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How can the struggle against Bush move forward?

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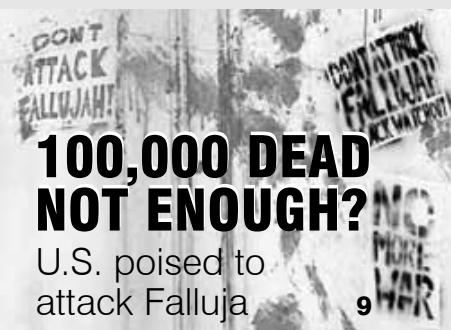
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# Masses face more war, poverty, racism Bush win sets stage for wide fightback

By Fred Goldstein

The electoral victory of George W. Bush, the Republican Party, and the right-wing and conservative forces fueling their campaign must serve as a wake-up call for the working class, the oppressed and all progressive and revolutionary forces to mobilize for struggle in the days ahead.

Tens of thousands of activists mobilized to defeat Bush at the polls, not because they were necessarily enamored of Sen. John Kerry, but because they wanted to put a stop to the Bush reaction. In the end their efforts were insufficient to overcome the vast campaign of reactionary politics and ideology promoted, not just by the Bush campaign, but by the capitalist media for months on end.

The media aided the Bush campaign in its effort to mobilize the fundamentalist right by dwelling on the opposition to same-sex marriage, and by giving equal time to so-called "right to life" advocates. Bush was thus greatly assisted in his effort to confuse and divide sections of the masses by anti-gay, anti-woman agitation. The networks and the print media conveniently legitimized and sanitized this as a debate over "social issues," instead of calling it the bigotry and sexism that it really is.

The vote showed the power of a highly funded, reactionary incumbent administration to organize armies of electioneers, and to dredge up and set in motion all the backward forces in society to turn out on election day. There was a record turnout of voters in this election—some estimates say it will reach 120 million—and they were turned out not only by the Kerry forces but also by the Bush machine.

Kerry himself did little to inspire the masses. He offered them little or next to nothing. His great electoral strength, as all the polls affirm, was the fear and hatred of Bush. In a word, his program was of little weight. His two concrete strong points were a woman's right to choose and the permission to bring in cheap prescription drugs from Canada. All the rest of his program was vague. It sounded like a list of tax breaks to the bosses to maybe create some jobs in the U.S. and achieve universal health care by giving people a tax credit. It did not really compute.

Beyond that he tried to outdo Bush on the phony "war against terrorism." By dwelling upon it excessively, instead of exposing it as a pretext for aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan, he helped Bush. By vowing to "win the war in Iraq" and to "stay the course" after he said it was the wrong war, Kerry not only confused the masses and demoralized the anti-war forces but he also reinforced the militarist mood promoted by and exploited by Bush.

Bush won the election by triumphing in areas in the South where racism, political reaction and the legacy of slavery are strongest and the unions and the working class are weakest and most poorly represented. He won the states in the Southwest and Great Plains area dominated by mine owners, millionaire land owners, agribusiness, cattle barons and oil magnates.

But in the large and middle-sized cities, in urban areas where tens of millions of workers and the oppressed people are con-

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# Let's make it four more years of resistance

By Deirdre Griswold

Strike while the iron is hot. Blacksmiths learned that's what you have to do to shape the softened metal into a formidable weapon or tool.

The political iron is hot right now as the progressive movement in the U.S. debates and analyzes the significance of the election and Bush's victory. All kinds of crises lie right under the surface, ready to burst out. The war of words is over and now it's a war against workers' pensions and health care, a war on youth, a war on Section 8 tenants, a war on gay and lesbian couples, a war to suppress civil rights and liberties, and a stunningly vicious war on ordinary people who happen to live in Iraq, where the oil is.

Everyone who is progressive needs to put their heads together and figure out how to move the struggle forward. There's a way to do that: the National Fightback Conference in New York on Nov. 13-14, sponsored by Workers World Party.

A lot of concerned people invested time and effort in the Kerry campaign, including many who weren't that inspired by the Massachusetts millionaire but desperately wanted to stop Bush. They're feeling very let down right now. Others saw this election as just another effort to divert the independent struggle movements that have been taking on war, racism and poverty.

No matter who you are, come to the conference and participate in a serious discussion of where to go from here. Bush's victory is not the end of history. Millions of people in the U.S. are facing the same issues. Younger people especially showed right away, on demonstrations starting the day after the election, that they're not going to lie down and roll over because Bush won.

So let's talk about strategies. There is stirring in the working class now, organized and unorganized. This is the class that has the social weight to seriously challenge the rotting capitalist system. What's needed is a clear program and the will to carry it out.

## Youth organizing meeting of FIST

A special feature of the conference will be the first national youth organizing meeting of FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together. It will take up: \*What youth can do to fight military recruiting and the draft. \*The role of youth in the struggle against racism, sexism, and LGBT oppression. \*Fighting back against police repression and the prison industrial complex. \*Building revolutionary consciousness among youth.

The conference will start out on Saturday morning with a plenary on "How to Forward the Movement?" That afternoon two other plenaries will address "The class struggle, at home and abroad," including the fight against imperialism.

Invited guest speakers will include Brenda Stokely, an organizer of the Million Worker March; Yoomi Jeong,

Secretary General of the Korea Truth Commission; and Dorotea Mendoza, secretary-general of Gabriela—a Philippines women's group.

Workers World Party candidates John Parker and Teresa Gutierrez will be participating in the plenaries, as will FIST organizers Julie Fry, Peter Gilbert and LeiLani Dowell—who was also a Peace and Freedom candidate in California.

In between the plenaries are many workshops and discussion groups, so people will have lots of opportunity to exchange ideas and questions.

## Wide-ranging workshops and discussion groups

A workshop on "Elections and the Capitalist State" will analyze the Anybody But Bush movement and the class character of the two major parties. Is there merit to the fears of fascism that impelled many into this movement? What form of state exists in the U.S. today? How democratic is imperialist democracy? How can the movement push back state repression?

Another workshop will take up the two pillars of anti-imperialist struggle in the Mideast today: the Palestinian and Iraqi resistance movements. It will focus especially on building international solidarity and a Bring the Troops Home Now movement here at home. It will review the experiences of the Million Worker March, which merged anti-war and workers' movements, and discuss how this can be strengthened in the upcoming Dec. 3-10 Stop the War Week.

A workshop on "Challenges Facing the Labor Movement Today" will discuss the significance of the Million Worker March, which succeeded despite resistance from the AFL-CIO leadership, and the growing struggles of immigrant workers. It will examine the changes taking place in the work force and why this is fueling the rise of new, more militant leaders.

"Building Class Unity in the Struggle against Racism, Sexism and Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans Oppression" is another workshop topic, as is "Fighting Capitalist Globalization with Revolutionary Internationalism." What will it take to change from polluting, exploiting capitalism to a world system that will benefit the majority of people as well as the environment?

There will be discussions on anti-imperialist struggles around the world, and one on "The ABCs of Marxism and Socialism."

Regular readers of Workers World newspaper will get a chance to hear from reporters and political analysts on our writing staff, many of whom are also activists in the many struggle movements we cover journalistically.

Make reservations now for the National Fightback Conference. Either register online at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org), see the coupon on page 2 of this paper for details, or call (212) 627-2994. □

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### 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! Rally and march. Gather at Hollywood and Highland, noon. 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](http://www.workers.org).

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SAT., NOV. 13 9 am Registration  
10 am-7 pm Plenaries, Panels & Workshops

SUN., NOV. 14 10 am-3 pm  
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PHOTO: BRAD GOODNIGHT

## Youth hassle Edwards & ROTC

By Hussam Eltayeb  
Raleigh, N.C.

As Democratic vice-presidential candidate John Edwards, the “home-town hero,” approached his polling site in his motorcade on Oct. 27, in order to engage in a media photo opportunity, hordes of anti-war protesters greeted him.

A number of members of the youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—along with activists from other regional organizations, held signs reading “Stop the war machine.” A number of bikers from Critical Mass chanted “Drop Bush not bombs.”

In order to vote, Edwards had to pass within 50 feet of the protesters.

Half an hour earlier, the bicyclists—

Critical Mass and FIST members—had taken over the downtown streets here. They clogged traffic at a time when thousands were attempting to drive to a joint Bon Jovi-Edwards rally.

The activists got different responses from drivers, ranging from honks of approval to curses. In one disturbing incident, an apparently pro-war truck driver stopped and hurled racist and homophobic slurs at FIST members. Despite that, the protest kept going.

As activists rode up and down past the long, long line of people waiting to get into the event, they led chants against the occupations of Iraq and Palestine.

“Lots of people in the line cheered our message,” said Peter Gilbert, a member of FIST.



That same day, other FIST members went looking for the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, which has conducted weekly outdoor drill formations on Wednesdays in a highly visible courtyard on the campus of North Carolina State University.

FIST members had effectively blocked and disrupted the ROTC drills on Sept. 29. [“Four days, four actions, one FIST,” *Workers World*, Oct. 14, 2004]

This time, FIST youth found that ROTC had moved their drill practice to a parking lot, hardly visible, behind the gym building. □

## Arrests of Critical Mass

# Police find new target: bicyclists

By Deirdre Griswold  
New York

New York City police have again used mass arrests to break up a ride of bicyclists. On Oct. 29, they arrested 33 people taking part in the monthly Critical Mass bike ride, which promotes environmentally friendly forms of transportation.

More than 1,000 bicyclists were on the ride, many dressed in Halloween costumes. They had started out at Union Square and headed north on Park Avenue. Police turned out in force.

The city had gone to court trying to stop the ride, but just the day before the mass arrests, a federal judge ruled that the Critical Mass event did not need a permit and that the city could not seize bicycles unless riders were charged with a crime or violated the law. This didn't stop the police.

Matthew Roth, an organizer and one of those arrested, said riders were targeted from the start.

“There was an air of intimidation,”

he told *Newsday*. “There was a van projecting a recorded voice saying that riders must follow a certain route and if they deviated, they would be arrested.”

The cyclists have been a target of police attack before. Some 264 Critical Mass bicyclists were arrested in August just days before huge demonstrations against the Republican National Convention. A number were brutally beaten. The arrests were seen as an attempt by police and city authorities, including billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg, to create an atmosphere of intimidation and fear before the protests.

Critical Mass, which describes itself as an “event” rather than an organization, inspires bike tours on the last Friday of each month in 250 cities across the globe.

In San Francisco, Critical Mass cyclists showed up Oct. 29 to support locked-out hotel workers.

KCBS reported that the riders chose a route that took them to several hotels affected by the lockout. “It makes me feel great. I'm loving it. It's encourag-

ing,” said one locked-out union worker. Richard McLean used to work as a bartender at the Hilton. He watched as bikes did to cars what strikers sometimes did to guests. “They're stopping traffic.”

In another example of outrageous police behavior, facilitated by beefed-up repression allowed under the “Patriot Act,” Boston cops recently fatally wounded a young woman celebrating the Red Sox victory over the Yankees. She was struck in the eye with a pepper-gas pellet during “crowd control.”

In a time of unpopular war, drastic climate change and growing economic problems and uncertainty for millions of workers, it is not surprising that the police see gatherings of young people as threatening to “order.” It is their job to protect a capitalist order that is increasingly destructive, degrading, oppressive and hated. The more they do their odious job, the more they antagonize the youth and propel them into struggle to uproot the system. □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

## Empire of oil—forever?

“He who owns oil will own the world ... who has oil has empire.”

—Henri Berenger, *Commissioner General for Oil Products, France, World War I*

No matter which way this god-forsaken “election” goes, America's imperial hunger for oil will continue. While the Republicans present a more bellicose face, the Democrats will certainly do the same thing, but perhaps with a smile.



That's what makes this advertising war, about who's tough and who's not, so utterly ridiculous. Both candidates will push imperial wars for American “natural resources” (in other words, oil), because that's what their financial backers demand.

