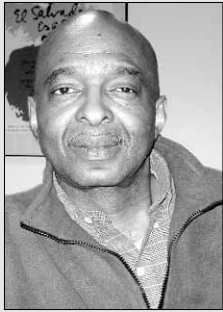


## MUNDO OBRERO

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# Vietnam had sham elections, too Iraqis want their country back

By Fred Goldstein

On Sept. 4, 1967, the New York Times carried the following headline: "U.S. Encouraged by Vietnam Vote: Officials Cite 83% Turnout Despite Vietcong Terror."

The dispatch by Peter Grose began: "United States officials were surprised and heartened today at the size of turnout in South Vietnam's presidential election. ... A successful election has long been seen as a keystone in President Johnson's policy of encouraging the growth of constitutional processes in South Vietnam. The election was the culmination of a constitutional development that began in January, 1966, to which President Johnson gave his personal commitment..."

At the time, Washington had 500,000 troops in Vietnam. The U.S. was carpet bombing with B-52s, dropping napalm and Agent Orange, destroying villages and assassinating people suspected of being with the National Liberation Front. The puppet government was torturing prisoners in underground "tiger cages." Yet it was able to organize a sham election and delude itself that the election was a "turning point" in its futile effort to conquer and colonize Vietnam.

Today the Pentagon is bringing "democracy" to Iraq with bombs, bullets, raids, checkpoints, prisons and the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib. Over 100,000 Iraqis have been killed by U.S. forces. The country is in a shambles. Falluja has been destroyed; Ramadi and other cities are in a permanent state of war against the occupation. Electricity, running water and public services barely exist and unemployment is between 60 and 70 percent.

Washington is deluding itself today about its so-called "democratic" election in Iraq. In fact, this election will result in compounding the Bush administration's crisis there. The country

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**GIs speak out  
'They can't put us all in jail!'** 4

is still run from the U.S. Embassy—the largest embassy in the world—headed by John Negroponte, former organizer of death squads in Guatemala in 1981-1985, and by Pentagon generals George Casey and John Abizaid.

From here on in, they are going to be faced with not only an insurgency, but with having to manage a political process in which the parties and candidates are going to come under intense mass pressure to get the U.S. troops out of the country. Whatever the true turnout was in the election, the overriding expectations of the masses of Iraqis are that the election will lead to getting the U.S. out. This is the one thing the masses are passionately united on and the thing they could not vote for in this fraudulent election.

President George W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld refuse to give a timetable for the U.S. to get out. And the puppet president of Iraq, Ghazi Yawar, told a press conference, "It's only complete nonsense to ask the troops to leave in this chaos and this vacuum of power." (Washington Post, Feb. 1)

The New York Times chief reporter in Baghdad, John Burns, had to digress from gushing over the election to admit that people from the U.S. could not "assume that elections made

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## WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

