers to target people of color for arrest. This

unholy trio wants Hartford cops to implement "zero tolerance" campaigns of the kind used in New York City, which especially criminalize young people of color for everything from jaywalking to littering.

The goal is not to make Hartford communities safer but to whitewash its downtown business district.

By exposing the real goals of the new police chief and his allies, Hartford activists sent a clear message that they are ready to challenge plans to increase police repression, violence and racism. □

WWP campaign reaches California, Tennessee

John Parker at Million Worker March in front Hotel Washington.



WW PHOTO G. DUNKEL

Special to Workers World

If workers ran this country, there would be good housing and free, quality health care and education for all. Instead, we have poverty, racism and a bloody war in Iraq for corporate profits that is eating up billions of dollars every week. Neither George W. Bush nor John Kerry will change that.

Representatives of the Workers World Party election campaign brought this fighting socialist message to a number of venues in mid-October.

Presidential candidates John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez were in the Bay Area on Oct. 13, accompanied by LeiLani Dowell, a member of WWP who is also the Peace and Freedom Party candidate for Congress in San Francisco's Eighth Congressional District. They brought their campaign message of "Money for jobs, not war in Iraq" to a group of students at Berkeley

High School and then attended a "meet the candidates" event at the African American Art and Culture Complex in San Francisco.

Later that week, the candidates flew to Washington to attend the Million Worker March. Parker told a rally in front of the Hotel Washington that the low-paid hotel workers, who are fighting for a better contract, were setting an example for all of labor.

On Oct. 15 at Eastern Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Workers World Editor Deirdre Griswold, herself a former WWP presidential candidate, represented the Parker-Gutierrez campaign at a debate of third-party candidates organized by the Green Party. She urged the largely student audience to not just vote but to get involved in the many struggle movements that are challenging the reactionary policies of big business and its two-party system. □

On the road with WWP candidates

SOUTH

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

THURS., OCT. 21, 7 p.m.
Univ. of N.C. 1513 Sunnyside Ave.
For information, call 704-618-1320

ATLANTA

SAT., OCT. 23, 3-5 p.m.
Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless
477 Peachtree St. NE,
(corner of Peachtree & Pine).
For Atlanta information
call: 404-235-5704

SOUTHWEST

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

TUES., OCT. 26

MIDWEST

CHICAGO

THURS., OCT. 28, 7 p.m.
New World Resource Center
1300 N. Western Ave.
For information call: 773-381-5839.

DETROIT

OCT. 30, 5 p.m.
5920 Second Ave.
For information call: 313-831-0750.

A campaign representative will participate in a third-party presidential debate on Oct. 29 at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.

For updates, visit the campaign website at www.vote4workers.org or call the campaign offices in NYC at 212-627-2994 or Los Angeles at 323-936-1416.

Christopher Reeve and disability rights

By Gene Clancy

Film star and disabled-rights activist Christopher Reeve died Oct. 11 at age 52. His death highlighted not only his substantial contributions to the cause of disability rights, but the plight of disabled people generally. It also underlined the distorted priorities and policies of the U.S. government and the health-care system here.

Reeve died of cardiac failure brought on by a raging infection that had spread from a pressure sore, a common condition of many people with disabilities. The death of someone who, as a film star and director, had resources and medical care not available to the vast majority of people highlights the fragility of life for many of the severely disabled.

To his credit, Reeve had used his public persona since his disabling accident to advocate for a number of progressive causes. Right-wing forces continue to oppose many of these causes, which include stem cell research and insurance reform.

Embryonic stem cell research holds great promise not only to people with disabilities but for medicine in general. The goal is to replace injured or damaged cells with stem cells from embryos. For many with damaged spinal or central nervous systems, such research represents one of the few hopes of recovery.

Nevertheless, President George W. Bush has restricted such research to those stem cell "lines" created before Aug. 9, 2001. This alone greatly limits research. Many right wingers would like to curtail stem cell research altogether.

Reeve also urged greater spending by the insurance companies on rehabilitative therapies and technology for those with disabilities. These steps would not only improve health, but increase independence for disabled people and reduce overall costs.

Reeve's own care cost in excess of \$500,000 a year. Though this was covered by several policies, it still strained his considerable financial resources.

As Reeve said in 1998, "Most people don't have that luxury."

Of course, the big insurance companies, looking to maximize profits, try hard to limit spending for the disabled even more, regardless of their income. In addition to their struggles with their disabilities and discrimination, people with disabilities spend much effort and time just getting insurance coverage.

Billions wasted

The \$500,000 mentioned above might make it seem that the cost of adequate health care for those with disabilities is prohibitive. But this ignores a number of factors, most of which have little to do with disabilities themselves.

Most of the money spent for the disabled is for sheer survival. According to a study done in 1988, just before passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act:

"Almost two-thirds of PWDs [persons with disabilities] did not go to a movie last year; three-fourths did not see a live music performance; two-thirds no sporting event; 17 percent never eat in restaurants; 13 percent never shop in grocery stores. Forty percent of PWDs did not finish high school.

"Thirty-six percent of PWDs are dependent on government support. Another 25 percent get no support from government yet do not work. Sixty

percent of government support receivers are the primary wage earners in their family.

"PWDs are subject to widespread and severe discrimination; extremely disadvantaged at tremendous economic cost [to the country as a whole]." (ADA Law. Robert Mauro, rmauro@delphi.com)

There are nearly 45 million people with disabilities in the United States—almost one in six people. Nearly one-third of these are severely disabled according to ADA criteria.

Most of those with disabilities live in poverty. Three-quarters of those with severe disabilities are unemployed. (Disabilities Statistics Archive)

Most people with disabilities who are between ages 15 and 64 want to work. But getting a job is not easy.

According to one report, a qualified person with one or more disabilities has a one in 100 chance of getting a job when compared with an able-bodied person with similar qualifications.

The chance of a Black woman with a disability being unemployed is over 90 percent. Ninety-seven percent of all disabled women never earn more than \$10,000 a year. (U.S. Department of Labor)

An analysis of more than 10,000 disabled employees showed that 31 percent of their hiring required no added cost for special training or facilities. Fifty percent cost under \$50 and 69 percent cost less than \$500. Only 1 percent cost over \$5,000. Studies show that building a new facility that is accessible adds only 0.5 percent to the building's cost. (Job Accommodation Network)

Independence at stake

Not only the loss of productivity, amounting to billions of dollars, is at stake. Lobbyists for the nursing-home industry have influenced laws so that public funds favor nursing homes over alternative and less expensive programs that allow disabled people to be independent.

Some 100,000 people die every year of decubiti ulcers—bedsores, which caused Chris Reeve's death. Most live in understaffed nursing homes, many of which are for-profit organizations.

Disabled, you are 25 times more likely to spend a piece of your life in a nursing home. In a long-term study of quadriplegics, they lived for an average of 15 years when independent—but for only 18 months at a nursing home. (Mauro, ADA Law)

Recently, thousands of young men and women have been added to the ranks of people with disabilities because of the U.S. war of conquest in Iraq. Many of these are truly life-changing injuries: loss of limbs, paralysis, blindness. A large number have suffered irreparable psychological trauma from their combat experiences, and from being forced into the role of colonial occupier.

These disabled veterans have returned to the United States to face cutbacks in veterans' benefits and reduced spending for people with disabilities and health care generally. At the same time, over \$120 billion has been spent on the war in Iraq, with no end in sight.

A small portion of this amount could fully fund the programs for which Christopher Reeve and thousands of disabled activists across the country have fought so hard.

People with disabilities and progressive people everywhere must redouble our efforts to achieve justice, end discrimination, and create a health-care system that serves people's needs, not profits.

Clancy is a disabled activist



A small portion of the money spent to oppress Iraq would fully fund disability programs here

ON THE PICKET LINE

SUE DAVIS



Supporters from unions in region rally for striking casino workers.

Striking casino workers continue direct action

When contract negotiations stall, what do you do? Take direct action.

That's exactly what 10,000 striking Atlantic City casino-hotel workers did Oct. 16 when they took to the street after a rally. Ignoring a recent court injunction barring street demonstrations, striking bartenders, cocktail servers, housekeepers, porters, food servers and counter staff shut down the main drag, Pacific Avenue, for two hours. Robert McDevitt, president of UNITE HERE Local 54, and two other union officials were arrested for contempt of court. Owners of seven casinos have refused to negotiate since the Oct. 1 walkout.

Kentucky strike wins benefits

On Sept. 27, a one-day strike of 45,000 Kentucky teachers protesting the governor's proposal to triple the cost of state workers' health benefits got fast results. Especially when they threatened to go out indefinitely Oct. 27 if their demands weren't met.

To counter the governor's proposal, on Oct. 14 the state legislature approved a \$160-million plan to provide cut-rate health insurance coverage to a total of 229,000 current and retired state workers. That's a living example of the collective power that workers wield when withholding their labor.

Restaurant workers at Merrill Lynch sign cards

High-paid Merrill Lynch stock traders wouldn't go near a union with a barge pole. But UNITE HERE recently invaded four Merrill Lynch sites when food service workers in the executive dining room, cafeterias and trading floors signed cards to join the union. The 117 workers are employed by French food contractor Sodexo.

Restroom attendants win back pay and tips

If you thought that working for tips—but no wages—was a thing of the past, think again. Seventy attendants in 32 of New York City's high-profile restaurants and clubs worked under those conditions until their super-exploitation was exposed in early October. But that's not the worst of it: They were also forced to turn over a percentage of their tips as "lease fees" to their employer, Royal Flush Bathroom Attendants.