The American economic machine began its industrial age with oil running those machines. Oil gave birth to the vast automotive industry, the resultant highway construction industry, the huge petrochemical industry, the explosion in plastics and the fueling of America's menacing military machine, which is being used to spark wars abroad, to protect U.S. control of oil.

One need not have been a history or political science major to see through the transparent justifications for the Second War on Iraq. It had nothing to do with “weapons of mass destruction,” nor to bring democracy—it was, and is, to control Iraq's vast oilfields. And Iraqis, as well as millions of others in the region, know this with a certainty that can only be matched by their assurance that the sun rises tomorrow.

In essence, the two corporate parties present a difference in degree; not in kind. But, thanks to the corporate media, this campaign will probably turn on the illusions of personality; on who smiles, who smirks, and who has a nice hairdo.

If Rome taught us anything, it's that empire wears many faces.

Many Democrats look back to the Clinton administration with longing; but it, too, is the longing for illusions. For it was during the Clinton years that the Defense Department touched base with the armed forces of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and began providing them with U.S. arms and training. The temporary U.S. military bases (the payoff for the arms and the training) became semi-permanent in the wake of 9/11, and it all came to be because those states ring the vast oil deposits near the Caspian Sea. In the words of a U.S. State Department report of 2002, U.S. aid is intended to “improve U.S.-Kazakh military cooperation while establishing a U.S.-interoperable base along the oil-rich Caspian.” (U.S. Dept. of State, “Congressional Budget Justifications: Foreign Operations, Fiscal Year 2003)

That's the backdoor reason for the invasion of Iraq.

Until America decides to get off the oil-pipe, it doesn't matter who is, or isn't elected. If they are part of either corporate party, they will swear fealty, not to the Constitution, but to the bottom lines of the oil companies.

That's what makes this nonsense about the “war on terror” or the “Iraqi liberation” so tragic. These are public relations sideshows, mounted by the political elite, projected by the media elite, on behalf of their economic elite, at the costs of billions of public dollars, and thousands of lives—so that oil can rule.

How can one “spread democracy” by ignoring democracy?

The largest anti-war demonstrations in American and world history did not deter this mad rush for black gold in Iraq. It did not stop this invasion erected on a bridge of lies.

Indeed, the American presidency was built upon the judicial theft of the election, and use of state power to intimidate, disenfranchise and betray the votes of tens of thousands in Florida alone. Yeah, the Bush Regime really wants to “spread democracy”!

In oil's name, the United States is immersed in a new kind of colonialism, for the resources that lie under foreign feet. They could care less about the people.

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# THE WAR MUST STOP NOW!

Not one more life - or U.S. bomb or bullet - or new war to pacify Iraq

The war and occupation can end now. And the people can end it!

Jobs - unions - healthcare education - housing bring the troops home now

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Conference in NYC

**Dec 5 - Solidarity Rally with Haiti**  
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**Jan 20 - Counterinaugural**  
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## As Austin onlookers cheer

# Marchers demand an end to executions

By Gloria Rubac  
Austin, Texas

The 5th Annual March to Stop Executions drew cheers from onlookers and shoppers here as hundreds of activists and families of death row prisoners demanded an end to executions.

Demonstrators gathered on Oct. 30 at Republic Park, marched through downtown Austin toward the State Capitol, passed the governor's mansion and rallied again at the Texas Supreme Court—the state's highest criminal court.

The overwhelming majority of the dozens of family members of death row prisoners attending the protest—some of whom also spoke at the rallies—were African American and Latin@. This reflects the disproportionate numbers of people from oppressed communities who are on death row, as well as the spirit of struggle and fightback present in the communities of color.

Monique Matthews came from Louisiana to speak on behalf of her brother, Ryan Matthews, who was released from Louisiana's death row earlier this year. He was the 115th innocent person released in the U.S. since 1972.

The website of Moratorium Now! stresses a key reason why so many people who are innocent end up on death row: more than 90 percent of people on death row in this country were too impoverished to hire a lawyer to defend them. ([www.quixote.org](http://www.quixote.org))

Njeri Shakur from the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement spoke to

the rally, encouraging the crowd to believe the people who say their family members on death row are innocent. Shakur pointed to the case of Tony Ford, convicted in El Paso by police testimony.

Because of an ongoing scandal in the crime lab of the Houston Police Department, many cases of innocent people who were sent to prison have now come to public attention. With this knowledge of crime lab incompetence and lies by police who have collaborated with district attorneys, it is likely that many more cases of innocence will come out.

Lee Bolton came from California to speak about her son, Nanon Williams, who was convicted and sent to death row based on reported results from the widely discredited crime lab. She drew wild cheers when she boldly proclaimed, "Nanon is innocent and we will free him from death row!"

Bruce Williams is fighting for Frances Newton, who has an execution date of Dec. 1. He told protesters he thinks he is closing in on finding out who the real killer was in this case. The cops had no evidence against Newton but tried her anyway, he said. He added that the Houston crime lab also botched the evidence in their ballistics investigation of Newton's case.

Other family members also stressed the innocence of their loved ones. Lawrence Foster defended his grandson, Kenneth Foster. Delia Perez-Meyer thanked everyone for their support of her brother, Louis Perez. Rodney Reed's mother, Sandra Reed, said her family is going to fight

until he is exonerated.

Letty Gonzales shared her pain as she spoke of her brother, Andrew Flores, executed in September by the state of Texas.

### Traveled far and wide to attend

A number of activists and friends of death row prisoners traveled from Europe to the protest. They included friends of Daryl Wheatfall, Hank Skinner and Robert Acuna.

A highlight of the rally was entertainment by the Welfare Poets from New York City—Puerto Rican musicians and spoken-word artists who presented a message of liberation to the crowd. This group raised the spirit and courage of all present.

This group was invited to the demonstration by four of the men living on death row in Texas: Randy Arroyo, Tony Ford, Derrick Frazier and Kenneth Foster.

The Welfare Poets brought information and inspiration to those whose friends and family members are facing the oppression of the racist and anti-poor criminal justice system and those fighting for abolition of the death penalty.

The poets, as well as the emcees and many in the crowd, expressed profound gratitude to the four men on death row who took it upon themselves to be in contact with the band and invite them to participate in the march and rally.

"We love being with the people here in Texas who are fighting for freedom," said Hector Rivera, one of the band's founders. □

## Human Rights Weekend to honor Safiya Bukhari

By Monica Moorehead  
New York

The Jericho Movement has declared Dec. 10-11 in New York City as "Safiya Bukhari International Human Rights Weekend."

Jericho was founded March 28, 1998, by a dedicated group predominantly made up of seasoned Black freedom fighters nationwide—many of whom were once political prisoners and have since been released. One of those freedom fighters was Safiya Bukhari. She tragically passed away in 2003, at age 53, after a long illness.

Inside the U.S., political and community activists have long used Dec. 10 to tie together important struggles at home and abroad, especially fighting racist repression.

On Dec. 10, 1948, the then newly formed United Nations adopted a Universal Declaration of Human Rights in "areas of peace, humanitarian assistance, sustainable development and social and economic progress." Notwithstanding the fact that the UN has since, on the whole, been used as a world body to condone imperialist war and occupation—especially in the cases of Iraq, Palestine, Haiti and Afghanistan—Dec. 10 has been universally recognized as Human Rights Day.

This year the events here will honor Bukhari, a member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army. She served as vice president of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika.

Since the 1960s, the Republic of New Afrika has promoted the establishment of a separate Black nation in the Deep South to exercise the right to self-determination.

Bukhari was one in a long list of victims of the FBI's Cointelpro operations that targeted and persecuted leaders and key activists of national liberation and civil rights movements in the U.S. She spent nine years in prison.

In 1992, she helped form the New York Free Mumia Coalition which still works diligently to help free African American journalist and death row political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal. Bukhari was also co-chair of the Jericho Movement and the Free Mumia coalition until her death.

In an essay on U.S. political repression, Bukhari wrote, "We have to build a movement to liberate our people. The issue of political prisoners is part of that movement that we are building and in building that movement we must understand that this is



not a separate issue. It is an integral part of that movement; it can't be put in front of the movement and can't be an after thought. It must be woven into the very fibers... Organize, Educate, Liberate to FREE OUR POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR!!!" ([thejerichomovement.com](http://thejerichomovement.com))

The aim of Jericho is to raise broader awareness of political prisoners languishing in U.S. jails for many years and to organize campaigns for their freedom. Jericho supports Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier, the MOVE 9, Sundiata Acoli, Eddie Conway, Jalil Muntaqim, Marilyn Buck, Oscar Lopez Rivera, Kathy Boudin and others.

A calendar of events has been scheduled for Dec. 10-11 in New York City.

On Dec. 10, a cultural event will take place at Hunter College, 68th St. at Lexington Ave., from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

On Dec. 11, a "Networking for Activists" is scheduled at the UN Church Center, 777 UN Plaza, 41st St. and 1st Ave., from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Afterward, a demonstration and rally in support of political prisoners and human rights worldwide will take place at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza.

For more information, call NYC Jericho, (718) 220-6004. □

# ON THE

## Hotel struggles continue around U.S.

Workers in UNITE HERE continue to be on strike or locked out at 21 hotels in the U.S. and Canada.

In addition, workers in Local 11 in Los Angeles are preparing to call a boycott of nine luxury hotels there. The union says the hotels are continuing to pressure and intimidate workers; have taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from the pockets of workers through an allegedly illegal medical co-payment; continue to saddle workers with unreasonable workloads; and continue to ignore the fact that over 90 percent of Local 11 members reject their contract proposals.

And in Washington, D.C., the union has put 14 hotels on notice that the workers are prepared to strike if necessary. Hotel managers there negotiating with Local 25 are threatening workers with higher health care costs unless they accept the hotels' offer.

In San Francisco, hotels continue to lock out 4,000 workers, but they are getting widespread support from the community.

On Oct. 26, after the city's hotel operators rejected the mayor's proposed 90-day cooling-off period, Mayor Gavin Newsom joined workers on the picket line, called for a boycott of the 14 hotels and urged other mayors to play hardball with corporate hotel owners. Two days later, a group from the Haiti Action Committee, which was holding a protest of the U.S.-led occupation of Haiti, then marched to several hotels and joined the picket lines in solidarity with the workers. And on Oct. 29, Critical Mass bicyclists pedaled from hotel to hotel giving the workers encouragement.

They got another boost when the state government concluded that they are eligible for unemployment insurance.

In Boston on Oct. 20, 85 members of UNITE HERE Local 26 held a sit-in at a downtown Hyatt Regency to show solidarity with locked-out union members in San Francisco.

Hotel workers are trying to win fair contracts that would expire in 2006, giving workers parity to negotiate with the increasingly global hotel industry.



Atlantic City casino workers celebrate settlement.

A tentative agreement has been reached in the month-long strike of 10,000 workers at casinos in Atlantic City, N.J. After large rallies that drew thousands of supporters to the picket lines, including celebrities Danny Glover, Jesse Jackson and Haitian musician Wyclef Jean, the company substantially improved its offer. "Our members have achieved the best contract in the history of Local 54 and in the history of the gaming industry," said Bob McDevitt, president of UNITE HERE Local 54. "The solidarity and determination of Local 54 members during the strike led to the major improvements in this tentative settlement, as compared to the casino's final offer before the strike."

McDevitt continued: "The tentative agreement consists of substantial increases in wages, health and pension contributions. It ensures continued full family healthcare coverage with no payroll deductions for five years. It makes sure none of our jobs will be subcontracted, and that future growth in Atlantic City will be done with good, union jobs. It protects Local 54 members and their union contract in the event any casino is sold. And every single striker—with no exceptions—goes back to work at their same job, shift, station and seniority."