# Massive support for Iraqi resistance 11



PHOTO: VERMELHO

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# DEMONSTRATE FOR MUMIA

## Time is running out...



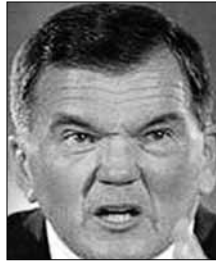
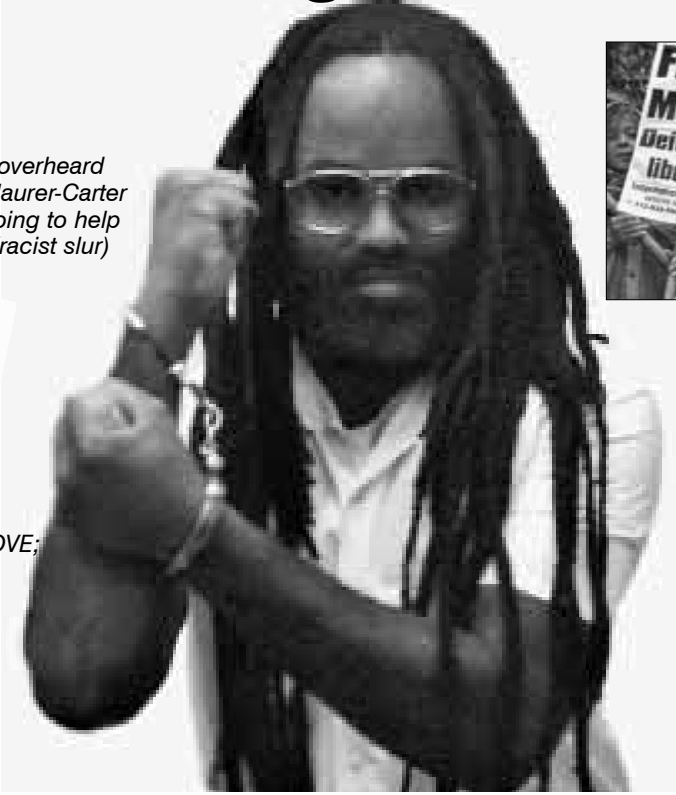
Judge Albert Sabo was overheard by court reporter Terri Maurer-Carter to say, "Yeah, and I'm going to help them fry the N - - - -!" (racist slur)



PA Gov Ed. Rendell targeted Mumia and MOVE. Stated he wants to sign the execution warrant



This man, Arnold Beverly has confessed. Why won't the court let him testify?



Former PA Gov. Tom Ridge had Mumia's confidential legal mail opened and tried to execute him. Ridge backed down under enormous support from people like you

**JUDGE PAMELA DEMBE**  
• Says no racism in Judge Sabo's rulings  
• Cancels Feb 11 hearing on testimony of innocence

# FEB 11

## Come to a press conference and a hearing—**PEOPLE'S COURT IN PHILADELPHIA**

- Let the evidence be heard and **YOU BE THE JUDGE!**
- Hear what the unfair and unbalanced courts and news media don't want you to hear
- **People demand to know why the Feb 11 hearing was canceled**
- **Why isn't there a hearing with Mumia present?**
- **Why is evidence of Mumia's innocence being suppressed by the courts and government?**

**10 am Meet at AFSC 15th & Cherry St.**  
**11 am March to the Criminal Justice Bldg. 13 & Filbert St**  
**1:30-5 pm People's hearing on Mumia's innocence-AFSC**



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Departure from 33<sup>rd</sup> St. and 8<sup>th</sup> Ave., **Mumia NYC hotline 212-330-8029**

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##### Sat., Feb. 5

New England Human Rights Organization for Haiti Presents: "An Evening in Solidarity with the People of Haiti" Supported by: Fanmi Lavalas; International Action Center, MLK Bolivarian Circle of Boston, Women's Fightback Network, FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together), Haitkaah Social Justice Center, Iraq War Veterans Tour. Donation: 5:30 p.m. At USWA Local 8751 Boston School Bus Drivers, 25 Colgate Rd., Roslindale For info (781) 956-7417 or nehroh@hotmail.com.

#### LOS ANGELES

##### Sat., Feb. 5

Fourm: End War & Occupation in Iraq, Haiti & Palestine, featuring former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Sponsored by International Action Center, media sponsor KPFF. At the Bullocks Wilshire Bldg, 2nd floor, 1050 Wilshire Blvd, 4pm. Call for information and to make reservations. (323) 936-7266.

#### NEW YORK

##### Fri., Feb. 4

Workers World Party meeting: Hear Fred Goldstein, WW contributing editor, on how the fraudulent Iraq election under occupation will deepen the crisis for imperialism, and Monica

Moorehead, WW managing editor, on developments in the case of political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

##### Fri., Feb. 11

Workers World Party Meeting. Report on World Social Forum: 155,000 progressive activists from 135 countries gathered the last week of January in Porto Alegre in opposition to the imperialist World Economic Forum. Hear analyses of the events by WWP participants Berta Joubert-Ceci and John Catalinotto. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

#### SAN FRANCISCO

##### Sat., Feb. 12

Black History Month forum. Building a united struggle against Bushism. Featured speakers: Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local 10 executive board and co-chair, Million Worker March Comm.; Monica Moorehead, WW newspaper managing editor, Millions for Mumia coordinator; Henry Clark, exec. dir., West County Toxics Coalition. Sponsored by Workers World Party. Donation at the door. 4 p.m. At African American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton St. (between Webster & Buchanan). For info (415) 561-9752.