Rafael Rojas, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic, told the Oct. 8 New York Times that he often worked 70 to 80 hours but usually cleared only \$300 a week in tips after giving the company \$100 or more. At Planet Hollywood in Times Square, attendants had to give up 25 percent of their daily tips. It's estimated that Royal Flush gobbled up \$1,700 a day from attendants' tips.

On Oct. 7 New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer announced a \$175,000 back-pay settlement with Tavern on the Green and a \$4 million lawsuit against Royal Flush on behalf of the workers, who are both immigrants and U.S.-born. The lawsuit seeks \$2.9 million in back pay and \$1.1 in damages. It also asserts that Royal Flush failed to pay \$1.7 million in minimum wages from April 1, 2000, to Oct. 1, 2004 and wrongfully took \$1.2 million from employees' tips during that time.

A number of the restaurants and clubs have agreed to hire the attendants directly and to pay them wages in addition to the tips the workers collect.

Screenwriters sign deal

Members of both East and West Coast branches of the Writers Guild inked a deal Oct. 12 that provides a \$37 million increase in health benefits but no increase in residual payments for DVDs. The TV and movie screenwriters walked away from the table in June over both issues while members continued to work under the old contract.

The Writers Guild also won a 3-percent increase in minimum payments and increases in their pension plan, but accepted rollbacks in payments to TV news writers. The Directors Guild signed a similar agreement in late September. □

At NYC pier

LGBT youths of color protest harassment

By Minnie Bruce Pratt
New York

High-stakes real estate is transforming Greenwich Village in New York City. And it is driving out young people who gather there in order to carry on the long tradition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities gathering in the West Village.

But young people are organizing and fighting back.

Some 200 people, mostly youths of color, rallied Oct. 16 at the site of the Stonewall Rebellion in Sheridan Square, and marched through police down Christopher Street to the piers. They chanted, "Stonewall means fight back!" and carried signs reading, "Homeless youth need beds, not jails."

Stonewall was the 1969 uprising against police brutality led by transgender, gay and lesbian young people. Most were people of color, homeless and forced by poverty into prostitution. The piers have served for generations as shelter and home to such youths.

The group Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment—FIERCE—organized

and led the Oct. 16 protest. FIERCE is a community organization formed in 2000 by trans, lesbian, gay, bisexual, Two-Spirit, queer and questioning (TLGTSQQ) youths of color in New York City. FIERCE battles police brutality and discriminatory arrests of youths of color. It organizes for housing, employment, education and healthcare for homeless and low-income youths. And it provides training in community leadership.

Scapegoating youth of color

The rally and march were part of the FIERCE "Save Our Space" campaign to protest "the displacement and criminalization of TLGTSQQ youth." Young people, mostly of color, are hit with police harassment and street sweeps in the efforts to "upscale" the Village as giant real-estate interests engineer their "beautification" campaign.

In a multi-million-dollar real-estate boom, high-rise apartment buildings are climbing in the West Village, designed by internationally known architects such as Robert Meier and Philip Johnson. The wealthy are buying apartments at astronomical prices. For instance, there's the penthouse just bought by the Olsen twins,

actors Mary-Kate and Ashley, for \$7.3 million. (New York Times, July 11)

Hand in glove with real-estate financiers, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration is developing the Christopher Street pier as part of the Hudson River Park, at a cost of \$330 million. The old piers are advertised as "islands of repose in the midst of our vibrant city."

First with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's "Quality of Life" campaign, and now continuing with Bloomberg's "Operation Clean Sweep," LGBT young of color have been arrested for acts that affluent white Village visitors or residents commit with impunity—like "noise" and "loitering."

Robert Gangi, executive director of the Correctional Association of New York, pointed to the racist profiling of such arrests in a comment on people held in the arrest pens: "One of the things that's startling is how rarely you see a white face. And the great majority of charges ... are quality of life charges." (Village Voice, April 30, 2002)

At the closing rally on Oct. 16, Kenyon Farrow, a FIERCE ally, drew a parallel between the "Black Codes" of Reconstruction and the "Quality of Life" campaigns. Both, he pointed out, were intended to

restrict people of color in public space, and to entrap them into prison. He demanded the city end the curfew on the piers.

Heather Horgan, organizer trainee for FIERCE, led chants and said, "We're friends, family and we're not going nowhere!" Stonewall veteran Bob Kohler praised the youths: "You do have the power—the power to organize!"

Transgender lesbian activist Leslie Feinberg said at the rally, "Real quality of life means housing, jobs, education and health care, freedom from racism and police brutality." The only "job" offered now to many young people, Feinberg pointed out, is to kill or be killed as soldiers in Iraq. Feinberg asked the crowd, "Are you going to go?"

Youths shouted back: "Hell, no!" and began chanting, "Bring the troops home now!"

Aries Delacruz, FIERCE organizer, concluded: "Queer youth, homeless youth, youth of color, have been in the Village and on the pier for 40 years, before everyone else. Now we are losing one of the few places we have had to build community. They are telling us to go away, and providing no help, no services. It's a class struggle." □

Protests mount as

Washington cuts aid to Section 8 housing

By Heather Cottin

"They say cut back, we say leave Iraq," chanted 150 low-income tenants in Boston on Oct. 9. They were protesting the latest Bush attacks on Section 8 housing.

On the day that the cost of the war in Iraq approached \$140 billion, according to Costofwar.com, these protesters joined many others across the country resisting what an Oct. 16 New York Times editorial admitted was a "war on affordable housing."

Most of the 1.9 million poor families whose housing expenses are partially reimbursed by the Section 8 voucher program will be penalized by new Department of Housing and Urban Development reductions in housing assistance. According to HUD's new formula for "fair market rentals," people renting houses and apartments across the country will have to come up with 10 to 30 percent more money per month to pay their rent.

Over the past few years the Bush administration has battered Section 8 recipients. But this is the most severe attack on the program to date.

Section 8 is not a public housing program—it utilizes existing private housing. It is a program that provides subsidies for people who can't afford the high rents in today's market. Landlords have been happy with it because they are guaranteed a "fair market rent." The tenants pay just 30 percent of their income; HUD makes up the rest.

But now the federal agency claims that "fair market rents" are declining, so it will provide less money to landlords. It is using a new formula that averages suburban rents with those in large cities. Since rents are actually continuing to rise in most urban areas, those Section 8 tenants will have to come up with an estimated \$50 to \$300 extra per month or lose their apartments.

And who will be hardest hit? "Women and children are the largest growing sector of the homeless population," said Donald Whitehead, executive director of

the National Coalition for the Homeless. (Elgin, Ill., Daily Herald, Oct. 10)

"My grandmother lives on disability. She gets less than \$570 a month," said Jennifer K., a student at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, N.Y. "She has to come up with \$400 a month to pay for her apartment in Brooklyn. She doesn't know how she will do it. And she can't even get food stamps, because she is on Section 8."

George C., another LaGuardia student, said he knew of a family where both parents have two jobs each and are now trying to get three jobs to make up the Section 8 cuts. Theirs is a big family, and the recent HUD reductions specifically targeted families renting large apartments.

Who suffers? Who benefits?

Once the housing stock for the poor dries up, landlords will be able to gentrify whole neighborhoods. The cost of all rentals could skyrocket. Banks and big realtors stand to profit from the evictions of the elderly, disabled and poor.

The Bush administration is pushing back three decades of progress in housing

for the poor. Since March, in most communities around the country, waiting lists for public housing and for Section 8 assistance have been closed.

As winter nears, hundreds of thousands could face homelessness.

Since the last recession, urban areas have seen the greatest increase in homelessness since the Great Depression. In New York City, it's up 24 percent. In 2003 the incidence of homeless families in New York was at twice the level of the 1980s.

The crisis is growing exponentially, with an 82-percent increase in homelessness since 1998. Families make up 79 percent of the U.S. homeless population, according to the Coalition for the Homeless.

The repeal of welfare laws under President Bill Clinton has also been a major contributor to the swelling ranks of homeless families.

"People are barely living from paycheck to paycheck. The place [the rent money] will come from is the food budget," said a woman who helps run a food pantry in Riverhead, Long Island. (Newsday, Sept. 26) She noted that the number of people

coming to the food pantry has increased 25 percent in the last 18 months.

New England was hit hard by HUD's new way of reckoning "fair market rent."

Effective Oct. 1, the proposed new maximum rent that a landlord receives from the Section 8 program for a two-bedroom unit anywhere in Rhode Island was set at \$671. (Federal Register, Aug. 6) But average rentals run \$1,032 in Rhode Island, and more in the state of Massachusetts. (Newport Daily News, Sept. 21) More landlords will refuse to take Section 8 tenants under the new rules.

Chris Barnett, spokesperson for Rhode Island Housing, said he and other housing advocates around the country suspect that "lowering fair-market rents is one way to shrink the program. Every time the maximum rent falls, it makes it more difficult for people to find apartments. The fewer people actually using the program, the less it costs Washington."

Average rent reimbursement for a two-bedroom apartment in most communities west of Boston is now \$1,266, less than last year's average of \$1,419. (Boston Globe, Sept. 30)

Responding to the anger of housing advocates, the Bush administration promised to restore some of the money. But the New York Times editorial noted that "lesser cuts ... leave the program diminished, housing authorities confused and the general public mistakenly believing that the status quo has been regained."