The union says the five-year agreement includes a 91-percent increase in employer healthcare contributions to continue fully employer-paid family healthcare coverage with no paycheck deductions and a 51-percent increase in employer pension contributions over the life of the contract.

# PICKET LINE

SUE DAVIS

## Half of unionists against Iraq war

Somewhere between 4 million and 5.5 million workers are members of unions or state and local labor federations that oppose the war, estimated David Swanson, media coordinator of the International Labor Communicators Association, in an Oct. 10 article posted on ILCAonline.org. "The resolutions passed by these organizations are not all identical," he said, "but all oppose the war, and most very clearly call for immediate withdrawal."

Swanson noted that there is "an unknown amount of overlap between these two counts, since some of the unions opposing the war have locals that belong to state and regional bodies opposing the war. But there are also a number of unions and regional organizations opposing the war that are not included. It seems safe to say that something approaching half of the U.S. labor movement is now officially for peace." Details of Swanson's calculation are posted in a footnote to his online article.

The list of state labor federations opposing the war now includes Maryland, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin, in addition to California. Also included are at least 20 district and regional bodies, more than 20 central labor councils and 20 local unions, as well as dozens of ad hoc committees and other labor organizations, including the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and Pride At Work—all allied organizations of the AFL-CIO.

## Union win at New School

On Oct. 15 the New School formally recognized Academics Come Together-UAW (ACT-UAW) as the collective bargaining agent for its part-time faculty. But the win didn't come easily.

After a February election where part-time faculty designated ACT-UAW as their collective bargaining agent, the New School appealed the vote to the National Labor Relations Board, asking the board to void the election. But the NLRB upheld the vote on Sept. 22. In response to the New School's decision to negotiate, ACT-UAW has called off its boycott of New School events. To learn more about the struggle go to [www.newschooluaw.org](http://www.newschooluaw.org); send messages of solidarity to [mail@newschooluaw.org](mailto:mail@newschooluaw.org).

## Maintenance workers win 2-year strike

Striking maintenance workers at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, east of Long Island's North Fork, held out for two long years. But that made the contract ratified Oct. 27 by members of Local 30 of the Operating Engineers all the sweeter. The workers won 3 percent raises each year through 2007 and increases in health and pension benefits. The only contract term that imposed limits on the workers is a no-strike clause with mandatory arbitration; the company is also prohibited from locking the workers out.

## Canadians honor U.S. worker killed on job

Quebecor is one of the largest commercial printers in the world. Its workers in the U.S. are organizing to join the Graphic Communications International Union that already represents Quebecor workers in Canada. When workers at Quebecor plants in Toronto and Vancouver learned that Carolyn Cox Campbell had been killed Oct. 15 in a forklift accident at Quebecor's plant in Versailles, Ky., they showed solidarity by honoring her with a moment of silence.

"This was a terrible tragedy. The Canadian shops wanted to let workers in Versailles know they are not alone," said Ian Clarke, a worker at Quebecor in Toronto and a member of GCIU Local 100M.

One of the major issues in the organizing drive, launched in December 2003, is job safety. Campbell's death only underscores the severity of the problem. The goal of the Justice@Quebecor campaign is to win basic human rights on the job at Quebecor's facilities worldwide. For more information, go to [www.justice@quebecor.org](http://www.justice@quebecor.org). □

# Anti-war solidarity with hotel workers

By Adrian Garcia  
Los Angeles

"Corporations overlap and cross over into [different] industries," explained Maria Elena Durazo. "Why shouldn't workers come together and fight corporations?"

Durazo, president of Local 11 of UNITE HERE, was explaining to an audience of anti-war activists why textile and hotel workers have merged to form this large new international union. The Oct. 29 meeting was a solidarity event to support hotel workers in Los Angeles and other cities in the U.S. and Canada who are facing lock-outs and a possible strike.

Called by the L.A. branch of the International Action Center, the forum also heard from Victor Narro, director of the UCLA Labor Center, and Maggie Vascassenno, organizer for the IAC.

Vascassenno kicked off the spirited meeting with an eyewitness report from the Million Worker March, held in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 17. She described the numerous

unions from throughout the country that took part in the historic march, along with anti-war organizations like the IAC and celebrities like Danny Glover and Martin Luther King III. "The Million Worker March has arrived and we should join to build an independent anti-war movement," pronounced Vascassenno.

Narro commended the IAC for sponsoring an event in support of hotel workers, and for its previous work on behalf of striking supermarket workers.

He presented a picture of unity and solidarity among workers against corporations that are intent on crushing their union. As an example, Narro spoke about an agreement by day laborers who have vowed not to scab on locked-out hotel workers. He also noted the support from student organizations, including the Mexican/Chican@ group MEChA and Asian Pacific groups. "We must come together and fight corporate greed and exploitation," exhorted Narro.

Durazo described the conditions behind the recent merger of textile and hotel workers that produced



WW PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO  
Maria Elena Durazo

UNITE HERE. It was, she said, "a premeditated act for the purpose of establishing ourselves in advance to go into this struggle." The struggle involves battling big corporations, such as the Hyatt and Starwood hotel chains, for retention of health benefits and to have hotel workers' contracts expire simultaneously in 2006.

Durazo also presented some grave statistics concerning hotel workers. According to Durazo, "90 percent of hotel workers, who are mostly women of color, are un-unionized." At the same time, Durazo described a solid struggle of resistance, with actions occurring throughout the country, and more to follow. "We hope these actions are contagious," she concluded. □

## Massey's big mess

# Coal miners fight union-busting bankruptcy

By David Hoskins  
Charleston, W. Va.

Allegations have been flying that Horizon Natural Resources and Massey Energy Co. have conspired to undermine the wages and benefits of unionized workers. In response, a progressive coalition of miners, students and community activists was formed after a fightback rally in a town near the Cannelton, W. Va., coal mine.

In September of this year Horizon placed its Cannelton mine on idle and laid off all its unionized workforce. Horizon recently sold the mine to Massey Energy Co. Union activists claim that Massey did not place the highest bid; other bidders had promised to keep the union workforce mostly intact.

Horizon had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in November 2002. This is the second time that owners of this company have used the bankruptcy court to slide out of their obligations to the workers. Horizon is a reincarnation of AEI Resources Inc., which had filed for bankruptcy in February 2002. According to the company's web site, "Less than three months later, on May 9, it emerged as Horizon, the nation's fourth-largest coal company. Horizon operates 42 mines, including 27 surface and 15 underground, in five states: Kentucky, West Virginia, Illinois, Indiana and Colorado."

The United Mine Workers of America protested the recent sale of Horizon because it would strip more than 5,000 active and retired coal miners of health benefits and job security.

The federal bankruptcy judge overseeing the sale allowed Massey's assault on the union to go forward when he gave permission to cancel the union contracts for current workers and retirees. Massey, the new owner of the mine, has since fired over 250 coal miners in West Virginia for connections with the UMWA. Retirees have lost the healthcare and pension benefits they were depending on after exiting the workforce, adding to the 270,000 West Virginians who already lack healthcare.

In a move reminiscent of the West Virginia Coal Mine Wars of 1912-1921, Massey has placed armed guards on the premises to intimidate workers and the community into submission.

This declaration of war on the working class by Massey Energy is nothing new to Appalachians. For years Massey has been plagued by a bad reputation for union busting and environmental destruction.

At an Oct. 21 UMWA rally at a packed high school gym in Smithers, W. Va., near Cannelton, miners and the union promised to stand up and fight to regain their voice in the workplace. If Massey thought it was going to close this deal in the comfort of the courtroom, it is sadly mistaken. Students, miners and community activists are uniting in what looks to be a long struggle as workers fight back against Massey's war on the workers.

This progressive coalition is demanding a return of healthcare benefits to all retirees, retention of the union and its current contract, the removal of all armed guards from the Cannelton mine, and an investigation into the purchase of Horizon Mines by Massey Energy. One thing that this ordeal makes abundantly clear to West Virginians is that the business tycoons, government and judges in this country are not on the side of the workers and their families. □

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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# Struggle continues for

By Monica Moorehead

It's finally over. In a campaign that cost them over \$2 billion, George W. Bush has won reelection to the U.S. presidency, outpolling Sen. John Kerry by a margin of about 3.5 million votes, as of Nov. 3.

How will this election be remembered? Some say this was the most important election ever. What that means exactly has never been explained.

The question is, how SHOULD this election be remembered? Many will surely remember how undemocratic it was, due to the attempted and outright suppression of voters, especially in the oppressed communities.

Ron Gould is the former assistant chief electoral officer for Elections Canada. He has been involved in 90 election missions in 70 countries. After observing the voting process in Miami-Dade County on Nov. 2, he said: "Unlike almost every other country in the world, there is not one national election today. The decentralized system means that rules vary widely county by county, so there are actually more than 13,000 elections today." (International Herald Tribune, Nov. 3)

It was very unusual for the U.S. government to allow international monitors to critique the voting process here. Republican strategists, especially, were not happy with such scrutiny, but conceded in

light of their tainted reputation from the 2000 presidential elections.

This, however, did not stop them in their efforts to intimidate, disqualify and demonize voters who traditionally vote for the Democratic Party. This time their tactics were generally more sophisticated, but, in some instances, more brazen.

If added up, those who vote Democratic are mostly women and/or people of color, the youth and low-wage workers as well as those who are pro-union, pro-choice and pro-civil rights. In recent times, African Americans have been more identified with the Democratic Party than any other group. So it comes as no surprise that the Republican Party did everything possible

to suppress the Black vote, legally and illegally, to gain the upper hand.

It took over a month for Bush to be selected as president in 2000, based on the outright theft by the Republicans of the heavily pro-Democratic Black vote in Florida. Even though Bush won the Florida vote this time, the state was a main battleground over voter disenfranchisement.

## Intimidation before the vote

The following accounts are from a recent AFL-CIO Working Families e-Activist list released before Nov. 2:

"In Pennsylvania, Republican House Speaker and Bush-Cheney '04 State Regional Campaign Chair John Perzel

## Parker in-your-face with Kerry

# Socialists campaign in swing states

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

The three candidates of Workers World Party—John Parker for president, Teresa Gutierrez for vice president and LeiLani Dowell for Congress—completed a whirlwind week at the end of October that took them through the battleground "swing" states of New Mexico, Illinois and Michigan, with a final stop in the Baltimore-Washington area.

Parker said, "This campaign made it clear there's a lot of frustration with capitalism. It's obvious that the system is unable to meet the basic needs of working people. And the people we met with seemed ready, and determined, to fight for fundamental change."

Parker, accompanied by Dowell, went nose-to-nose with Democrat John Kerry at a huge outdoor rally of 18,000 in Albuquerque on Oct. 26. Working his way to within 15 feet of the podium where Kerry was speaking, Parker raised a WWP placard that said, "No Kerry. No Bush. No war." Then Parker challenged, "Why do you and Bush want to continue the U.S. terror against Iraq? This war is all about oil and profits, and you and Bush know it! Why are you and Bush attacking immigrants with Homeland Security and the Patriot Act?"

He called out these questions repeatedly as he was surrounded by the Secret Service.

The media censored Parker's protest by screening out his voice on the videotape later run as rally news coverage. But the issues he raised were on the minds of local residents, as candidates found out when they later met with a spirited group for discussion. Organized by an Albuquerque activist who had traveled with this summer's Venceremos Brigade to Cuba, the meeting drew people who wanted in-depth answers to why Democratic candidate Kerry was not the solution to the reactionary policies of President George W. Bush.

The candidates then traveled to the Midwest for a series of meetings, beginning with two in Chicago on Oct. 28. The staff and clients of Access Living, a disabled rights agency, welcomed them at a lunchtime discussion. They asked probing questions about the drastic loss of civil liberties under the Bush administration.

The candidates agreed that increasingly heavy repression, felt especially in communities of color, can make people fearful of a rise of fascism, so that Kerry could look like an alternative. But they emphasized that the only way to truly secure our



John Parker rallies in support of the hotel workers in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 17 during the Million Worker March. LeiLani Dowell, Teresa Gutierrez at the June Pride March in New York City.



WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL AND JOHN PARKER

rights is to fight for them in a mass independent movement that shows its power in numbers in the streets.

An evening meeting, sponsored by the Workers World Party branch of Chicago, began with a report on an ongoing strike by city college teachers against overcrowded classrooms and higher work loads. The candidates then connected this

local struggle to the demands raised by the Oct. 17 Million Worker March in Washington, D.C., which called for "Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation."

Local organizer Peter Kimball said the candidates' open dialogue with participants was "great for the movement."

Activists in Ann Arbor, Mich., at the

University of Michigan, put together a meeting for the candidates at the request of other students wanting to learn about socialism. In an informal discussion in a residence hall on Oct. 29, the candidates spoke about why capitalism is not "the end of history" and how socialism is a system that can truly meet human needs.

*Continued on page 10*

# Bush win sets stage for wide

*Continued from page 1*

centrated—in the Northeast, Midwest and West Coast—Bush's reactionary agenda was rejected across the board, mostly by significant margins.

A great deal is being made of Bush having won the popular vote by 59 million to 55.4 million for Kerry—as of Nov. 3. This is definitely a negative development in politics and gives the Bush forces a position of strength from which to advance their program of war and domestic reaction. But both Bush and the capitalist press are making far too much out of it.

It is said that Bush now has a "mandate." But it is clear from this election that he has no mandate whatsoever from the workers, from the unions, from Black people—who voted against him 9 or 10 to 1, depending on which polls one uses. He has no mandate from Latinos, who voted against him by 60 percent. In fact, he has no mandate from 54 million people, plus the millions of immigrant workers who cannot even vote at all.

If you detach the 54 million number

from the electoral process and think of those same numbers in the context of organized resistance and struggle opposing the Bush program, then the prospect for pushing back Bush can be seen in an entirely different light.

The forces that resisted Bush electorally have their greatest strength among the workers, and particularly among the organized workers in the urban centers—from Baltimore to New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and so on.

If one tenth of the people who voted for Kerry were now to be mobilized for struggle, if one hundredth of the close to a billion dollars spent to finance Kerry's campaign were now used to open up a counteroffensive against the war in Iraq and the assault on labor, the entire politics of the country could be turned around, Bush's electoral victory notwithstanding.

The Bush victory is nothing like the Reagan victory of 1980. At that time, Reagan won the industrial states away from the Democrats and took the working class all the way to the right. He won Michigan, Wisconsin, California,

Illinois and Pennsylvania. These workers had traditionally been Democrats. From that election came the phrase "Reagan Democrats," meaning workers who had been suckered by the Reagan program. That's where Reagan's political strength derived from.

Bush was unable to turn the workers around in this election, even though some sections may have fallen prey to his "social issues" here and there. This election has something in common with the Nixon victory in 1968 in that, after he won, Nixon had to continue the Vietnam War. Declaring he was going to bring "peace with honor," he proceeded to bomb the cities of North Vietnam. What followed was a firestorm of anti-war struggle which eventually led to the end of the draft and the so-called "Vietnamization" of the war, a prelude to U.S. withdrawal.

Bush has won his election but he is now embarking on a bloody course to subdue the resistance in Iraq. But unlike during the Nixon era—when the labor movement and the working class was removed from the anti-war struggle and largely apathetic—Bush is moving toward an escala-



# Black voting rights

acknowledged his job is to suppress the largely minority Philadelphia vote. "The Kerry campaign needs to come out with humongous numbers here in Philadelphia," Perzel told U.S. News & World Report. "It's important for me to keep that number down."

"In Ohio, Bush supporters filed 35,000 voter eligibility challenges and were preparing to send challengers to 8,000 polling places on Election Day to suppress more votes, according to The Washington Post. A judge had to step in to block their efforts."

That judge was overruled in federal court, but the Republicans, perhaps fearing real confrontations, pulled back on actually challenging voters at the polls in this crucial swing state.

They did push for a court review of about 14,000 registrations in the Cleveland area, but a judge turned down their request on Nov. 1. Acorn, a nonprofit group that conducted voter registration in poor neighborhoods, asserts that 46 percent of the Republican challenges in Cuyahoga County, which includes Cleveland, were against Black people, who represent only 27 percent of the county's population. The city of Cleveland is over 50-percent Black.

Republican lawyers armed with the photos of 1,700 "felons" and their "criminal records" were positioned in various Black polling places in Florida in case they tried to vote. Under Florida law, any "felon" not granted clemency cannot vote.

The racist criminal justice system in the U.S. guarantees that African Americans make up a disproportionate number of those considered "felons." Earlier this year, former felons granted clemency could not find their names reinstated on the voting rosters. A class action lawsuit was filed on their behalf.

Documents prepared for top National Convention and Bush campaign operatives listed voters in predominantly Black areas of Jacksonville, Fla., whose votes Bush supporters likely would challenge (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights).

This past summer, Black senior voters in Orlando were visited in their homes by police openly wearing guns who said they were "investigating voter fraud."

There have been reports about 60,000

"missing" absentee ballots in Florida that the U.S. postal service could not seem to find.

## Struggle is the answer, not elections

There is no class distinction between the leaderships of the Democratic and Republican parties—these predominantly white leaders are tied, to one degree or another, to the interests of the ruling class. While Bush initiated the war on Iraq, Kerry made it clear during his campaign that he would not only keep U.S. troops in Iraq but would seek to expand that war.

There are, however, tactical and social differences between the Democrats and

Republicans. The Democratic Party leadership relies heavily on a mass base that includes a vast majority of organized labor and oppressed people.

The intimidation and suppression of the vote shows that racism and national oppression played a strategic role in the outcome of this election. The right to vote is a hard-won bourgeois democratic right that is still being denied to tens of millions of oppressed people, including immigrant workers who toil in the fields, restaurants and factories of the U.S.

To forge class unity among workers of all nationalities, concrete support for the most marginalized and oppressed people

must be mounted, including defending their right to vote, no matter who they vote for. The struggle for the right to vote is a continuation of earlier struggles to break the monopoly on the political process exercised by rich, white men of property.

Now that the 2004 elections are history, the progressive movement, including those fighting for a socialist future, must take heart by regrouping and rededicating itself to grow stronger and more confident. This positive attitude is necessary in order to fight for independence from the stranglehold of the big business parties and rid the planet of racism, poverty and capitalist exploitation once and for all. □

## Election validates premise of MILLION WORKER MARCH

By Larry Holmes

Sometimes it takes a little while for people to appreciate how significant something was. This is very true of the Million Worker March on Oct. 17 in Washington, D.C.

It's no small accomplishment to bring together some 10,000 workers, representing scores of labor unions in every part of the country, along with a slice of the anti-war movement and progressives in Washington, D.C., on any day, under any circumstances.

To the many who came to the MWM, it was like holding a national convention of workers who understood the necessity of the working class having an independent voice or "speaking in its own name"—as MWM literature explained.

In all honesty, when one considers what the MWM was up against, the "Anybody But Bush" pressure to do nothing but concentrate on the election, the lack of any serious funds, as well as constant hostility both from wrong-minded leaders in the labor movement who should have known better and from the government—it's almost a miracle that it happened at all.

Now that we are all pondering what to do with the outcome of the presidential election, it's instructive to remember the essential message overriding the MWM: no matter what happens on Nov. 2, the working class is going to be organizing, it's going to be fighting, it's going to be in the face of the bosses, getting stronger, getting more unified, no matter who wins.

As I looked over the election exit polls from state to state, it occurred to me just what the election is from our view. On Nov. 2, tens of millions of low-wage workers and unemployed people—the workers who make \$7 an hour and less, who have no health insurance, who work in hotels, laundries, chicken processing plants, who clean houses and hotel rooms—tried to vote Bush out.

If the vote was based on those who make under \$30,000 a year, Bush would have lost not only Ohio and Florida, he would have lost every state, including every state in the South as well as "Bush country" Texas.

Poor and working people voted in some cases 3 to 1 to get rid of him. It is these workers, the ones who need a voice, the ones whose issues were not really talked about, that the MWM wanted to, and to a great extent did, push forth into the light of day.

The election buried the workers under-



WW PHOTO: ARTURO PEREZ SAAD

Larry Holmes speaking at the Million Worker March.

neath John Kerry's bourgeois business-as-usual politics.

MWM was initiated by African American militants in Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. What made it so unique and revolutionary was that even though it came from Black militants, the call was to all workers, regardless of race or nationality. It was a call for workers' unity.

Many heeded the call. Part of our problem is that more didn't.

What the MWM leaders understood was that the problem was not just Bush. It's capitalism.

It's not only George W. Bush who's taking a meat cleaver to the health benefits, wages and rights and unions of workers. It is a systemic crisis—the unrestrained rampage of capitalism pitting workers against each other and consuming the lives and resources of the planet.

This has popularly come to be known as globalization.

MWM was an effort to respond to this crisis. To push forward the fight to organize workers. To strengthen unions. To make them more independent, more inclusive, more radical, more struggle-oriented, more militant and global in their outlook.

The response of the top leadership of the AFL-CIO to the Million Worker March can politely be called a big mistake. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney issued a statement in response to MWM last summer saying that, while the AFL-CIO leadership agrees with the goals of the march,

we feel that all of our efforts should be directed to the elections and so we are instructing the members of the AFL-CIO not to participate in it.

In other words, in his view, you couldn't have both. It was impermissible to work on the elections and the Million Worker March at the same time. It was impermissible to have the march at all.

Many progressives in the labor movement—fortunately, not all—agreed with Sweeney and acted accordingly.

It's an old argument on the left. Whether we should be "dreamers" and organize independent of the two capitalist parties, or whether we should be "practical."

All things considered, at this moment those of us who worked hard on the MWM consider ourselves dreamers who are acting very practically.

Anyone who went out and distributed a leaflet for the Million Worker March can tell you that the appeal and the popularity of it were obvious. What we lacked was the funds and the support necessary to fully realize the dream.

The organized labor movement probably spent several hundred million dollars on the elections. Workers have the right to do that if they believe that it serves their interests. Whether it does or not is subject to argument.

If MWM organizers had had a budget equal to 1 percent of what labor spent—let's say \$2 million to \$3 million—we would have had to rent a big part of the state of Maryland just to have space to park the buses.

One more lesson about the Million Worker March in the wake of the elections.

When you look at what the Bush forces did to generate virulent anti-lesbian, gay, bi and trans bigotry, anti-woman, racist and anti-immigrant ideas in order to "move their base" to the polls, it should remind us that when there isn't enough of a strong, independent and confident workers' movement and workers' struggle, it makes it all the more easier to fill the void with a lot of dangerous, reactionary and diversionary stuff.

The good news is that now that the elections are finally over, we have a chance to open up the next phase of the struggle against the war and the system responsible for war.

Anyone for a Million Worker March? Holmes is a member of Workers World Party's Secretariat and one of the organizers of the Million Worker March.

## fightback

tion at a time when wages are declining, jobs are being lost, budgets and social services are being cut in the states because federal tax cuts to the rich have left no money for any form of assistance, and the workers are showing a renewed anti-war sentiment.

In truth, Kerry would have had to confront the same crisis in Iraq and enforce the same economic hardships on the workers that Bush will try to do. It is capitalist imperialism and the big corporations running it that determine the course in war and peace, that impose exploitation and plunder.

Now that the elections are past, it is high time to pay attention to moving forward by mobilization and struggle. It is time to expand the conception of the Million Worker March, of workers marching and speaking in their own name, as the MWM did so gloriously even before the election.