### Workers World

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## Immigrant's fight not over

# Finally freed, David Wong faces deportation

By LeiLani Dowell

After a successful 18-year battle to overturn trumped-up murder charges against him, Chinese immigrant David Wong now faces a struggle against deportation. His struggle highlights the outrageous hardship and oppression many immigrants face in the United States, as well as the immigrant communities' resistance to that repression.

Wong arrived in the United States with his family as a teenager. He worked long hours at restaurants for below-minimum wages. In 1983, at age 21, he was convicted of armed robbery and sent to the Clinton, N.Y., Correctional Facility on an eight-to-25-year sentence.

In March 1986, Tyrone Julius, another inmate at the facility, was stabbed to death in the middle of the prison yard. Of the 70 to 100 inmates present at the time of the stabbing, only the two Chinese inmates—Wong and Tse Kin Cheung—were searched. Neither was found to have a weapon or traces of blood.

Despite this, Wong was tried for Julius' murder by an all-white jury. He was convicted on charges of second-degree murder and sentenced to an additional 25 years to life.

Wong, who speaks little English, had received no translation during the two visits his trial lawyers paid to him in the 15 months before the trial. During the trial, Wong received translation in a Chinese dialect other than his own by a translator who said she felt nervous and unprofessional during the trial.

The prosecution's case rested largely on the testimony of an inmate, Peter DellFava, and corrections officer Ryan

LaPierre, who admitted in his testimony that he did not even see the stabbing or the weapon. No motive or physical evidence was presented during the six-day trial.

Activists rallied in defense of Wong almost from the start. The other Chinese inmate at Clinton, Tse Kin Cheung, wrote to Asian American activists and told them about Wong's wrongful conviction.

In 1990, Yuri Kochiyama organized the David Wong Support Committee. In 1999, the New York Times ran an exposé on the case. The Times quoted prison employees who said that Wong's innocence was well known at the prison, as well as former inmates who had witnessed the murder and said it was committed by a former rival of Julius, not by Wong.

That same year, a private investigator found DellFava, who admitted that he lied at the trial to get a parole recommendation and prison transfer. He further says that he was persuaded by a corrections officer to blame Wong because he had few friends in the prison and spoke little English. Two years later, almost a dozen inmates signed affidavits or told investigators that another man had murdered Julius.

After continuing legal struggles, the murder charges against Wong were finally dropped on Dec. 10—some 18 years after the conviction. By the time Wong was cleared of the murder, he was 41 years old. He had earned a diploma during his time in prison and would like to be a youth counselor.

Wong wrote, "My freedom did not come easy, but I'm happy I'm now able to put my nightmare behind me, and I'm excited for my freedom and the

prospect of my future."

Yet Wong and his supporters now face a new battle. Wong was released from the Clinton Correctional Facility on Dec. 28—but he was immediately taken by immigration officials and has been detained ever since at the Buffalo, N.Y., Federal Detention Center. Despite having arrived legally in the United States, he currently does not have status.

Since 1995, there has been a concentrated effort across the country to deport out-of-status prisoners, on the heels of a bill that makes it easier for the government to deport immigrant convicts.

A report called "Immigrant Convicts in U.S. Prisons: The Easiest Target" highlights cases of deportations or threat of deportation against large numbers of immigrant convicts from Los Angeles to New York City since passage of the bill. Wong's lawyer says he doesn't know of any cases of deportation being stopped despite a wrongful conviction.