HUD is using rental rates from 2000 to determine these Draconian cuts. So its subsidy for a four-bedroom apartment in New York City will drop from \$1,504 a month to \$1,286—a 14-percent reduction.

A tenant would have to pay an extra \$218 to stay in the same apartment. Some 110,000 tenants will be affected in New York City. (New York Times, Sept. 22)

Housing advocates are organizing to oppose the HUD cutbacks in Texas, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Illinois, Connecticut, California, Montana and other states. □

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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Million Worker March sows the

Continued from page 1

diverted at least 30 buses to RFK Stadium, located far from the rally site.

Labor and anti-war movements join forces

When the MWM was first conceived in the beginning of 2004, the initiators had hoped the national leadership of the AFL-CIO, headed by John Sweeney, would give full political support and the resources needed to fill buses. Instead, the AFL-CIO leadership refused help to the march, and even undermined it.

To counter the AFL-CIO leadership's negative response, MWM organizers then reached out to the anti-war movement for broad political and concrete support. The International Action Center helped form "Anti-War Committees 4 the MWM" all over the country, to link the anti-war struggle and the workers' movement.

Some of the MWM's main demands were to bring the troops home from Iraq and to divert money from Pentagon wars abroad to human needs.

These struggles were linked not just in words but also in deed. For instance, the Central New Jersey Coalition for Peace and Justice shared a bus with Casa Freehold, an outgrowth of the Workers Committee for Progress and Social Welfare and Monmouth County Residents for Immigrants' Rights.

Rally speakers included Clarence Thomas, Leo Robinson and Trent Willis from Local 10; Brenda Stokely, president of AFSCME District Council 1707; International Concerned Family and Friends leader Pam Africa, who introduced an audiotaped message from Mumia Abu-Jamal; former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; Larry Holmes, IAC co-chair and principal anti-war organizer of the MWM; Dick Gregory; Danny Glover; Martin Luther King III; Marlene Jean-Louis of Haiti's Lavalas movement; ANSWER representatives; Chris Silvera of Teamsters Local 808 and many more.

The rally co-chairs included Sharon Black, MWM's Washington regional coordinator, and Ralph Schoenman, MWM's media coordinator.

On-going issue-oriented discussions took place in tents on the Lincoln Memorial grounds during the rally, including youth and student organizing,

the environment, political prisoners, reparations, the war on Iraq, women's issues and more.

Hundreds of MWM participants marched to the Hotel Washington near the White House, where hotel workers looking out the window greeted them with waves. UNITE HERE Local 25 Executive Secretary-Treasurer John A. Boardman greeted the primarily youthful marchers. He expressed appreciation to the MWM for much-needed solidarity at a crucial time, when almost 4,000 hotel workers in the D.C. area are in fierce negotiations with greedy hotel bosses for a new contract.

Leading the march to the hotel was Fight Imperialism—Stand Together (FIST), a newly formed militant youth group; Youth United for Change, a predominantly Black group from Philadelphia; and a delegation of anarchist youth.

AFL-CIO leadership & the MWM

On June 23, AFL-CIO President Sweeney had authored a letter regarding the MWM to all state federations and central labor councils of the AFL-CIO. He told them "not to sponsor or devote resources to the demonstration in Washington, D.C."

And Sweeney emphasized in the letter that "the AFL-CIO is NOT a co-sponsor of this effort and we will not be devoting resources or energies toward mobilizing demonstrations this fall," but will work instead to remove "George W. Bush from office."

In the eyes of the top AFL-CIO leadership, not only would they spend tens of millions of dollars of union dues to try to elect John Kerry, but they would prevent the mobilization of millions of workers who might come to Washington, D.C., to fight for universal health care, a living wage, amnesty for undocumented workers, guaranteed pensions, a repeal of anti-labor legislation like the Taft-Hartley Act and much more.

This approach sabotaged and undermined the full potential of the MWM. For instance, SEIU/1199's rank and file in New York City voted to endorse the MWM and arrange buses for its members. Instead, the local leadership diverted buses to take their staff and others to canvas for Kerry in Pennsylvania and other "swing" states.

At a national Black Caucus meeting of

the Teamsters held in Florida over the summer, the locals voted overwhelmingly to organize buses to the MWM. Soon afterward, Teamsters President James Hoffa personally ordered the union's locals to abort those plans.

In union after union, from the Postal Workers to AFSCME to the National Education Association, activists who wanted to devote their time and resources to organizing workers to attend the MWM were pressured to cease building for the MWM, and in some cases in the week before Oct. 17, to canvas for Kerry.

Despite these problems, thousands of workers and union activists came to Washington.

What's next after Oct. 17?

On Oct. 18, regional organizers of the MWM met in the D.C. area to both evaluate the march and brainstorm on proposals to move the MWM movement forward.

Among the ideas that regional coordinators agreed to bring back to their regions for further discussion were setting a national day in solidarity with the hotel workers as well as other low-wage workers struggling for contracts, and identifying International Women's Day and May Day for MWM activities.

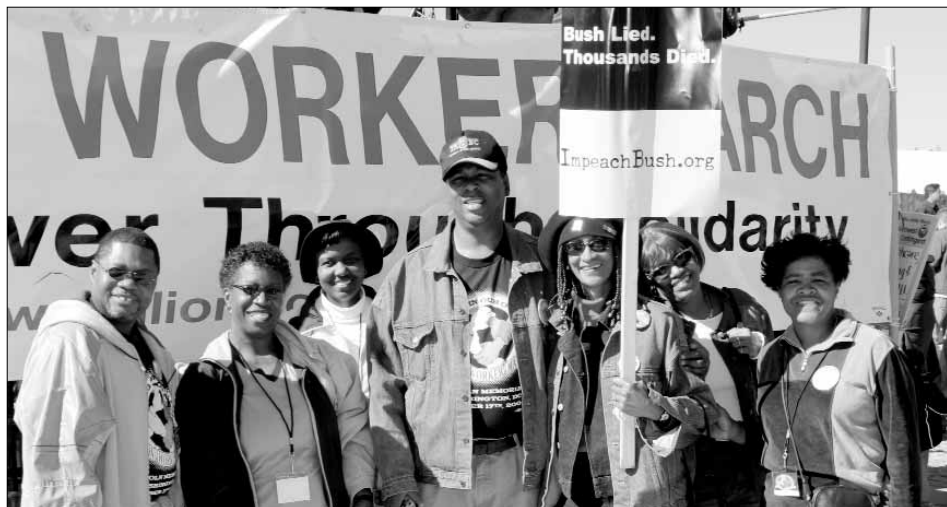
Other ideas included setting a "Repeal the Taft-Hartley" day, setting up workers' boards, and setting dates for MWM planning meetings and conferences.

In addition to proposing to the regions that Dec. 3-10 be designated "Stop the War Now Week" for mass actions, the meeting also began discussing its posture toward next summer's AFL-CIO convention in Chicago, as well as setting a date for another MWM day of action during the fall of 2005.

Despite the efforts of those labor leaders who promote the Democratic Party as the primary organization for advancing the cause of workers, the MWM has not only arrived—but its leadership is making exciting plans to build a new movement to push the struggle for workers' rights forward. Workers World newspaper will continue its coverage and assessment of the MWM as more information becomes available in the coming period. □



Danny Glover



WW PHOTO: G DUNKEL



seeds of a new movement



Youths marched to support hotel workers at Hotel Washington.

WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO



Pam Africa

Youths active in solidarity march with hotel workers

By Stephanie Nichols
Washington, D.C.

Radical young people from all across the country came with solidarity to the Million Worker March Oct. 17 at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Several high-school students traveled from as far as Maine to join the march. They carried a banner that read, "Leave these children behind."

Students from North Carolina University brought a banner that read, "We've found the WMDs. They're in North Carolina." There were bombs painted underneath, labeled "racism," "sexism," "ecocide," etc.

Young people played a leading role among the marchers and populated the Lincoln Memorial ready for a militant struggle. Youths make up the highest proportion of the homeless, those in poverty and without health care, with the highest percentages of these being youths of color.

Former student and youth activists from the Vietnam-war era welcomed these young people. This, unfortunately, illustrated how the struggle has needed to continue. Working-class people are still fighting for the basic human rights in 2004.

You won't find youths as the highest percentage of voters this election year. And you do not see many people under 18 years of age complaining that they don't have the right to vote. You will find youths in the streets demanding an end to this system that ignores them and their needs completely, a system that threatens their future by sending them to war, destroys the environment and doesn't even guarantee them an education or a job.

Youths are ready to unite together to fight the

capitalist system as a whole. And they have guidance from some of the most seasoned revolutionaries, including the organizers of the Million Worker March.

Marchers chanted loudly, picking up on many chants coming straight from the youth themselves, such as: "What's the solution? People's revolution. What's the reaction? Direct action." "What's outrageous? Poverty wages. What's disgusting? Union busting."

A march brought people from the site of the rally to the Hotel Washington, where hotel workers have been preparing to strike. Several workers looked out from the hotel's windows and cheered the demonstrators, raising raised their fists in solidarity.

Q Allen of North Carolina FIST—Fight Imperialism—Stand Together—spoke outside the hotel in solidarity with all working people and youths fighting for their rights on the streets.