This is the way to steal back Bush's political victory from him and his reactionary administration. They have won the election, but they are far from winning the struggles that are sure to follow. □

# Elections in Uruguay, Venezuela show waning grip of imperialism

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

The people of South America are in a struggle to take back their countries from the grasp of those representing transnational capital and the imperialist-imposed neoliberal process of privatization and "open markets." This struggle was reflected Oct. 31, just two days before the too-much-talked-about U.S. elections, in elections in both Uruguay in the south and Venezuela in the north of the continent.

In Uruguay, a coalition of left to center-left parties, groups and individuals won the presidency by a wide margin. Many Uruguayans had gone into exile when a repressive military dictatorship took over in the 1970s. Out of an estimated 500,000 who live abroad, some 40,000 returned to their country just before the election to be able to participate. They traveled from Europe and the nearby countries of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, both to participate in the elections and be part of the historic moment. Airports, ports and bus terminals were festive as relatives and friends welcomed their loved ones, mostly young, who were exiled for political or economic reasons.

Dr. Tabaré Vázquez, candidate of the Frente Amplio (Broad Front), won by a wide margin in the first round. This is the first time in Uruguay's 170-year history that a leftist has won the highest government office. Dr. Vázquez, a socialist and an oncologist who treats cancer patients, from 1990 until 1995 was the mayor of Montevideo, the nation's capital, where half of the country's population resides.

About half a million people had attended the closing rally of the FA campaign on Oct. 27. After the elections, as soon as the first results were known, people from poor neighborhoods poured into the center of Montevideo where the FA's headquarters are located. Shouts of "Uruguay, Uruguay, Uruguay" were mixed with revolutionary songs and slogans.

Besides electing a president, the people overwhelmingly decided against a proposal for a constitutional amendment that would have privatized the water. This was a major setback for transnational corporations, which are intensifying their vulture-like pursuit of water resources all over the region.

This country of only 3.4 million people was once dubbed the Switzerland of Latin America. Education and social benefits were guaranteed, paid mostly from the revenues of meat and wool exports. Two centrist capitalist parties, the Colorados (Reds) and the Blancos (Whites), have been swapping power ever since the middle of the 1800s. A military dictatorship ruled the country from 1973 to 1985.

The façade of a prosperous, egalitarian country more democratic than its neighbors was punctured by the rise of an urban guerrilla movement in the 1960s—the National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros), which distributed food to the poor. In 1971 the FA was formed. Former guerrilla members now form the largest sector of FA members.

Even in this Latin American "Switzerland," neoliberal formulas led to indebtedness to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Privatization of national enterprises and resources and reduction of social programs became a reality. The terrible financial collapse that crumbled Argentina and the fall of Brazil's currency, the real, were also severe blows to Uruguay's economy. These two countries were the base of its income through export and tourism.

The economy began contracting in 2001, several banks were closed, bank deposits in foreign currencies were frozen and unemployment rose to 19.8 percent. Jorge Battle, the current president and a close U.S. ally, set in motion fiscal measures to improve the economy, which by 2003 showed a modest upswing that continued to the first months of 2004.

However, this did not translate into any improvement in the quality of life for the majority of the people.

Poverty increased, and now 32 percent of the population, with 56 percent of Uruguay's children under the age of 6, lives under the poverty level. External debt is now \$13 billion.

This situation has increased inequality and dissatisfaction. Because of it, the FA over the years has steadily increased in numbers and power. Communists, socialists, labor and former guerrillas united. Even some Social and Christian Democrats and Nationalists disaffiliated from their parties to join the FA, which organizes through neighborhood-based committees. Well-known Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano says that this political force "grew day by day, house by house, without noise, in silence, without ostentation ... and the most important thing is that it grew from the bottom up."

Members pay monthly dues and elect their representatives. A National Plenum and Political Bureau are the permanent leadership bodies. The name has evolved to Progressive Encounter Broad Front New Majority, reflecting the coalition character and the participation of varied political forces.

Tabaré Vázquez has promised to address the social emergency, starting with a \$100-million emergency plan of assistance to the poorest sectors of the population and working for a more equitable distribution of the nation's wealth.

While the people in Latin America are celebrating, Washington is not. Philadelphia Inquirer foreign staff reporter Kevin Hall wrote on Nov. 1: "Socialist Tabaré Vázquez won a majority of votes for president in Uruguay yesterday, adding his nation to South America's political swing to the left and potentially denying the United States an important ally in the region." The New York Times describes the FA as an "ungainly beast."

The U.S. ruling class is certainly upset with the election results, for it will lose a loyal ally who not only imposed the criminal neoliberal measures but also backed U.S. "free trade" agreements for the Americas and joined its attempts to isolate Cuba. In 2003 and 2004, Uruguay presented resolutions in the United Nations condemning Cuba for human rights abuses. Now Tabaré Vázquez has called for "independence with respect to political and military alliances under the hegemony of great powers" and promises to restore relations with Cuba.

Daniel Viglietti, an Uruguayan composer and musician, says: "This is a historic moment in Latin America, it is the people's time."

## Bolivarians move forward in Venezuela

In the north, in Venezuela, reveille rang out at 3 a.m. on Oct. 31 announcing the time to wake up and get ready to vote. Although not as internationally publicized as the presidential referendum of Aug. 15, these regional and local elections were an important step in the advancement of what Venezuelans call the Bolivarian Revolution. The opposition's hold was broken on many gubernatorial and mayoral offices.

More than 120,000 troops and police were in place throughout the country to ensure a smooth carrying out of the elections, since the enemies of the revolution had threatened disruption.

Out of 22 governorships, 19 were won by candidates backed by President Hugo Chávez. Only in the oil-rich state of Zulia and in Nueva Esparta, both hard enemies of the Bolivarian Process, did the anti-Chávez candidates win. The state of Carabobo, another base of the opposition, was undecided two days after the election, with many hand-written ballots still being counted—in Caracas, as decided by the

*Continued on page 10*

# Repression grows more violent in Haiti

By G. Dunkel

The Haitian police, firmly backed by United Nations forces currently occupying Haiti, have decided on a new tactic to put down the massive, popular resistance against the U.S.-imposed government of Prime Minister Gérard Latortue. This "de facto" government was imposed by the U.S. and France on Feb. 29, after the kidnapping of democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide by U.S. Marines.

During the day, the police drive into poor neighborhoods in areas known to support Aristide and open fire on groups of people, leaving the bodies of the people they kill lying in the street.

Haitians remember that the paramilitary Macoutes in the time of the Duvaliers—another family of dictators supported by the United States—would kill anyone who moved the bodies of their victims. The Macoutes wanted the dead bodies to reinforce the terror they had spread.

According to an Oct. 27 Reuters dispatch, opponents of the Latortue regime said 13 people were killed by the cops that day in a poor neighborhood of Port-au-Prince called Fort National, near Bel Air. Only eight bodies were turned over to the local morgue. Residents of Fort National say that the cops disposed of the

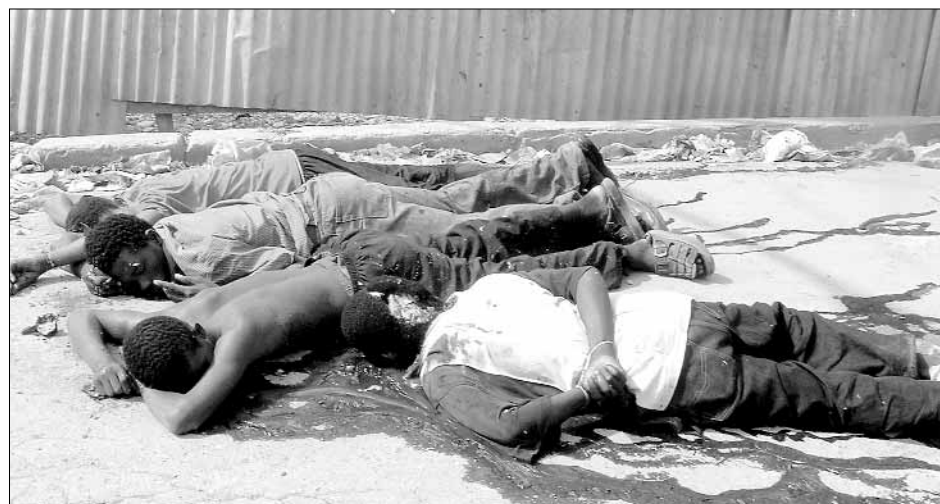


PHOTO: HAITI PROGRES

Four young men executed by police in Carrefour Pean.

other bodies.

The morgue in this desperately poor country lacks electricity. It can't keep bodies from decomposing so it has been burying them in mass graves. While this is an essential health measure on the part of the morgue, it also keeps the press and doctors doing autopsies from examining bodies and determining the cause of death.

In the neighborhood of Carrefour-Pean on the same day, according to Haiti Progrès journalist Kim Ives, who was there, four young men were shot dead and left lying in the street.

The clearest example of this policy is the death of Emmanuel Marcéus on Rue St.

Joseph in La Saline, while he was selling candy with his mother. Marcéus, who was called Manno, lived with his mother, two aunts, a grandmother and two smaller brothers in a one-room shed. He was 9 years old and in the fourth grade.

Around 2:00 in the afternoon, a pickup truck filled with cops dressed in black and wearing ski masks pulled up and opened fire on the market. Manno was hit in the leg and couldn't run away. A cop shot him in the abdomen. As he lay dead or dying, another cop shot him in the head. (Haiti Progrès, Oct. 27 to Nov. 4)

His family was so frightened that they let him lie in the street until 10:00 p.m.,

then took his body back home. The central morgue refused to take it the next day, claiming to be full. The family finally found a private morgue that would dispose of the body.

This murder of a popular 9-year-old has made the anger in his neighborhood seethe even more. Residents feel that the U.S.-imposed government of Latortue is conducting a terror campaign against them, fully backed by the UN forces in Haiti, which take part in these raids against poor neighborhoods.

There are many reasons why the cops don't raid during the night. For one, they are afraid that, in the completely dark streets of Port-au-Prince's poor neighborhoods where there are no street lights, no electricity and piles of garbage are scattered here and there, they would be vulnerable to ambushes. From time to time, their fire is answered and they are forced to retreat, even during the day.

Three recent demonstrations have taken place in New York protesting the repression in Haiti. The Haiti Solidarity Network—in conjunction with Fanmi Lavalas, International Answer and the International Action Center—is currently working to build a major meeting in Brooklyn on Dec. 5 at New York City College of Technology to explain the current situation in Haiti and build support for the resistance. □



## War crimes make more resistance inevitable

# U.S. prepares massive attack

By Fred Goldstein

The cynical political/military stage management in Iraq by the Bush administration and the Pentagon is moving towards its bloody climax. Just at the very moment that the U.S. presidential elections are about to end, the Pentagon has put 4,000 more troops into Iraq. Marines and Army troops are moving into position around Falluja and Ramadi while the puppet CIA prime minister, Ayad Allawi, has announced he is “running out of patience” and is preparing to “order” his masters to open a full-scale assault on those cities.

Meanwhile, the New York Times revealed in its Oct. 31 edition that it conducted an off-the-record, behind-the-scenes interview with 15 top generals, admirals and embassy officials in Iraq in late October as the preparations for the attack on Falluja and other cities were being made.

Said the Times, “Senior American military commanders and civilians officials in Iraq are speaking more candidly about the hurdles that could jeopardize their plans to defeat an adaptive and tenacious insurgency and hold elections in January.” While they are all giving up-beat public statements on the prospects of the occupation, privately they are saying that the so-called Iraqi “national army” that they are counting so much on is “soon to be led by untested generals” and has been “penetrated by spies and insurgents.”

They all say that the forces of the resistance are growing and that the U.S. is losing the battle to protect its puppet government, police and army from assaults by anti-occupation fighters, who are jeopardizing the entire effort to conquer Iraq. “If we can’t stop the intimidation factor, we can’t win,” said Lt. Gen. John F. Sattler, the commander of nearly 40,000 Marines and soldiers in western and southern Iraq.