An article in Asian Week correctly describes Wong's story as that of a man "trapped at the nexus of race, immigration, crime and the law." Forced to work for less than minimum wage and then caught in the prison-industrial complex, Wong was scapegoated because of his race and now has to face the criminalization of immigrants that is used to justify the U.S. government's own deplorable acts against working people at home and abroad. The real criminal is the renegade system of capitalist exploitation.

Wong's supporters have launched a national letter-writing and petition campaign to halt his deportation.

For more information, visit [www.freedavidwong.org](http://www.freedavidwong.org). □

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

## Judges of death

As the nation ponders the fate of a young California man being sentenced to death, the case of another man, one lesser-known, one without wealth or whiteness, comes back before the nation's highest court after having been shunted through a series of killing courts in Texas.

Thomas Miller-El, 53, was just before the U.S. Supreme Court about two years ago, when eight of the nine justices determined that the "Court of Appeals erred in denying a certificate of appealability" on Miller-El's claim of racial discrimination in his jury selection.

Back before the Texas state and federal courts, Miller-El expected them to respect the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. But, as the saying goes, he "had another thing coming." Both the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals (sort of a Texas Supreme Court for criminal cases), and the 5th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals promptly denied Miller-El's claims, by virtually ignoring what the majority of the Supreme Court said and glomming onto what was written by the lone dissenter in the case, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas, to support their denials.

In legal circles, this is almost unheard of. One former chief judge, John J. Gibbons, who sat on the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals (in Philadelphia), said, "The idea that the system can tolerate open defiance by an inferior court just cannot stand" (New York Times, Dec. 5).

We shall see.

Dissenting opinions, in legal opinions, have some, if limited value. They demonstrate that courts were split on various issues. They speak down through the pages of history of errors made by the present court that will hopefully be seen later. But, in a strictly legal sense, they mean nothing. It is a fundamental legal principle that majority opinions carry the deciding weight of which way cases are decided. Dissenting opinions have, comparatively speaking, no weight.

So, if that is so, why did a majority of the Texas Criminal Court of Appeals, and the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, essentially ignore the determination of the majority opinion, and deign to abide by the dissenting opinion? Why would learned, experienced judges dare do such a thing?

The answer (or at least part of it) may lie in the fact that 80 percent of the Texas appellate court is composed of ex-prosecutors who have learned from their former jobs to give short shrift to arguments by defendants. Many of them probably worked their way up onto the bench by doing the very things that the Supreme Court has criticized, so they simply don't want to agree that their own professional actions (like striking Blacks off juries) were unconstitutional. But what of the 5th Circuit, where federal judges, not state judges, hold sway?

The answer may lie not in the law but in the realm of politics. For judges, though they wear black robes, are yet political creatures. Even in the federal system, they are appointed by, and in, the political system. Senators submit them, and presidents nominate them. And how do they come to the attention of national political figures? By demonstrating their 'conservative' credentials. Judges, in the Miller-El case, dared to violate fundamental rules of judicial procedure because they were "auditioning" for higher seats in the judicial hierarchy. Mr. Miller-El was nothing more than a Black, living stepping stone on the Stairway of Ambition.

Moreover, Texas is infamous for its taste for death, as amply demonstrated by the bloody reign of George W. Bush, who presided over the executions of over 150 men and several women. While Texas governor, Bush undoubtedly appointed at least some of the judges to the state's appeals court, and surely (as president) looked kindly to those nominations to the 5th Circuit federal bench of jurists who shared his penchant for cutting judicial corners when it came to the death penalty.

It is only in that fractured political light that their actions begin to make sense.

Another saying: "Law is but politics, by other means."



THOMASMILLEREL.COM  
Death row inmate  
Thomas Miller-El

# Racism and homophobia in entertainment

By David Hoskins

A popular New York radio station is now under fire for playing an anti-Asian assault on the tsunami victims of Southeast Asia.

The lyrics scoffing at the plight of tsunami survivors were recently played on Hot 97's "Miss Jones in the Morning" show. The song included many racial slurs directed toward those who suffered so much from the recent catastrophic tsunami. The children who lost their families in this disaster were also mocked in the lyrics.