The march concluded a day of rock-solid politics, once again showing young people in the lead of militant struggles. Without the young, there will be no true political working-class movement on the streets. After the historic Million Worker March, the struggle will continue, and our rights will be won. □



Q Allen

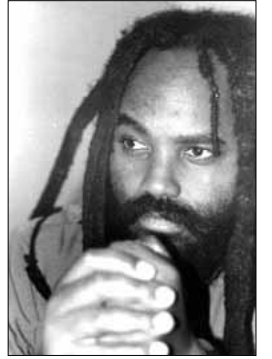


Ignacio Meneses



By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

The war against workers



Almost all of us, from wherever we have come, have something vital in common: we are engaged in the world of work.

Some of us are members of unions—as am I, a proud, card-carrying member of the National Writers Union, which is affiliated with the United Auto Workers.

Some of us, perhaps a majority, are not members of a union, and yet, as so-called "contingency workers," as temps, as part-timers, as on-call workers, as workfare, as day laborers, as prison laborers, we are people who are workers, who add social good—and all of us are catching hell!

That's because wherever there is a war against wages, that means a war against workers.

If we speak the truth, it doesn't matter who wins the White House; workers are catching hell. That's because the only choices before the American people are corporate choices; a thin narrow slice between two quite similar "brokerage parties," that sell their souls to the highest bidder.

Think of it this way: The last president supported by vast labor votes was William Jefferson Clinton. And how did Clinton reward labor support? By passing NAFTA, and opening the door to the globalist monster that is sucking the life blood from most working families across the nation. The drastic loss of U.S. manufacturing jobs, and the resultant drop in wages, can be traced to the NAFTA bill.

That's why a Million Worker March is now necessary: to break through the corporate gobbledygobble that now dominates the coming elections. Corporate candidates covered by corporate media for corporate interests. It's no wonder it's so slimy. It's also no wonder that the word "workers" rarely, if ever, crosses the lips of the corporate candidates. It's no wonder that the word "union" sounds like profanity when they mention it.

It is only the workers who can or will defend the interests of workers: universal health care for ALL people; a national living wage and livable retirement benefits; bring about democracy to the shop floor, so that decisions about work are made by those who labor; taxation that is progressive, on corporations and the wealthy, and relieves the burdens on the working class and poor; an end to wars waged for Corporate America, like Iraq; the immediate revocation of all anti-labor pacts, like NAFTA, FTAA, the WTO, and CAFTA; the repeal of Taft-Hartley; repeal of the so-called "Patriot Act"!

These are but some of the demands motivating the Million Worker March, but it can't be all of them. Workers actually build this society; it is they, and only they, who can rebuild it.

This means a resurgence of the labor movement that is truly revolutionary—that does not "settle" for its slice, but changes the social order completely. The union movement has a history of exclusion that worked against its own class interests; what if—what IF—all of those people we mentioned a few moments ago—part-timers, on-calls, perma-temps, and yes prison laborers—were actually unionized? It would add immeasurably to the power of labor, and add to the power of unions generally as a social force in the social order! In a phrase, this is win-win. Social transformation is possible, but only—ONLY—with social organization!

When people organize, broadly, and as a social force, then you will hear those political whores speak the word "union" like they are speaking of a lover! Our esteemed ancestor, the great escaped captive and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, once said, "Power concedes nothing without demand." He was right then; he is right now. Labor must unite to force this corrupt political system to yield. We, all of us, will be able to construct new realities, not merely demand them.

Or else we will be choosing the same monkeys to sit over us, as they betray us, forever. That time must end. Thank you!

This statement was given by Mumia Abu-Jamal in a taped presentation to the Million Worker March.

U.S. platoon refuses 'suicide mission' in Iraq

By Dustin Langley

On Oct. 13, soldiers from the 343rd Quartermaster Company, based in Rock Hill, S.C., and stationed in Tallil, Iraq, refused to drive seven unarmored fuel tankers to areas near Baghdad where resistance attacks on convoys are an almost daily occurrence.

The company has personnel from South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina and Mississippi. They arrived in Iraq in April as part of the 13th Corps Support Command—a 15,000-strong logistics and supply unit.

Almost 90 percent of the company's troops are National Guard members or reservists. Twenty-six have been killed thus far.

The fuel-laden trucks they were ordered to drive could not go faster than 40 miles per hour. Several of the vehicles had mechanical problems. The platoon had also been informed that the convoy would not be escorted by infantry in humvees or helicopter gunships.

The incident received international news coverage after some of the GIs managed to contact their relatives in the United States.

It was the first reported incident of a large group of U.S. troops in Iraq refusing orders.

Beverly Dobbs of Vandiver, Ala., told Salon magazine that she got a panicked call from her son, Spec. Joseph Dobbs, on Oct. 13. "Mama, we're in a lot of trouble," he said.

"We refused to go because our vehicles were in awful shape. The place they wanted to send us was dangerous. We had to go without guns. All of us refused to go. We're not risking our lives like that."

"I'm proud of my son," said Renee Shealey of her son Scott, one of 19 soldiers who refused orders to go on what the soldiers called a "suicide mission" in Iraq.

The Army has said a "full investigation" of the incident is under way and that disciplinary action would be meted out if warranted.

Tod Ensign, legal director for Citizen Soldier, a New-York-based GI/veterans' rights advocacy group, is demanding access to Pfc. Colin Durham of Rock Hill, S.C. Nadine Stafford of Rock Hill has asked Ensign to talk to Durham, her grandson, and ascertain his current legal status and that of other members of his unit.

History of resistance

Combat refusals are nothing new to the U.S. Army. As early as 1813, a unit of 4,000 Kentucky soldiers declined to engage Native forces that had just attacked Fort Dearborn (later Chicago).

During the Mexican-American War, thousands of soldiers, rebelling against anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic bigotry, deserted the U.S. Army and joined the Mexican Army in its struggle to fight the U.S. invasion. Led by Capt. John Riley of County Galway, they formed the "San Patricio" Battalion and fought bravely in most of the campaigns of the two-year war.

This latest refusal by an entire platoon is reminiscent of the Vietnam War. By 1970 in Vietnam, killing hated officers and sergeants with fragmentation grenades—"fraggings"—was commonplace. Mutinies also occurred.

Over 65,000 soldiers had deserted by 1970. Search and destroy missions often became "search and avoid."

In an article headed "The Collapse of the Armed Forces," written for the Armed Forces Journal in June 1971, Col. Robert D. Heinl Jr. reported that the "army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse." He cited widespread incidents of mutiny, fraggings, and GI organizing against the war as evidence.

Heinl quoted a U.S. soldier in Cu Chi: "They have set up separate companies for men who refuse to go into the field. It's no big thing to refuse to go. If a man is ordered to go to such and such a place he no longer goes through the hassle of refusing; he just packs his shirt and goes to visit some buddies at another base camp."



Pat McCook, left, and Jackie Butler in Jackson, Miss., Oct. 20. They are wives of soldiers who refused a suicide mission in Iraq.

"Operations have become incredibly ragtag. Many guys don't even put on their uniforms any more.... The American garrison on the larger bases are virtually disarmed. The lifers have taken our weapons from us and put them under lock and key.... There have also been quite a few fraggings incidents in the battalion."

GI resistance was instrumental in ending the war in Vietnam. Anti-war activists played a key role in supporting GI resisters. Organizations like the American Servicemen's Union provided support for GIs who opposed the war.

The ASU published a newspaper for GIs called *The Bond*. The name reflected the bond between the anti-war movement and the brothers and sisters in the military. Establishing that bond once again is a priority for those interested in bringing the occupation of Iraq to an end.

Anti-war groups support GI resisters

The Support Network for an Armed Forces Union—SNAFU—is an organization that supports resistance inside the military. SNAFU has issued a statement

supporting this platoon's refusal of orders, and is working to provide support for soldiers who refuse.

According to SNAFU: "These soldiers have been placed in danger by the policies of the U.S. government that have created a climate of hatred throughout the Arab and Muslim world. The illegal war against Iraq, the brutalization of the Palestinian people, the bombing of civilians in Fallujah and throughout Iraq, and the torture chambers at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere have engendered a justifiable outrage throughout the region."

"The Pentagon and the brass have repeatedly demonstrated their disregard for human life by brutalizing and murdering Iraqi people, and by their callous disregard for the safety and well-being of their own troops. Pentagon officials and the officer corps view front-line troops, drawn largely from poor and oppressed communities, as expendable, in the same way they view the Iraqi people as less than human.... We support the decision by these soldiers to refuse orders and we call upon others to also take action to stop the war." (www.join-snafu.org) □

LOS ANGELES

Thousands march for immigrant rights

By Adrian Garcia
Los Angeles

Los Angeles's immigrant communities came out in the thousands in two simultaneous demonstrations on Oct. 16. Immigrant demonstrators were joined by members of immigrant-rights organizations, church groups, teachers and unions.

The demonstrations demanded an end to attacks against immigrants, including the recent raids that have resulted in the summary deportation of thousands of undocumented immigrants. The protesters also demanded driver's licenses and unconditional amnesty for all undocumented immigrants.

The protests commemorated the 10-year struggle against the reactionary anti-immigrant provisions found in Proposition 187. Prop. 187 was designed to deny undocumented workers' children

medical care and education.

This struggle is especially pertinent because Republican Party forces, headed by California Secretary of State Kevin Shelley are threatening to re-introduce similar legislation in the near future.