### No social base for occupation

The underlying apprehension of the military and embassy officials in Iraq reflects the insoluble problem facing U.S. imperialism, the Bush administration and any future Kerry administration. The necessary historical conditions for creating a pliant, neocolonial regime rely on having a significant social base in the local ruling class and in the middle classes of the oppressed country. These are the preconditions for being able to control the politics and economics of a country indirectly.

The U.S. commanders and the political strategists behind the Iraq invasion and the occupation are premising their hopes on the creation of a puppet army and the nourishing of a comprador, caretaker bourgeoisie that will share in the crumbs left on the table by the big U.S. transnational corporations while they look after their interests. An attack on Falluja and other cities of Iraq will put the final end to that fantasy.

Washington is facing a choice: they either have to get out and cede genuine sovereignty to Iraq or continue with the occupation. There is no in-between because the Iraqi people experienced independence for two generations after kicking out the British imperialists—and no amount of imperialist military force can change this.

The fears over attacking Falluja are really about utterly destroying all future prospects for the U.S. imperialists in Iraq. Those fears are well founded.

But having declared their objectives—to

crush the popular resistance and hold phony, stage-managed elections to pave the way for a pro-U.S. neocolonial regime that will give Washington and Wall Street what they want—the Bush administration and the Pentagon are going full steam ahead with their bloody plans, all fears and trepidations aside.

By the beginning of November the Pentagon had raised the troop level from 138,000 to 142,000. The 3,700-member Louisiana-based 256th Enhanced Separate Brigade, a National Guard Unit, has been sent to Camp Victory North, headquarters of the Army’s 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad. And the 1st Cavalry 2nd Brigade was given a stop-loss order to remain in Iraq for the battle instead of going to Fort Hood, Texas, as part of its normal rotation.

Preparations for this new round of war crimes against Falluja come as reports of 100,000 Iraqis killed during the U.S. war and occupation hit the newswires. This new report was conspicuously played down to footnote size by the entire U.S. capitalist media machine.

The initial announcement came in an Oct. 28 release from Reuters. “Making conservative assumptions, we think that about 100,000 excess deaths or more have happened since the 2003 invasion of Iraq,” said Les Roberts of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in a report published online by The Lancet medical journal. ... The researchers blamed air strikes for many of the deaths.

“What we have evidence of is the use of air power in populated urban areas and the bad consequences of it,” Roberts said. Gilbert Burnham, who collaborated on the research, said U.S. military action in Iraq was ‘very bad for Iraqi civilians.’

“Two-thirds of violent deaths in the study were reported in Falluja,” continued Reuters, “the insurgent-held city 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad which had been repeatedly hit by U.S. air strikes.”

### Preparations for a terrible battle

Tanks and armored vehicles have been reinforcing a tightening ring around the city as air and artillery attacks have escalated. But the Allawi puppet “interim government” has been stonewalling the negotiators representing the people of Falluja. The Allawi regime has been buying time

for the U.S. troop buildup, for the U.S. elections to be over to avoid any political damage to Bush, and to promote the pretense that his regime is interested in a peaceful outcome so that, when the massive destruction takes place, he will be off the hook.

Allawi is following a script written in Washington. The U.S. military has targeted 15 cities and seven smaller towns that it must conquer in order to hold elections in January. Central to the plan is Falluja. The plans have been drawn up and are being reviewed over and over again. The forces are being put in place.

The Allawi (read Pentagon) regime has been going through the motions of negotiation. According to the Washington Post of Oct. 28, “Earlier this month, local insurgent leaders agreed to accept broad conditions set by the Iraqi government,” but they demanded in return “a halt to U.S. attacks and acknowledgment that women and children have been among the casualties in U.S. strikes.”

But whatever was agreed to was always nullified by the non-negotiable demand, made by Allawi and the U.S., that the leaders turn over Abu al-Zarqawi, the so-called “terrorist leader” that the military uses as the excuse for all its air strikes on the city. Of course, the people of Falluja long ago declared that this was impossible, either because he did not exist or wasn’t in the city, and that, in any case, no one knew where he was. In fact, the Nov. 1 issue of the London Independent carries an admission by U.S. military commanders that he probably is not there.

As the talks broke down, “members of the Shura Council of Mujaheddin, which governs Falluja, told residents who had not already fled the city to leave before what they described as ‘the last great battle’ with U.S. forces.” (Washington Post, Oct. 28)

The fact that all the U.S. military preparations for this horrendous escalation to a new stage of war against the Iraqi people can take place in the midst of a capitalist election campaign exposes the bankruptcy of the fraudulent democracy under imperialism.

The majority of the workers and the oppressed in this country are against the war. The majority of the youth are against the war. The soldiers in Iraq want only one

thing—to come home. Their families want them home. Yet, not one word by either candidate, Kerry or Bush, has given even lip service to this deep sentiment about a matter of life and death to tens of thousands of Iraqis and thousands of U.S. soldiers, who will have to kill or be killed in the coming catastrophe.

Just as during the Vietnam War, the elections go on—as does the military machine—completely out of the control of the masses of people. This machine is the instrument of the ruling class, dedicated to doing the bidding of the oil companies, the military planners and the capitalist, profit-seeking big business interests who want to control the strategic and oil-rich Persian Gulf as a stepping stone to putting a stranglehold on the entire Middle East and beyond, just as they wanted to dominate southeast Asia and the Pacific during the Vietnam War.

Whoever wins the U.S. elections, the people of the U.S. and Iraq are facing a violent escalation of the occupation into the stage of a war against whole cities.

But should the U.S. carry out these unspeakable crimes against Falluja, Ramadi and other cities and towns, the horrendous suffering they will impose upon the Iraqi people will further doom their plans of domination. They want to crush Falluja so they can have elections. They want elections so they can withdraw eventually from the occupation and control the country, the oil, the ports and the military bases from afar.

But the invasion of Falluja and cities of Iraq will not make the people more amenable to a U.S. takeover through manipulation of some electoral process, assuming that the U.S. occupiers are even able to pull it off. It will make the resistance wider, more determined. It will make the U.S. more hated. It will make it harder to form a puppet army. It will require more U.S. troops, more occupation of more cities and towns.

In the end it will make a rebellion against the U.S. imperialists more likely in the Middle East. Above all, it is likely to lead to an escalation of the struggle by the ranks of the military against the inhuman conditions imposed by their officers. And it will fuel the struggle against the war right here at home. □

## As gov’ts sign European Constitution

# Masses demand withdrawal from Iraq

By John Catalinotto

Some 70,000 people marched Oct. 30 through the streets of Rome to demand the immediate withdrawal of Italian troops from Iraq. The protesters also demanded an end to the bombing of Falluja, the city the U.S. occupation forces have designated as the capital of the Iraqi resistance.

In Mestre, on the outskirts of Venice, another protest took direct action as hundreds of people sat in the street to block a military parade attended by Communications Minister Fabrizio Gasparri.

The march, called by Stop the War, took place on the day that 25 heads of state of the countries that are members of the European Union signed the European Constitution. This document marks another step forward in the creation of a European government at the service of big

capital. Some of the demands of the anti-war march also opposed the militarization of Europe and the attack on social welfare embodied in the constitution.

Although Turkey is not yet a member of the European Union, the Turkish head of state also signed the European Constitution Oct. 29. In Istanbul’s Taksim Square, the Global Peace and Justice Coalition demanded “No to Bush. End the occupation of Iraq.”

Viewed from the United States, the European Union and the new Constitution might look like a challenge to U.S. imperialist hegemony in the world. This is only one side of European unity. The European Union at this time is completely dominated by big capital, that is, it is an imperialist united Europe. It is united not only to compete with U.S. imperialism but also to control the European workers and the oppressed countries in Asia, Africa

and Latin America, as well as in Eastern Europe.

This was made clear in the demands of left forces in Spain, who demonstrated on Oct. 29 in Madrid against the signing of the European Constitution. The protest was called by a coalition of political parties, trade unions and social movements, among them the Corriente Roja (Red Current).

The groups in Madrid denounced the constitution’s “scorn for hard-won social and labor rights,” its submission to the savage neoliberal policies pushed by the European Central Bank at the service of the multinational monopolies, and its neglect of the rights of immigrants. They also assailed “its militaristic and imperialistic character and its submission to NATO,” as well as its “silence on the rights of women and on the protection of the environment.” □

## Back to the streets

As the votes were being counted in Ohio, U.S. jets launched bombs and rockets on homes in Falluja in Iraq. As Kerry was conceding to Bush, U.S. Marines moved closer to a vicious ground assault on Falluja and Ramadi.

For the past six months the election contest between these two capitalist politicians has been the focus of political activity in the United States. It has absorbed the attention of many progressive people in this country. It has absorbed the time and effort of many who were active in the struggle against this criminal war and occupation of Iraq.

Now, in the name of preparing "democratic elections" in Iraq, Washington is preparing to unleash another bloodbath against the Iraqi people, adding to the 100,000 killed since March 2003 and the 1.5 million killed by 12 years of sanctions.

Kerry criticized Bush over Iraq, but never made clear he would do anything different. Now he is out of the picture. Everyone knows what Bush has done. Everyone knows he promised to "stay the course in Iraq." In other words, kill more Iraqis and put more GIs in harm's way.

The war may not be the only issue over which youth and workers here will have to confront the second Bush

administration. But it is a matter of life and death, for both Iraqis and for U.S. youth.

Many people who oppose the occupation of Iraq had put their energies into defeating Bush in this election. They did this even though they knew that Kerry guaranteed no exit from the war. Some may be tempted to pull back after their electoral effort fell short. Better to jump right back into action against the war and occupation.

At the Million Worker March Oct. 17, a call was made to "those of us who are based in the union/workers movement; organizations that are fighting for jobs, health care and housing; youth and student organizations; veterans; military families; military resisters; solidarity movements; and all the other progressive movements—to make the week of Friday Dec. 3 to Friday Dec. 10 (International Human Rights Day) a time for truly mass action across the country to Stop the War Now!"

This MWM-initiated Stop the War Week will be the first national anti-war mobilization following the election. It can set the tone for the battle against the second Bush administration's war in Iraq, and we encourage our readers and the rest of the anti-war movement to take up this challenge. □

## Socialists campaign

*Continued from page 6*

A large multinational crowd packed an Oct. 30 Detroit meeting to hear Parker and Gutierrez on "Anyone but Bush? or Two Peas in a Pod." They spoke on how making life better for the workers and oppressed won't happen under capitalism. A retiree commented that when he woke up that morning all he had was \$8—which he used to buy coffee and breakfast, and to get to the meeting to hear the candidates. Another speaker from the floor denounced a local ballot initiative against lesbian and gay marriage as a divide-and-conquer tactic.

Finally, the candidates took socialism into the U.S. capital on Oct. 31. The morning gathering was jointly sponsored by Workers World Party branches in Baltimore and Washington.

According to organizer Pam Parker, a multinational crowd of students, retirees, union activists and leaders shared their personal experiences of this hard time as the U.S. makes war abroad and on working and oppressed people at home. The impact of cutbacks on all ages came out in stories from older workers who'd lost their jobs and a young man in his 20s who had just been laid off and lost his health insurance. A high school student said he didn't know what his future would be; his mother was now unemployed. Union activists noted the tremendous pressure to vote for Kerry rather than work for an independent union movement.

There was ardent support for Workers World Party at the meeting, with new visitors and more seasoned veterans of the struggle participating in a strong revolutionary discussion. One question to the candidates—"How did you get to be a communist?"—gave Parker and

Gutierrez a chance to talk about their personal histories and what had inspired them to take their political path. They talked of how the vision of Workers World Party was always people first before profits, unlike the candidates of the capitalist parties who will never promote programs that don't make money for big business.