An immediate and angry response from listeners has forced the station to stop playing this tasteless piece of racist propaganda.

While this hateful attack on oppressed nationalities went completely unnoticed by the Bush administration, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings saw fit to intimidate officials of the Public Broadcasting Service into censoring a proposed episode of the popular children's program "Postcards from Buster."

Buster is an animated rabbit that visits its families all across the United States. Previous episodes have featured Buster and his visits to children of fundamen-

talist Christian and Mormon families. The program's described goal is to promote tolerance and provide affirmation to children from diverse backgrounds.

The censored episode entitled "Sugartime!" featured the children of openly lesbian parents living in rural Vermont. The Bush administration objected on the grounds that the episode introduces children to a lifestyle that some parents may find "objectionable."

PBS officials caved in to coercion and canceled the episode after Spellings threatened to pull funding for the show.

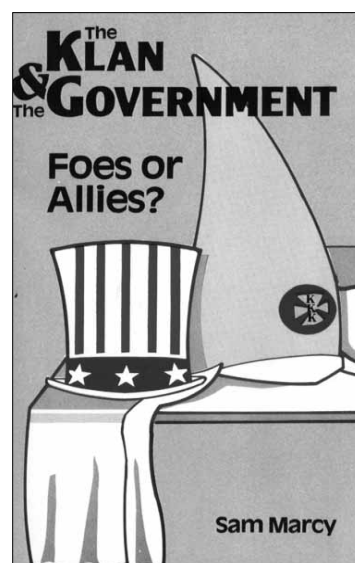
These are two examples of how capitalism helps to secure its existence by pitting people against each other. Hot 97 launched its anti-Asian "song" on a show hosted by an African American woman. It is in the interests of the ruling class to breed hostility and discontent between oppressed groups to prevent united action toward a more just and humane socialist system.

Fanning religious prejudice against the lesbian, gay, bi and trans communities further solidifies the market system by dividing progressive forces.

The racism and homophobia that manifests itself through Hot 97's lyrics and the Bush administration's decision

to censor "Postcards from Buster" are endemic to capitalism.

It is the working class, including the nationally oppressed, the LGBT communities and their allies, that has the power to defeat the existing capitalist system and usher in an economic system based on planning and cooperation that can root out racism and all forms of oppression. □



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# Number of soldiers resisting Iraq war grows

By Sako Sefiani

According to the U.S. Army, a soldier preparing to deploy to Iraq for the second time was detained in Fort Campbell, Ky., on allegations he made a bomb threat against his unit, the Associated Press reported Jan. 26.

Spc. Rodney Whitacre of Decatur, Ill., was arrested Jan. 23 in the middle of his allegedly threatening phone call.

Whitacre is with the 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division. He was in Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division during its one-year deployment that ended early last year. He was supposed to return for a second tour.

Whitacre's room and an aircraft from his unit were searched using dogs, but no explosives were found. After the search, the battalion continued its deployment to Iraq.

Whitacre remained jailed. Fort Campbell spokesperson Lt. Col. Edward Loomis said he did not know if an attorney had been assigned to Whitacre.

On Jan. 10 Andres Raya, a 19-year-old Marine who had completed a seven-month tour in Iraq, was killed in a shoot-out with police at a Northern California liquor store. Raya was on leave from Camp Pendleton for the holidays. He was scheduled to return to Iraq soon after.

"In speaking with the family, they conveyed to us that their son did not desire to return to Iraq," said Lt. Bill Heyne of the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department.

If you happen to be contemplating whether to join the military, you might first want to know why so many soldiers who have already served in Iraq don't want to return there—and may even act out in desperation.

But to learn about those who refuse to go back, don't expect to find anything on the military's web sites. The Army's site, for example, returns only one article on the word "refuse"—"Soldier refuses to accept failure."

## 'They can't throw us all in jail'

Not only are some U.S. soldiers refusing to go. Their number is rising—despite overwhelming pressure and threat of imprisonment.