Cecilia Rodriguez, activist from Alianza Hondurena of Los Angeles proclaimed, "We will fight for amnesty, driver's licenses, and the right to take our children to school free from fear."

Workers World Party presidential candidate John Parker related the imperialist war in Iraq to the war being waged against immigrants at home, noting that "the first U.S. military casualty of the Iraq invasion was a Latino immigrant."

Parker also implored the crowd to follow the Oct. 17 Million Worker March in Washington, D.C. "The Million Worker March is building a network of struggle that will continue after the historic march," Parker said. □

PUERTO RICO

Support high for water workers' strike

By Arturo J. Pérez Saad

Despite a daily attack by the bosses' media and multiple marathon negotiating sessions, the Genuine Independent Union (UIA) in Puerto Rico, as of Oct. 19, had made great strides in its contract negotiations with the government-run Aqueducts and Sewage Authority (AAA). The workers went on strike on Oct. 4.

It is no mere coincidence that the AAA has begun to negotiate in good faith. Public support for the strike is high.

The Puerto Rican Workers Central (CPT), a coalition made up of 56 unions, has approved holding a national strike in solidarity with the UIA as negotiations break down. It "can come at any time," said CPT President Victor Villalba. An open letter has been sent by the Board of Directors of the Association of Exempt Non-Teaching Employees (HEEND) at the University of Puerto Rico soliciting the presidents of the Puerto Rican Chamber

of Representatives and the Senate to hold public hearings investigating the withdrawal of AAA funds from the unionized workers' medical plan.

In July the AAA, a state-run company, had replaced the union's health plan with a private group, Triple S, and demanded that all health-care costs be paid by the workers, all without the union's consent. The UIA's contract with the AAA expired in August.

On Oct. 4 the workers went out on strike to resolve the 16 contract demands that were stalled in the bargaining, including the most important, their health-care plan.

By Oct. 18 the AAA and UIA had been able to resolve the majority of the 16 demands in the contract, including the most difficult one, health care. Three clauses still unresolved as of Oct. 19 are about wage raises and two non-economic issues, the grievance process and union licenses. □

Occupation forces target Falluja

Each new offensive exposes U.S. colonial role

By Fred Goldstein

In Iraq the Bush administration has the unsolvable problem of all would-be colonial occupiers. Because of its desire to control the country and its wealth, it can never win the "hearts and minds" of the people. Thus it must resort to an escalating campaign of brutal force and bloodshed in an attempt to impose its will.

The struggle to subdue Falluja is an example. This industrial city of 300,000 has been carrying on a now legendary resistance to the U.S. forces. The resistance fighters have the sympathy and support of the population. The people have endured unending violence from the U.S. military since the first phase of the war ended in April 2003, yet have supported the anti-occupation forces and denied control of the city to the puppet forces in Baghdad.

The U.S. Marines were unable to take the city in April of this year, despite killing hundreds of Iraqis. They were forced to cede control of the city to the resistance. But with the Bush plan to foist a phony election on the country in order to declare "democracy" established, the Pentagon is determined to conquer Falluja and stamp out what has become the national symbol of resistance to the occupation.

The U.S. military has been bombarding the city daily. It has destroyed hundreds of houses and killed or wounded an untold number of civilians in an attempt to force a capitulation. Unable to bring about a negotiated surrender of the city, the Pentagon is now preparing an all-out offensive. It has asked British Prime Minister Tony Blair to move a battalion of his Black Watch troops from the Basra region to the Baghdad area in order to free up U.S. forces for the assault.

The more Washington tries to find ways to exert its control over the country, the more that control slips through its fingers. The much-celebrated handover of weapons by the Mahdi Army loyal to Moktada al-Sadr has turned out to be a bust.

The puppet regime of Ayad Allawi, under U.S. supervision, set up a period of offering money for weapons in Sadr City. "Despite the incentive, members of Sadr's militia, the Mahdi Army, have been slow to hand in weapons, U.S. military officials said," admitted the Oct. 18 Washington Post. Lt. Col. Florentino Carter of the 8th Infantry Regiment said that the effort had fallen "very short."

"Carter said," according to the Post, "weapons have been handed over mostly by Sadr City residents not believed to be insurgents." The U.S. news media show hundreds of weapons piled up, but Carter said this is "nowhere near what we know to be the large weapons caches that they have."

In one instance, Ahmed Saleh, 21, showed up to turn in an old 60-mm mortar. He said he was a member of the Mahdi Army but that the launcher was "not very good. I have another one at home that is much better," said Saleh. Asked by the Post reporter if he planned to hand it in, he said, "No, I'm going to keep it."

Plans fall apart

Another U.S. plan that is falling apart is to build a puppet Iraqi National Guard (ING). An article entitled "Sleeping with

the Enemy" in the Oct. 18 London Telegraph described the failure of the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program. It was devised during the Vietnam War and has been resurrected by the Pentagon for Iraq. It has failed more miserably in Iraq than it did in Vietnam.

The theory is that ING forces live together and patrol together while being trained by U.S. military forces in preparation for their withdrawal. It's "Iraqization" in the style of Richard Nixon's Vietnamization.

The Telegraph described the situation in the Karma Marine barracks near Falluja. "This is camp poison," said a Marine. "Watch your back." According to the Telegraph, "The Marines are convinced that many, perhaps most, of the 140 members of the Iraqi National Guard (ING) they share the camp with are double agents working on behalf of the insurgents holding Falluja. In the past week alone the Marines have arrested five of the guardsmen, including their commanding officer, Capt. Ali Mohammed Jasim."

Eighty Marines have been killed in Anbar province since June while patrolling under the CAP program.

"The Marines are convinced that the ING knows where many of the IEDs [improvised explosive devices] are planted and even say they have caught guardsmen in the act of laying mines. When joint patrols come under attack, they say, the ING simply refuses to fight."

The article quotes a Marine: "We know when this place is about to come under mortar attack because the ING suddenly disappears."

It is clear from each new unraveling of Washington's strategy and tactics in Iraq that there is a full-scale war of national liberation under way.

The New York Times is publishing a three-part series by its chief military correspondent, Michael Gordon, entitled the "Catastrophic Success"—a title taken from a quote by President George W. Bush in a magazine interview about Iraq.

The Times series, which began on Oct. 19, attempts to dissect all the errors of judgment made by the White House, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, and their aides. The essence of the debate is over whether or not there was a timely deployment of sufficient troops.

This is similar to a debate which broke out during the first stages of the war, when U.S. forces were being impeded by the resistance on the road to Baghdad.

Workers World newspaper wrote about this false debate in its April 10, 2003, issue when the war was only two weeks old and the fedayeen guerrilla fighters throughout southern Iraq were heroically blocking the U.S. military advance. [See box.]

Then, and now, this debate avoids the fundamental point. The Iraqi people fought colonialism under the Ottoman Turks and the British, and finally gained their independence in 1958. Washington is failing because it is trying to reimpose colonialism.

The dream of world domination by the architects of the Rumsfeld Doctrine and all the militaristic empire builders who seek the hegemony of U.S. finance capital is falling to pieces in the cities and on the roads of Iraq. □



Iraqi man carries the body of a child dug out from a U.S.-bombed building in Falluja, Oct. 20.

What Workers World said in April 2003:

The death of a delusory doctrine: Iraqi resistance and the Rumsfeld strategy

The following excerpts are from an article by Fred Goldstein in the April 10, 2003, issue of Workers World newspaper about the false debate regarding the role of U.S. troop strength in the Iraq War.

The most important thing to note about the controversy over the war plan is that it is entirely superficial. The dispute has been reduced to a question of judgment. In fact, it is not merely a question of poor judgment on Rumsfeld's part. It is a question of ideology and world outlook that underlies the disastrous miscalculation.

The Bush administration developed its doctrine of world domination in a National Security Strategy document of September 2002. This is an evolution of the Defense Planning Guidance first promulgated in March 1992, authored by Paul Wolfowitz and approved and later modified by Cheney. It has been brought up to date and couched in language about countering terrorism. But it basically asserts the right of U.S. imperialism to intervene and remove any government that Washington deems a threat. The document further flatly states that no power or combination of powers shall be allowed to challenge the world supremacy of the Pentagon.

Such an outrageously aggressive and delusory political doctrine, which proclaims the intention of U.S. imperialism to dominate the globe and its population of 6 billion people, must of necessity have an enabling military doctrine that can envision such a world conquest within the means available to U.S. capitalism. ...

The Rumsfeld military doctrine—the supremacy of air power, high technology and threats of "shock and awe"—is a 21st-century version of 19th-century gunboat diplomacy. It harkens back to an era when the masses of the world were as yet isolated from one another, cut off from modern technology, military means, means of communication, and historical experience of struggle and organization. It recalls the era when British gunboats could sail to the coast

of China or Africa and fire their cannons—a vastly superior military technology at the time—and devastate a coastal area in order to bring the local rulers into submission. ...

This was the "shock and awe" of the 19th century, which is being resurrected for the 21st century with computer-guided bombs instead of cannon balls.

The fatal flaw in their doctrine

Its two principal and interconnected assumptions are that Washington can get its way by threatening governments into submission or changing "regimes" around the globe so as to establish absolute sovereignty and domination. And that the people of the world are an inert mass—they are mere objects sufficiently disorganized and non-threatening that they do not have to be taken into account as the fundamental factor in world history. All that is needed is to send some smart bombs, cruise missiles, killer helicopters and computerized tanks, and U.S. domination is assured.