Asked how she felt now that the campaign trail had ended, vice-presidential candidate Gutierrez said: "I want to build the Party more than ever. This trip showed us how important the Party is. We know that only the working class can end the war in Iraq. And, as we heard people's stories about unemployment and homelessness, and other oppressions, we could see that there's going to be a social explosion soon. With the Party's experience in fighting racism and guiding the struggle, we're prepared to lead the way." □

## Prisoner of NATO court

# Tug of war continues in Milosevic case

By John Catalinotto

An "Appeals Court" at the International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague on Nov. 1 was forced to override an earlier decision that had barred former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic from acting as his own defense counsel. The new ruling supposedly reinstates the defendant as his own lead counsel.

According to legal experts close to the defense, however, the new conditions are still unacceptable and may be even more dangerous for the defendant. The ICTY still will be able to impose counsel on Milosevic on a day-by-day basis should court doctors deem him too ill to represent himself.

These ICTY-appointed doctors are not of the defendant's own choosing. They have denied Milosevic proper treatment. They have also interrupted the trial in the past even when Milosevic has not himself complained of feeling ill.

This latest decision goes against the opinion of 100 international legal experts, including former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who protested when the ICTY imposed counsel on the president during the summer.

Over two months, the attorneys imposed on Milosevic—Richard Kay and Gillian Higgins—asked 200 witnesses to testify. Only five agreed. The rest refused to cooperate unless Milosevic were allowed to defend himself.

On Oct. 27, Kay and Gillian finally petitioned the court to relieve them of that duty.

### Defendant turned tables on NATO

Milosevic represented himself ably during the prosecution portion of the trial, which lasted over two years. First called the "trial of the century" and attended by international media, the case got less and less coverage when it became clear that Milosevic had succeeded in turning the tables on NATO.

According even to reports in the corporate media, Milosevic argued convincingly that the NATO powers, especially the United States and Germany, provoked the wars in the Balkans.

He had only a few months to prepare the defense portion of the case. This contrasted with the two years the court allowed to the highly funded prosecution team. Still, Milosevic managed to submit a list of over 1,000 defense witnesses. It

included U.S. and European government figures like President Bill Clinton, as well as witnesses friendly to the defendant or to his case against the court.

One witness who refused to testify unless Milosevic were allowed to defend himself was Sara Flounders, a co-director of the International Action Center. Flounders had been in Yugoslavia during the 78-day NATO bombing war in 1999. Along with her political expertise as a writer and editor of books on the Balkans, she had eyewitness testimony of NATO's war crimes to offer.

Flounders told Workers World that "from its beginning, the ICTY has been a travesty of justice. It was a political court set up by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in the early 1990s as a weapon against the Yugoslav Federation. Even the so-called Appeals Court is just another group of ICTY court officers paid for by U.S. funds and private donations from big-business figures like billionaire George Soros.

"The ICTY charged Milosevic in May 1999 during the NATO bombing in order to pressure him to submit to the demands of the NATO countries that were bombing Serbia and threatening to invade. All the charges involved Serbia's Kosovo province. Only after he was in custody in The Hague did the court charge him with crimes regarding Croatia and Bosnia.

"It was all political, with only a pretense of justice. The only possible and reasonable defense was a political defense. His defense is important," said Flounders, "not only because the war on Yugoslavia was a crime, but because it laid the groundwork for further U.S. military aggression.

"Though it had all the advantages," Flounders continued, "from February 2002 until last summer the prosecution was unable to bring any convincing evidence that the former president was guilty. Finally when he was ready to start his defense case, the court changed the rule again.

"The ICTY has violated even its own rules and guidelines along with all existing international law in its continuing attempt to deprive President Milosevic of even the most basic right to present his own defense.

"I joined with other witnesses in refusing to testify if President Milosevic was not conducting his defense. This court has no basis in international law. It has no right to exist. It is strictly a political weapon of the U.S. and NATO." □

## Elections in Uruguay, Venezuela

*Continued from page 8*

National Electoral Council after violent responses by the opposition. Written ballots are usually from the poorest citizens, who are overwhelmingly for the revolution.

An important victory was that of Juan Barreto for mayor of Metropolitan Caracas. He will now join Freddy Bernal, the outspoken revolutionary mayor of the Caracas Municipality, in a political union. Alfredo Peña, the previous mayor, had joined the opposition and used the Metropolitan Police against the masses in an effort to stop the revolutionary process.

After defeat in an August referendum

over the presidency, the opposition has fragmented and suffered fighting in its ranks. Confused after ambiguous messages from their leaders over voting or abstaining, many did not know what to do. Venezuelans say that without the assistance of Washington, they would not be a force to contend with. But the bourgeois political establishment in the U.S.—including both George W. Bush and John Kerry—want to keep the opposition alive.

In a speech after the Venezuelan referendum vote, Kerry said that the Bush administration "has lost the credibility necessary to become a true force for

progress. As president, I will create a true Community of the Americas, built on mutual respect and support for democracy, where neighbors look after neighbors as we work to realize our common goals."

U.S. "support for democracy" has meant continuing to fund opposition organizations for the violent defeat of the revolution—as illustrated by their attempts to forcibly remove a popularly elected president, instigate an oil industry sabotage and many other actions. Millions of dollars have been funneled to the opposition through the U.S. National

## East Germany in the 1970s

# Lesbian & gay movement blossoms

By Leslie Feinberg

"The legal situation of GDR [East German] gays improved considerably in 1968 with the elimination of Paragraph 175," historian Jim Steakley concluded in his published research. He credited the abolition of the almost century-old Prussian anti-homosexual law to the pioneering work of Dr. Rudolph Klimmer, a gay communist physician.

This move, part of an overhaul of the criminal code, elevated the GDR to the same progressive level as Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, which also decriminalized homosexuality in the mid-1960s. (Body Politic, December 1976-January 1977)

Writing in 1976, the Canadian researcher described an East German gay population characterized by long-term relationships, apparently more so than in West Germany or the United States. "The durability of such relationships may also reflect the relative lack of anomie and competitiveness in socialist society, yet the prevalence of gay couples is all the more striking in light of the fact that at 50 percent and still climbing, the GDR's divorce rate is the highest in the world.

"Although it deserves a more detailed analysis," he continued, "GDR citizens properly interpret the divorce rate as an index of women's emancipation rather than social collapse. In any case, the gay couples are seldom burdened by the ideology of pure monogamy, and affairs on the side as well as casual sexual encounters are standard.

"Parks, beaches (where nude bathing is widespread), and other public places have never been the locus of police entrapment, and arrests for public indecency are virtually unknown."

However, one last thorn of legal discrimination remained in the body of East German law. While the age of sexual consent was the same for same-sex and heterosexual minors, under the provisions of Paragraphs 150 and 151, homosexual adults penalized for relationships with under-age youths could be sentenced to three years behind bars, while heterosexuals only faced two-year sentences.

Steakley met with Klimmer during his research in the GDR. "Dr. Klimmer regards it as his greatest success," he reported, "that these paragraphs explicitly contain a provision allowing prison terms to be suspended in favor of probation, and court practice shows that this option has been widely adopted in cases which do not involve assault or coercion."

Endowment for Democracy.

But the revolution is growing stronger. In the coming days all the governors will be summoned to Caracas to plan new paths for the country, including the distribution of land through the Land Reform Law in the popular new Venezuelan Constitution, voted on by the people.

Last month President Chávez visited Petare, one of the poorest barrios of Caracas, for a ceremony to hand land titles to more than 3,000 families. During the event, he said: "We need to leave behind us the horrendous capitalist system that has been installed here, by those who attempted to dominate the people and to throw them into poverty. This is why we are here, to put an end to this." □

Before the GDR was overturned, even this legal inequity was removed.

Housing and employment, however, continued to be sites of struggles for equality after 1961. Partly this was due to lack of resources in the workers' state that made the early goal of socialism—equal distribution—difficult to attain. And age-old prejudice was also an obstacle.

Steakley gave voice to the frustration of gays with the GDR's governmental housing agency, which allocated space based on family size. This made it virtually impossible for single men to rent more than a studio apartment. But he did not examine this social crisis out of its economic context.

"Housing is still at a premium in the GDR, and it was only in 1975 that Berlin, for example, attained the per-capita level of housing that it had prior to World War II," he explained, "In order to keep the country from sinking below its current zero population growth, the government makes no bones about rewarding child-birth; and while abortion and contraceptives are freely available, premarital sex and unmarried motherhood are promoted in pop songs."

While the housing crunch Steakley described in 1976 constrained singles, he found that gays in East Germany were "optimistic that the GDR's ongoing, high-priority construction program will open new options within the next decade."

When examining the housing crisis in the GDR, it's important to reiterate that, by law, rent could not exceed 10 percent of an individual's income.

And when it came to jobs, Steakley stressed, "homosexuals are occasionally fired by a homophobic superior. But gays have successfully argued their cases in special GDR workers' courts and had their jobs restored with back pay."

Unlike a capitalist economic system, where wages are always in danger of being driven down by an "army of unemployed" competing against the employed, jobs are a right in a planned economy. Steakley stressed, "In a country with the right (not the obligation) to work and a serious labor shortage, job performance has become the sole criterion for hiring and firing."

### Flowering of lesbian, gay subculture

In his 10 pages of results of a study of the lesbian and gay movement in the GDR, published in 1989, researcher John Parsons explained that during the 1950s and 1960s an underground gay subculture had developed. But, he continued, "The 1970s and early 1980s were a time when this lesbian and gay subculture grew and flowered, creating a broad self-consciousness and assertiveness." (OUT/LOOK, Summer 1989)

The Berlin Association for Homosexual Concerns (HIB) was established in the spring of 1972 by both women and men. They organized public and private discussion groups and programs, held film showings and book readings, and hosted speakers from the fields of medicine, psychology and sociology.

Steakley added an important point about the class character of the association. "Unlike most gay organizations in West Germany, the HIB is largely made up of workers and professional people rather than students." Two of the three

members of the steering committee belonged to the Communist Party.

Parsons noted the role of women. "Parallel with these efforts, lesbians and feminists were organizing their own discussion groups centered on questions of women's liberation."

He added that although public discussion focused on male same-sexuality, "One fact that is striking, however, is that lesbian and gay cultural institutions and friendship circles in East Germany historically have been integrated much more across gender lines than those in either West Germany or the United States."

Steakley, writing closer to the period of the formation of HIB, said that while the organization waited until 1976 to apply for state recognition, "it by no means had an underground status during its first four years."

In its first year, the group approached the Ministry of Health to request public meeting space.

But the HIB delegation angrily withdrew its request after a psychiatrist offered to turn those weekly meetings into group therapy.

So the group turned to the national labor union—the FDGB. Steakley reported, "The FDGB was unable to provide rooms but urged the HIB to continue its search, noting that gays had legitimate concerns and should not be required to continue meeting in private homes."

He added that activists protested a lack of protection from anti-gay bashers to the Berlin police "and the HIB got a positive response."

The group also lodged complaints with city administrators when one of Berlin's gay bars was closed in 1975. "Protests to municipal authorities brought assurances that the measure was not intentionally anti-gay but part of a larger urban renewal program designed to enhance the capital's 'cosmopolitan character' which would soon lead to the opening of several new bars 'for every taste.'"

And Parsons pointed out that during the 1970s, a number of gay-identified clubs and cafes opened up in major East German cities.

### Answering the "Rat Man"

On June 1, 1976, HIB organized a very successful forum publicly sponsored by the Urania Society—a public education agency.

The event, a talk by Dr. Peter G. Klemm entitled "Sex Roles in Socialist Society," filled the meeting hall to capacity. Of the 500 who attended, only an estimated one-third were gay or lesbian.

Klemm's speech and the discussion that followed demonstrated a progressive current in a raging polemic against the work of Dr. Gunter Dörner, a Berlin endocrinology researcher dubbed "Rat Man" by HIB activists.