This, of course, is a necessary military doctrine for any faction of the ruling class that dreams of establishing a world empire. It means that you don't have to use millions of soldiers to go kill and be killed in massive combat. It means that the role of the infantry and the Marines is to go in and "mop up" after murderous bombardments and then be transitional occupation forces helping to usher in new puppet governments that will do the beck and call of Washington.

It means that the working class here being sent to the wars of conquest will not have to undergo hardships; will not rebel against being used as shock troops for the transnational corporations and the oil companies. It means the ruling class can have "endless war" abroad and social stability at home.

But the Iraqi government, which has become a government of national resistance, and the Iraqi people in every city, town and village, have already proven decisively on the ground that the Rumsfeld strategy, and the Bush doctrine of empire that it is calculated to uphold, are false to the core. □



War, taxes & struggle

The large number of people registering to vote for the first time in what are heavily Democratic Party areas undoubtedly reflects the growing politicization of the masses caused by the blatantly pro-rich, pro-war policies of the Bush administration. To that extent, it is a welcome development, all the more so since the Republicans have been throwing every obstacle in the way of voting by poor people, especially people of color. The disenfranchisement of African Americans continues in Florida and other states, and there is healthy skepticism on whether new electronic voting machines will be subject to manipulation.

That said, it is necessary to add that the Democratic Party doesn't deserve the support of these new voters and will not do what they are hoping for. Like the GOP, it is just another party of big business, but with a kinder, gentler image. On the issue of the war, which hangs over everything because it is a war for profit and plunder that is eating away at public funds, John Kerry's program is no better than Bush's. He's for putting even more troops into Iraq and Afghanistan, he's for a more aggressive stance against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran, and he's just as pro-Israel and anti-Palestine as Bush.

The venal character of both capitalist parties was made crystal clear on Oct. 11 when the Senate passed an outrageous corporate tax break bill and sent it to President George W. Bush to sign. Even the name of this bill is a travesty. Called the "American Jobs Creation Act of 2004," it will give corporations tax cuts worth \$136 billion over 10 years.

Why haven't more people heard of this obscene pork-barrel bill, which contains 633 pages of detailed giveaways for big business, especially the energy companies? Because it's been a minor issue in the presidential debates. Kerry mentioned it only briefly in the final debate, and then attacked China more than U.S. corporations. In the Senate, 25 Democrats voted for it, along with most Republicans. The vote was 69 to 17. The bill had passed in the House earlier by 280 to 41, with 73 Democrats joining Republicans in voting yes.

The bill cuts by 3 percent the general

tax rate on manufacturers and other "producers," all in the name of saving jobs. What it will save is \$76.5 billion for the corporations over 10 years. By redefining who are manufacturers, the bill was able to extend this tax cut to corporations like Bechtel, Halliburton and NASCAR. Other big winners will be Microsoft, Oracle and other software giants, as well as Hewlett-Packard and drug giant Eli Lilly. Other provisions favor oil companies, cruise ship operators and tobacco producers.

National Public Radio commentator Connie Rice says that "Instead of being indicted for tax evasion, a special group of big Houston corporations that dropped American citizenship to hide their profits in overseas tax havens will be forgiven and allowed to take advantage of the one-year tax holiday and one-seventh of the former tax rate. This is a one strike and you're in bill that grandfathers in only select Houston tax cheats."

The Expense Account Expansion Clause, Rice points out, "increases the small business expensing limit from \$25,000 to \$100,000. This same Congress—so generous with business—requires welfare mothers to count their thrift-shop dishes and winter coats toward their assets."

As usual, however, most of the tax giveaways go to big business. That's who really writes these tax laws, through the well established and perfectly "legal" nexus that exists between corporate lobbyists, well-financed think tanks and the politicians who so often are well-heeled lawyers themselves.

At the same time that this new bill was being passed, the government was cutting back on Section 8 subsidized housing, which several million people, many of them elderly and/or disabled, rely on to keep a roof over their heads.

How long can all this injustice and misery continue? The emergence of the Million Worker March movement shows that, while many millions are just now beginning to develop social awareness and are moving toward the ballot box, there are millions of others within the working class and its allies who recognize the futility of capitalist politics and are resolved to organize independent class struggle. □

Throughout Latin America Indigenous Day of Resistance

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Across many cities in Latin America, people commemorated Oct. 12 not as "Columbus Day," "Hispanic Heritage Day" or "Día de la Raza"—but as the "Day of Resistance of the Native Peoples."

Five centuries after the Spanish Empire's invasion of the Americas and the Caribbean, Indigenous people in every South and Central American country except Venezuela continue to face racism, cultural and linguistic discrimination, extreme poverty and genocide.

In Cuba, Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands, the Native population was decimated through forced labor, illnesses and suicides.

But now Indigenous people are rising up in South and Central America—not only demanding their rights but also opposing U.S. imperialism's intensifying exploitation of their countries in the form of so-called free-trade agreements.

In July, at the first Social Forum of the Americas in Quito, Ecuador, and in other meetings throughout the continent, hundreds of organizations set forth a program of action for Oct. 12. The primary purpose was to oppose the imposition of these trade agreements on their countries. The organizations included not only Indigenous organizations, but also peasants, labor, students, Afro-descendants, women and many others.

The free-trade agreements are imposed by transnational corporations, mainly U.S.-based, and the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, to force "structural reforms." These "reforms" entail privatizing services like health, education, communications and energy, with consequent layoffs, high unemployment, and increases in the cost of basic goods and services.

The transnational companies suck up natural resources and super-profits for Wall Street banks, leaving behind misery and desolation.

During the last two years, a wave of militant, massive demonstrations against the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas led to the failure of negotiations between the targeted South American countries and Washington. Now the Bush administration is meeting individually with each country's leadership, mostly behind closed doors, trying to set up secret deals.

In Central America, where the U.S.-sponsored Central America Free Trade Agree-

ment has not yet been ratified, there were actions against the pact Oct. 12. Some 30,000 Indigenous people held a protest in Guatemala. In El Salvador, the Movement for Social Resistance blocked main highways.

Negotiations are pending between the United States and Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. In Bolivia, Oct. 11 and 12 were days of commemoration of the more than 80 people killed last year in demonstrations that ousted President Sanchez de Lozada and demanded the nationalization of gas and oil.

This struggle is ongoing. On Oct. 18, thousands of peasants and workers in many sectors of the economy, including coca growers, converged on La Paz, Bolivia's capital. They surrounded Congress to demand passage of a nationalization law.

In Ecuador, Indigenous people, students, anti-FTAA groups and other social movements initiated a campaign to demand a popular referendum on the FTAA.

In Colombia, the Day of Resistance was marked by a general strike. In the biggest show of unity, labor federations, Indigenous groups, peasants, women, students and progressive organizations mobilized a million people throughout the country.

A poster for the strike read, "Surrounded by threats that give us courage ... we will all participate in the work stoppage without fear or cowardice." Protest events in Colombia seem to grow larger even as threats, assassinations, massacres, detentions and political imprisonment increase.

Strike organizers were clear in their objectives. Carlos Rodríguez Díaz, president of the Unitary Center of Workers, one of the labor federations initiating the call, said the strike was political. "We are not thinking only of the interests of workers, but we are struggling hard so we can have a country with a real economic and political democracy."

The Colombian Communist Party described the strike as a "memorable day," saying, "It has shown clearly the rejection of the FTAA and [President] Uribe's policy of Democratic Security." "Domestic Security" is a program of counter-insurgency measures directed against the armed liberation movements and all social and labor organizations, which Uribe has declared "allies of terrorism."

This strike came on the heels of a truckers' strike and a massive gathering of Native peoples demanding rights and opposing the trade agreements. □

After the elections, no matter who wins—

HOW CAN THE STRUGGLE MOVE FORWARD? A NATIONAL FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE

Do you want to really end the war, bring the troops home, fight for workers' rights, and build a movement against capitalism and racism?

Then come to a serious discussion on strategies.

The election won't solve war or poverty. It's a shell game.

Both Bush and Kerry come from the wealthy elite and are for this imperialist, capitalist system. Most unions, women's groups and other mass organizations hate Bush for tricking the country into war and feel compelled to support the Democrats. But Kerry is also for the war and says he'll send more troops and spend billions more on the Pentagon! Depending on who wins, the popular mood will be different.

The conference will discuss:

► What the outcome of the elections means

- Significance of the Million Worker March for the class struggle
- What youth are doing to fight military recruiting and the draft
- Resistance among soldiers, reservists and their families
- How the war machine eats up our wages and social services
- Getting unions and community groups to take an anti-war stand
- Supporting national liberation—in Iraq, Palestine, Haiti and everywhere
- Fighting imperialism by building international solidarity

The social crisis keeps growing.

Wealth has never been so polarized. Extreme poverty is forcing tens of millions to leave their homelands in search of work. For many, the trip ends with death at sea or along the borders; for millions more it ends in sweatshops or sexual slavery. Meanwhile, the bosses have created a global market for labor so they can go anywhere in search of lower wages and higher profits. Rampaging corporations destroy the environment and exhaust precious resources. Band-aids on a dying system won't work.

The conference will discuss:

- How workers can resist capitalist globalization
- Strengthening labor by fighting for immigrant rights
- Imperialist expansion in the post-Soviet era
- To save the world, we need socialist planning, not capitalist chaos

Capitalism breeds racism, oppression and inequality.

The workers are many. The capitalists are few. But with their billions they con-

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Denazification in socialist Germany opened door to gay rights

By Leslie Feinberg

Three major English-language sources written over the course of a decade and a half offered rich examples of the advances for gays and lesbians that took place in the German Democratic Republic—"East Germany"—after it was established in 1949.

Canadian historian Jim Steakley wrote the earliest of these accounts, "Gays under Socialism: Male Homosexuality in the German Democratic Republic." The article, containing material from his seven months of research in the GDR during the 1970s, appeared in the December 1976-January 1977 issue of *The Body Politic*.

A noteworthy contribution of Steakley's extensive research was his initial admonition that each socialist country has local features that it inherits from its past and its material realities.

He was followed by John Parsons, who made four research trips to the GDR over a six-year period. Parsons elaborated on the arduous political task the young workers' state had inherited. In his published findings—a 10-page article entitled "East Germany Faces Its Past: A New Start for Socialist Sexual Politics" (*OUT/LOOK*, Summer 1989)—he wrote: "The work of both the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee and the Communist Party was put to an end with the Nazi rise to power. Homosexuals, Communists, Social Democrats, and especially Jews were all ruthlessly persecuted and murdered.

"The Nazis succeeded, moreover," he continued, "in thoroughly tearing out the roots of cooperation that had existed among various people on the issue of sexuality. During the Nazis' 12-year rule, they reorganized the medical, legal and teaching professions—promoting confirmed Nazi ideologues, searching out those who were not, and raising a generation on Nazi propaganda. What few threads of the earlier cooperation the Nazis themselves did

not destroy, the devastation of the war and the battle lines drawn in the Cold War finished off."

Even before the founding of the German Democratic Republic on Oct. 6, 1949, the United States and Britain were maneuvering to stop socialist revolution from spreading across Germany.

By the end of World War II, the Soviet Red Army had crushed the Nazi invaders and forced them to retreat westward. As the collapsing army of German imperialism fled, the Red Army marched into Berlin and the fascists were defeated. But under pressure and threats from the U.S. and British, the Soviet Army was forced to pull back.

Nazis: Uprooted vs. replanted

After the defeat of fascism, Germans in the east, with Soviet help, worked to root out the Nazis and their capitalist collaborators and mobilize the population to rebuild.

Steakley offered an overview of conditions for gays and lesbians—his particular focus was on gay men—in the period of "Anti-fascist Democratic Renewal" from 1945 to 1949.

He wrote: "During this period of de-Nazification, the gay scene in the Soviet Occupied Zone was marked by a rapid recovery from the genocidally homophobic politics of German fascism. Homosexuals came out of hiding or returned from concentration camps, and gay bars began to reopen in both the East and the West.

"Overall," he added, "the de-Nazification program carried out in the Soviet Occupied Zone was far more aggressive and thorough than those in the Western zones."

In fact, in the West, the occupying forces of imperialism tried to prop up capitalist rule with massive infusions of financial aid, most from the U.S. Marshall Plan, while permitting tens of thousands of Nazi war criminals to emigrate or to re-enter Bonn's political arena. The United States and Britain allowed these former Nazis to resume their place in West German industry and government because they were the anti-communist bulwark.

Richard Plant emphasized this point in a June 1990 article in *Outweek*, "East German Journal: East German Gay Laws Years Ahead of West." Plant had been forced to flee Germany on the day of the infamous 1933 Reichstag fire that Hitler used to consolidate his power.

After the war, he wrote, "East German leaders tried to indict and convict as many high-ranking former Nazis as possible.

"The West German government, on the other hand, continued to employ some notorious Nazis in high positions long after the beloved Fuehrer's suicide."

The first chancellor of West Germany, Conrad Adenauer, who was approved by the U.S. occupiers, continued to keep Hans Globke as his secretary of the chancellery despite protests. Plant explained, "Globke was instrumental in drafting Nazi laws, enacted during the 1930s, which deprived Jews of their citizenship." Even after an East German court indicted Globke in absentia in 1950, Adenauer would not budge.

"Neither did Adenauer rescind the tough anti-gay Nazi decrees of 1935,

which, for example, declared that a man observed 'glancing lewdly at another man' could be taken into police custody."

That law, Paragraph 175A, was a Nazi amendment to the 1871 Prussian anti-homosexual Paragraph 175. The amendment allowed the Nazis to criminalize and snare those they accused of even homosexual fantasies or intent.

In the East that Nazi amendment—Paragraph 175A—was immediately removed from the books. Steakley stressed that in the GDR: "The immediate benefit for gay people came with the repeal of Paragraph 175a, the Nazi law which had led to the arrest and imprisonment of tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands of homosexuals. This law was struck down by the Superior State Court of Halle in 1948. By contrast, it remained in effect in West Germany until 1969."

Paragraph 175, however—the Prussian law against male homosexuality that had long been part of German criminal code—remained on the books in the Soviet Occupied Zone. It made sex between men punishable by up to four years in jail. The law remained on the books in West Germany, too.

Picking up the torch

Parsons gave thoughtful attention to the early struggles in the East to repeal Paragraph 175 itself.

"At the end of the war," he explained, "the earlier difference within the Communist Party again appeared as a discussion arose about how to reconstruct the society. Some people argued that the democratic reconstruction of the country should include progressive reforms of the laws and customs regarding sexuality.

"Articles appeared in many newspapers advocating the elimination of Paragraph 175. In Saxony, which later became a part of East Germany, the legislature endorsed repeal of the Paragraph."

One communist in particular deserves credit for these efforts: Dr. Rudolf Klimmer.

As a medical student in Dresden during the Weimar Republic, Klimmer, a gay man, had traveled to Berlin many times to follow developments within the homosexual emancipation movement. He particularly developed an association with Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld's Scientific-Humanitarian Committee.

Klimmer was a member of the Communist Party. So was the committee's secretary and later chairperson, Richard Linsert.

During 12 long years of fascism, Klimmer kept his political views and sexuality under wraps, marrying a lesbian for mutual protection. After the Nazis were defeated, he chose to live in the Soviet Occupied Zone and joined the Communist Party once again.

Steakley noted, "He launched a one-man campaign which aimed at repealing all laws against homosexuality, re-establishing Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science, and agitating with Soviet and local authorities for the full equality of gay people."

Klimmer, Steakley said, "also embarked upon a career similar to Hirschfeld's, continuing his medical practice and appearing as an expert witness in numerous court cases involving homosexuals, argu-

Klimmer launched a one-man campaign aimed at repealing all laws against homosexuality and winning the full equality of gay people.

ing at every turn for the repeal of Paragraph 175."

Although his tireless efforts were successful in helping to overturn the amendment to Paragraph 175, he was not able to repeal the old law itself. Nor was he able to win the establishment of a new Institute for Sexual Science.

Instead, he was appointed medical director of Dresden's Polyclinic, where he set up the first Marriage and Sexual Counseling Center of the Soviet Occupied Zone, which became a forerunner of dozens of similar centers across the GDR.

Cleaning up old cesspool

John Parsons examined the struggle for sexual liberation in a material context. He stressed that the efforts of Klimmer and others proved to be exceptional for two key reasons.

The GDR had to pull itself up out of the ashes of wartime devastation—hunger, homelessness, dislocation and poverty. The USSR, unlike the United States, had suffered tremendous destruction during the war and had no resources to send to Eastern Europe. Furthermore: "A generation of children had been raised and educated in Nazi schools. The problems of de-Nazifying the country, of creating new, democratic educational programs and new legal and medical professions took center stage.

"The Communist Party turned its attention to mobilizing the population for the barest of economic needs and towards stabilizing social life in the most orthodox of all structures."

The second cause, he wrote, "lies with developments in the communist movement itself."

The rise of a bureaucratic current in the Soviet leadership and the re-establishment of an anti-gay law in the USSR were to have an impact in East Germany as well. "Stalin's rise ended the Communist Party's advocacy of sexual reform. The same reversal occurred in Germany, with the growth of the influence of Stalinism throughout the world communist movement."

As a result, he stated, "Between 1948 and the late 1960s, lesbian and gay liberation lost any place in broad public discussions."

Steakley concluded that during the period of the Antifascist-Democratic Renewal, "Homosexuals were generally able to return to the place in German society which they had held before Hitler's rise to power"—gains that had been made possible in the Weimar Republic because of the mass German Homosexual Emancipation Movement—"but no further."

However, the work to provide jobs, education, housing and health care for the East German population as a whole continued to raise living standards. As material conditions improved, the struggle for sexual emancipation reached new heights.

Next: 1968—Paragraph 175 is abolished in the East, but not in the West.

WWP Conference *continued*

trol the state and the media. Politicians and talk-show hosts use ridicule and worse to promote racism, sexism, homophobia and fear of immigrants in order to divide us. Washington uses 9/11 as an excuse for more repressive laws and an "endless war" for oil.

The conference will discuss:

- ▶ Resisting the Patriot Act and other repressive measures
- ▶ Abolishing the racist prison system and death penalty
- ▶ Women's struggles for choice and economic equality
- ▶ Full rights for lesbians, gays, bi & trans people

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Jobs, housing, health care, education—these should be the right of every person. In this high-tech world, it's a crime that anyone should be hungry or homeless. We're for ousting the billionaires from power and helping to build a workers' world that puts people's needs before profits. It's called socialism.