Dörner claimed to be able to produce "homosexual" or "heterosexual" litters of rats based on injecting pregnant rats at different stages in the gestation period. Steakley emphasized, "Dörner's experiments raise the specter of pregnant women being tested for hormonal 'normalcy' and given booster shots if the results indicate that the fetus is 'homosexual.'"

East German gays and lesbians recalled all too well that under capitalism, the fascist eugenics wing of biological determinism rose to power with Nazism. But in the GDR, Dörner's theories and the faction of science he represented did not prevail.

Klemm argued against drawing broad generalizations about human sexuality based on animal research. His eloquent elaboration of this position, clarifying even today, appeared in a 1975 article in *Fur Dich*, a women's magazine with the largest circulation in the GDR.

"It is one of many human achievements to have liberated sexuality from its function as biological reproduction and to have made it into an independent source of pleasure and life enrichment. Once we have acknowledged this and accepted the fundamentally human, and therefore social, function of sexuality, we must also grant that the source of pleasure cannot be set by biological criteria; the 'wrong' taste in pleasure cannot be declared a 'sickness' in need of treatment.

"Homosexuals suffer only in an intolerant milieu! Homosexuality is a form of 'deviance' only in terms of traditional sex-role concepts! Any halfway imaginative heterosexual couple deviates from the 'natural'—e.g., the sexual behavior of rats—just as much as a homosexual couple.

"It is therefore quite proper to doubt whether the problem of bi-, homo- or hyposexuality can be actually solved with a shot of hormones in the fourth month of pregnancy, or even should be. Changes in the traditional concept of sex roles are certainly the more correct and above all the humane approach, and these remarks are intended as a contribution to that goal." (Body Politic)

Steakley concluded in 1976 that these views by Dr. Klemm were "a sample of the progressive psychological standpoint which is becoming increasingly influential in the GDR. It is perhaps significant that the founding of the gay movement has come since 1971, when the government announced that the GDR had achieved the level of a 'developed socialist society' and could now begin to lay the groundwork for the transition to communism.

"Not just experts but gay people from all walks of life are playing a role in the broad, democratic discussion of the socialist personality and sexuality, feminism and the future of the family."

That was East Germany in the 1970s. But by the 1980s, efforts by the Communist Party and the state created a historic milestone for same-sex emancipation.

*Next: 1980s East Germany: stunning social gains in workers' state.*

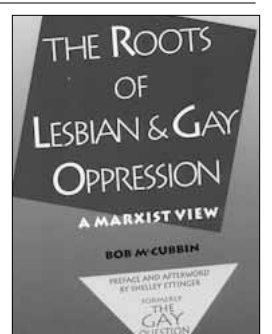
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## THE ROOTS OF LESBIAN AND GAY OPPRESSION:

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## Mientras la represión aumenta en Haití

# Crece la resistencia y la solidaridad

Por Pat Chin y G. Dunkel  
Nueva York

Activistas de organizaciones Africano-americanas, Círculos Bolivarianos de Venezuela y sus partidarios protestaron frente al Consulado Haitiano aquí en Nueva York el 25 de octubre para exigir el fin de la sangrienta ocupación imperialista de Haití y el retorno del presidente exiliado Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Los endosantes del “Mitin de Emergencia en Apoyo al Pueblo de Haití” incluyeron al Movimiento 12 de Diciembre; la Coalición Patrice Lumumba; Africanos Ayudando a Africanos; La Organización de Personas para el Progreso; Black Telephone Workers for Justice; Roger Toussaint, presidente de la Local 100 de los Trabajadores del Tránsito; Brenda Stokely, presidenta del Distrito 1707 de AFSCME; la Coalición África es Nuestro Hogar; y el Centro de Acción Internacional.

La represión en Haití respaldada por la

Casa Blanca se ha expandido tanto que l@s haitian@s no pudieron salir a las calles a participar en manifestaciones el fin de semana del 16 al 17 de octubre. Pero cuando la policía y las tropas extranjeras invadieron a Bel Air y Martissant—comunidades pobres de Port-au-Prince donde los partidarios de Aristide y su partido Fanmi Lavalas son fuertes—fueron recibidos con disparos y barricadas en llamas.

El 17 de octubre fue el aniversario número 198 del asesinato de Jean-Jacques Dessalines y el décimo aniversario del regreso de Aristide luego del primer golpe militar en su contra en 1991. El segundo golpe se dio al comienzo de este año, el 29 de febrero, cuando los marinos estadounidenses secuestraron a Aristide sacándole del país.

La estación haitiana de radio, Metropole, reportó el 18 de octubre que los partidarios de Aristide habían intentado atacar la estación de policía en Martissant, pero fueron rechazados a golpes. Un vehículo fue incendiado.

Mientras tanto, el 20 de octubre el centro de Port-au-Prince y sus alrededores continuaron siendo “el escenario de barricadas en llamas y disparos esporádicos...” “Alrededor del Boulevard La Saline frente a la playa de Bel-Air, bastión de los partidarios armados de Aristide, había barricadas en llamas” (Haiti Press Network)

### La lucha continúa

Desde el 30 de septiembre, cuando la policía mató a dos personas que protestaban el golpe militar, ha habido un aumento en la resistencia contra el régimen títere instalado por los Estados Unidos y encabezado por el Primer Ministro Interino, Gerard Latortue. Como resultado, el gobierno de facto ha estado negociando con el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos la compra de nuevas armas de fuego.

De concretarse algún acuerdo, terminaría el embargo contra las armas de fuego que hace 13 años Washington impuso luego del primer atentado contra Aristide. Dicho embargo se mantuvo aún después de su regreso del exilio.

Los levantamientos han forzado también al Fondo Monetario Internacional a cancelar las negociaciones sobre préstamos para Haití. Y Estados Unidos anunció el 21 de octubre que enviará 3.000 tropas adicionales para “detener la violencia” y prevenir una ola de refugiados. (Bloomberg)

Esto incrementaría la fuerza militar de la ONU liderada por Brasil a 6.200 ocupantes extranjeros—cuya meta es la de

aplantar el movimiento popular haitiano, dejando al país abierto a la súper explotación capitalista.

Con las protestas creciendo en fuerza y militancia, Latortue ha acusado a Sur África—la cual ha dado refugio a Aristide y su familia—de interferir en los asuntos internos de Haití. Pero el Presidente Thabo Mbeki respondió negativamente a los cargos de Latortue de que Aristide está usando a Sur África como “una base para desestabilizar a Haití por medio de la violencia.” Una declaración de prensa oficial también afirmó que “Sur África y el Presidente Mbeki no pueden ser utilizados como chivos expiatorios del fracaso del régimen de facto en Haití por restaurar la paz y la estabilidad.”

Un gran contingente de haitian@s que ondeaban su bandera se unió a la Marcha de un Millón Trabajador@s el 17 de octubre en Washington D.C. La activista de Lavalas Marlene Jean-Louis convocó desde el podio a la continuidad del trabajo solidario con Haití.

“Más de 8,000 trabajador@s haitian@s han perdido su trabajo desde el 29 de febrero a causa de su afiliación política,” le dijo a la multitud congregada. “El gobierno estadounidense junto a los gobiernos francés y canadiense, han sacado al Presidente Aristide de Haití porque quieren llevar a cabo sus propios planes neoliberales en Haití, y también porque Aristide es el primer presidente en la historia de Haití que ha demandado reparaciones para el pueblo haitiano, los más de \$21 billones que Francia nos forzó pagar como compensación después que ganamos nuestra independencia.

“Vamos a hacer que nos lo devuelva. Aunque Aristide no está en Haití, él es todavía el presidente del pueblo, y está con nosotros en espíritu, y vamos a seguir luchando por su regreso.”

El 18 de octubre hubo otra protesta frente al Consulado Haitiano en Washington. Los manifestantes demandaron la libertad del Pastor Gerard Jean-Juste quien fue detenido cruelmente en Haití mientras le daba de comer a niños hambrientos; tres de ellos, según se informa, fueron heridos a balazos. Organizada por el Comité Contra la Represión en Haití, la Red de Apoyo para Haití, Fanmi Lavalas (Ciudad de Nueva York), el Partido Nacional de Haití y Komite Chalo Jacklen, los manifestantes demandaron también el fin de la ocupación y de la sangrienta represión de la lucha popular en Haití.

### Inundación desastrosa

Cuatro semanas después de que la Tormenta Tropical Jeanne azotara despi-

adadamente el norte de Haití, las calles de Gonaives están todavía llenas de agua y lodo. La mayoría de la gente está sin vivienda. Las distribuciones de agua y alimentos a veces son canceladas, y el número de lugares de distribución ha sido reducido a dos de los cuatro iniciales. Más de 2,000 personas perdieron la vida a causa de la tempestad.

Latortue ha hecho muy poco para ayudar a las víctimas de la tormenta. Pero ha prometido derrotar a los simpatizantes de Aristide, a quienes llama “terroristas”.

El régimen de Latortue ha detenido a cientos de personas, incluso al pastor Jean-Juste, Gérard Gilles, la activista de Lavalas So Ann, la ex Primer Ministro Yvone Neptune y otros. Muchas personas han sido asesinadas por ser simpatizantes de Aristide. Los ex-soldados y los escuadrones de muerte paramilitares entrenados, armados y financiados por los Estados Unidos para derrocar a Aristide, se han proclamado como el ejército haitiano en ciudades pequeñas como Petit-Goâve (según el Washington Post, del 15 de octubre). Ellos han mandado destacamentos pequeños a Port-au-prince para ver si los dirigentes de Latortue en la Casa Blanca los aceptarían para la reconstitución del ejército.

Dada la historia de asesinatos de ese ejército, a Latortue le gustaría sin duda desplegar un ejército reconstituido—los verdaderos terroristas—contra sus oponentes. Pero él y la administración de Bush tienen que preocuparse por la reacción internacional—y la oposición del pueblo haitiano que respondería ante tal amenaza.

La burguesía de Haití, que comprendía la mayor parte de la “oposición” a Aristide, impidió que la fuerza laboral trabajara el 15 de octubre. La pérdida del sueldo ese día fue calculada para aumentar la presión económica y detener la voluntad del pueblo para luchar. Pero fracasó.

El régimen de ocupación ha aumentado los precios de los productos básicos. Y sólo alrededor de un 30 por ciento de la población trabaja regularmente—y por una miseria.

Han matado gente en la calle disparándole durante protestas y en la oscuridad de la noche. Pero no han extinguido la lucha contra la ocupación, por la liberación de todos los presos políticos y para conseguir el regreso de su líder elegido democráticamente, Presidente Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Así como crece la resistencia popular en Haití, también crece el movimiento de solidaridad en los Estados Unidos. Ahora es tiempo de globalizar la lucha.

Se necesitan donaciones para ayudar a las víctimas del Temporal Jeanne. Favor de enviar cheques dirigidos a MUDHA o Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees, 335 Maple Street, Brooklyn, NY 11225. Para donaciones deducibles de sus impuestos escriba el cheque para IFCI/MUDHA o IFCO/HWHR. Para más información, llame al (718) 735-4660. □

## Mensaje al Fidel Castro

Querido comandante en jefe  
Fidel Castro Ruz,

El Partido Mundo Obrero expresa nuestros más sinceros deseos de que tenga una rápida y completa recuperación. Nos conmovimos profundamente al ver cómo usted respondió a este desafortunado accidente del 20 de octubre.

Incluso bajo el dolor, usted reaccionó con optimismo y liderazgo revolucionarios, nunca olvidando ni por un segundo su gran responsabilidad para con el pueblo cubano y para el mundo. Como siempre, usted demostró la dignidad y la resistencia de la revolución cubana, cualidades que continúan frustrando a los enemigos del socialismo. Estamos seguros que usted recibirá el cuidado más cariñoso y experto de los ejemplares trabajadores médicos de Cuba. Cuba continúa siendo el faro que ilumina las esperanzas de millones de gente en todo el mundo — incluso aquí, en las entrañas del monstruo.

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