The conference will discuss:

- ▶ U.S. capitalism's Achilles' heel—the multinational working class
- ▶ Moving from dissent to militant resistance
- ▶ How mass struggles can lead to revolutionary movements
- ▶ Support for socialist Cuba, Korea and Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution



Resistencia al reclutamiento obligatorio en los EEUU

Por Julie Fry

Las Fuerzas Armadas de los Estados Unidos enfrentan una creciente crisis en Irak. Enfrentadas por la resistencia popular iraquí, las 130.000 tropas de los EEUU no pueden controlar al país.

Viendo en la televisión y en sus computadoras el desarrollo de este desastre, millones de jóvenes están preocupad@s de que vuelva el reclutamiento militar obligatorio, y más y más jóvenes están bajando para prevenirlo.

En Irak, los asaltos genocidas ocurridos por fuera de las "zonas verdes" controladas por el Pentágono encuentran una oposición feroz. El movimiento de resistencia reasume el control de las ciudades al momento que se retiran los invasores.

Para las tropas estadounidenses, la mayoría de ell@s jóvenes, pobres, y desproporcionadamente personas de color, la situación en Irak es aterradora. Están siendo forzadas a matar a miles de iraquíes y ellas a su vez se han vuelto blanco de la resistencia iraquí.

Los períodos de servicio han sido extendidos por muchos meses. Algunos trabajan turnos tan largos como de 24 horas seguidas porque los altos oficiales temen mucho a la población iraquí, la que está casi totalmente opuesta a ellas. La situación se está volviendo más insostenible cada día para las tropas EEUU.

Dustin Langley, un veterano y consejero de la Red de Apoyo por Un Sindicato en las Fuerzas Armadas (SNAFU por las

siglas en inglés) reporta que la resistencia a la ocupación está creciendo dentro de las Fuerzas Armadas. Según Langley: "Escuchamos a diario a jóvenes que preguntan, '¿Cómo salgo de las Fuerzas Armadas?'"

Un reporte publicado en enero de 2004 por Jeffrey Record, un profesor temporero del Colegio de Guerra Aérea, dijo que el Ejército de los EEUU está "cerca del colapso." De hecho, nueve de cada 10 Divisiones del Ejército están actualmente desplegadas en Irak o en Afganistán.

Un 63 por ciento de las fuerzas del Ejército está desplegado en algún lugar del exterior, aunque expertos militares dicen que para poder mantener ocupaciones por largo tiempo, el Ejército necesita dos veces más la cantidad de tropas en casa que en el exterior.

A la misma vez, las Fuerzas Armadas no están reclutando tropas nuevas. Los cuatro servicios militares han fracasado en sus cuotas de reclutas este año. Y un 49 por ciento de soldados en Irak dice que no van a reincorporarse. (www.nodraftnoway.org)

Tanto el senador John Kerry como el presidente. George W. Bush están igualmente comprometidos a mantener la ocupación en Irak. Los dos han dicho que se precisan más tropas. ¿De dónde las van a sacar?

Mucha gente cree que es probable que se inicie una campaña para restablecer el reclutamiento militar obligatorio, no importa quien gane la elección presidencial. Mientras tanto, siguen los períodos de servicio militar extendidos y las activa-

ciones de soldados de reserva.

En septiembre, el Representante John Murtha de Pennsylvania, miembro del Subcomité de Asignaciones Militares de la Casa de Representantes, dijo que descubrió por medio de conversaciones con oficiales del Pentágono que Bush está planeando llamar una cantidad enorme de efectivos nuevos, la mayoría de ellos de la Guardia Nacional y de la Reserva, después de las elecciones del 2 de noviembre.

Esto no es nada menos que un reclutamiento militar obligatorio de otra forma, dado que los miembros de la Guardia Nacional y los reservistas son básicamente civiles que pasan un fin de semana al mes haciendo servicio militar. Pero el plan también demuestra que el gobierno de los EEUU está desesperado por tener más efectivos, y esto es lo que está causando que jóvenes alrededor del país teman que vayan a reinstaurar oficialmente al reclutamiento militar obligatorio.

Jóvenes dentro y fuera del servicio militar ya se están organizando para resistir la amenaza. Muchos están prestando atención a las voces contra la guerra como por ejemplo la de Brandon Hughey, un joven de 19 años y la de David Sanders de 20 años, que salieron de los EEUU en vez de encontrarse forzados a jugar un papel en la ocupación. Los dos enfrentan cárcel si regresan.

Los estudiantes están organizando en contra del reclutamiento militar en sus universidades, en un esfuerzo por detener el reclutamiento militar obligatorio antes de que comience. Recientemente, estudi-

antes activistas de la organización de jóvenes, Combate el Imperialismo, Alcémonos Unid@s (FIST por las siglas en inglés) pararon un ejercicio militar del programa ROTC conducido por un grupo de estudiantes entrenándose para volverse oficiales del Ejército en la Universidad Estatal de Carolina del Norte. L@s activistas planean otras actividades para acabar con el programa militar en su universidad.

En la Ciudad de Nueva York, FIST y otro grupo, Servicio Militar Obligatorio, ¡De Ningún Modo!, (No Draft, No Way), están auspiciando una reunión masiva el 11 de diciembre bajo el título, "Juventud y la Resistencia al Militarismo", para organizar activistas en contra de la posibilidad de la vuelta del reclutamiento obligatorio. L@s organizador@s enfatizan que la participación de jóvenes en el movimiento antiguerra demuestra que si Washington intenta forzarles a participar en la injusta ocupación de Irak, van a enfrentarse con una resistencia masiva.

Langley de SNAFU concluyó, "Ya estamos hablando de jóvenes que están en las Fuerzas Armadas como de jóvenes que enfrentan la posibilidad del reclutamiento obligatorio, está claro que la gente joven está opuesta a la agenda de los dos partidos políticos oficiales de la 'guerra sin fin', y están tomando la vanguardia de la resistencia".

Fry es organizadora de FIST, una organización revolucionaria de jóvenes. Comuníquese con FIST@workers.org para más información. □

Activistas arrestad@s por bloquear desfile de Colón

Por Larry Hales
Denver

Cuando 230 estudiantes, activistas y trabajador@s salieron a las calles aquí el 9 de octubre para protestar pacíficamente la celebración del Día de Colón y la descripción como si fuera un héroe del hombre responsable del genocidio de los pueblos indígenas, fueron arrestados por 600 policías, muchos de ellos vestidos con todos los pertrechos antimotines.

En total, aproximadamente 600 personas salieron temprano en la fresca mañana del sábado. Se reunieron en las escalinatas del capitolio estatal para escuchar a oradores del Movimiento Americano Indígena (AIM por las siglas en inglés) y de varias otras organizaciones indígenas, así como a líderes de la comunidad negra y la latina.

Los líderes del AIM y la Alianza Ministerial Negra de Denver prometieron salir a las calles para bloquear el desfile del Día de Colón, y se hizo una llamada para conseguir voluntarios. Más de 200 personas prometieron salir a las calles para obstaculizar la procesión.

Quedaron firmes en su intento cuando fueron informados que probablemente podrían ser arrestados.

Los protestantes, llevando pancartas que reclamaban el fin a las alabanzas a Colón y al colonialismo, marcharon a las calles Blake y la 19 ubicadas en la parte céntrica de Denver. El tambor sagrado del evento en contra del Día de Colón iba adelante siguiéndole muy de cerca el grupo de gente nativa.

Mientras caminaban por las calles, fueron topados por la policía que les esperaba con autobuses carcelarios y camiones policiales.

Tod@s aquell@s que no querían ser detened@s fueron instruid@s a salirse de la calle. Pero much@s se quedaron, desafiantes, enfrentando la policía que llevaba sus muchos instrumentos de

represión.

La mayoría de l@s que se quedó en la calle eran activistas indígenas. Fueron l@s últim@s en ser arrestad@s y metid@s en los camiones.

A tod@s l@s arrestad@s l@s soltaron dos horas después.

El fin de semana de Transformar el Día de Colón comenzó el 8 de octubre con una marcha de las Cuatro Direcciones. El fin de semana anterior se había celebrado foros sobre el racismo y el legado de Colón. Todo ello era un intento de promover un sentido de comunidad y mostrar que la Alianza para Transformar el Día de Colón, iniciado en 1989, no estaba organizado contra l@s italian@s, sino para mostrar el respeto hacia todas las culturas.

De este modo piden el fin del día feriado en honor a un violador y asesino que

comenzó el comercio de esclavos en esta parte del mundo. Desde que el Día de Colón fue iniciado en el estado de Colorado en 1905 por el gobernador Alva Adams, algunas de las más grandes manifestaciones en contra de ese día han ocurrido aquí.

Con los conflictos que los gobernantes de los EEUU han involucrado al país, la lucha en contra de las mentiras históricas se vuelve más fuerte, y seguirá así día por día mientras la resistencia a la agresión imperialista incrementa. El impulso hacia la guerra, tanto 500 años atrás como hoy en día, ha sido motivado siempre por la conquista y las ganancias, pero también acompañado de racismo e intolerancias.

De hecho, ha habido un aumento del odio contra los árabes y los musulmanes por parte de los líderes de este país y de sus medios de comunicación.

No era distinto cuando Colón y sus partidarios comenzaron con la esclavitud y genocidio de los pueblos indígenas de las Américas. Así que mientras salimos a las calles para protestar contra de la guerra, recordemos a Colón como lo que realmente era. □

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