Sgt. Kevin Benderman of Savannah, Ga., a mechanic with 10 years in the Army, refused to return to Iraq, saying, "You just don't know how bad it is." Benderman said he became morally opposed to the war after seeing it firsthand during his first tour. He faces court-martial after failing to deploy with his unit.

In a Jan. 13 AP interview, Benderman said he never grasped the misery that war inflicts on civilians or combatants until he saw it firsthand.

"You can sit around your house and discuss this thing in abstract terms, but until you see and experience it for yourself, you just don't know how bad it is," he said. "War is the ultimate in violence and it is indiscriminate."

Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia of the Florida National Guard refused to return to his unit in Iraq while home on leave last year. Last May Mejia was court-martialed. He was sentenced to a year in prison for desertion, despite his pending conscientious objector application.

In San Diego in December, Navy Petty Officer Pablo Paredes refused to board a ship bound for the Persian Gulf. Paredes was assigned to the amphibious transport USS Bonhomme Richard, which ferries Marines to Iraq.

"I don't want to be a part of a ship that's taking 3,000 Marines over there, knowing a hundred or more of them won't come back," he said. "I can't sleep at night knowing that's what I do for a living."

Paredes said he was young and naive when he joined the Navy in 2000. He "never imagined, in a million years, we would go to war with somebody who had done nothing to us." He hopes his protest will inspire others to refuse to take part in the war.

"I know other people are feeling the

same way I am, and I'm hoping more people will stand up," Paredes said. "They can't throw us all in jail."

Army Pvt. Jeremy Hinzman is seeking refugee status in Canada after refusing to serve in Iraq. He told immigration officials that the war is illegal and serving there would have meant committing war crimes. Several soldiers are seeking refugee status in Canada.

## Stop 'stop-loss'

On Dec. 6, eight Army soldiers filed a lawsuit in a Washington, D.C., federal court challenging the Defense Department's "stop-loss" policy of keeping troops active after their enlistment term has ended.

The stop-loss policy was instituted last spring for all troops headed to Iraq and Afghanistan. It has barred thousands of soldiers from returning home even though their enlistment terms have been fulfilled.

According to this rule, if a soldier's unit is still in Iraq or Afghanistan, that soldier cannot leave even when his or her enlistment time runs out.

"My job was to go over and perform my duties under the contract I signed," said David Qualls, one of the plaintiffs. Qualls signed up in July 2003 for a one-year stint in the Arkansas National Guard. "But my year is up and it's been up. Now I believe that they should honor their end of the contract."

On Dec. 29, in another federal lawsuit, Sgt. Emiliano Santiago of the Oregon Army National Guard argued he was improperly called to active duty after his formal eight-year contract had ended. The case again centered on the "stop-loss" policy.

The Center on Conscience and War, which advises military personnel on conscientious objector—CO—discharges, reports that the "bare minimum" number of enlisted soldiers who have applied for CO status is "several hundred, and this number only includes the ones that have come to my group and to groups we're associated with," said CCW's J.E. McNeil.

Only a small percentage of people who apply actually receive a CO discharge. Moreover, military statistics lag about one year behind. Decisions on CO applications take on average six months to one year, and sometimes as long as two years. So the exact number of COs in this war will not be known for some time.

Under military law, a person must be opposed to war in all forms to be considered a conscientious objector. "If a person said, 'I'm not opposed to war, but I'm opposed to the Iraq war,' they would not qualify," said Louis Hiken, an attorney with the Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild.

Also, military figures do not count applications from service people who are absent without leave, so they don't include resisters like Stephen Funk. Funk was a Marine reservist on unauthorized leave before he publicly declared himself a conscientious objector and reported back to his military base in San Jose, Calif., last April 1.

Besides the senseless killings of working people by the sons and daughters of other workers, besides terror, destruction and human tragedy on the grandest scale, wars have always engendered significant social, political and economic consequences.

Many women and men from working-class backgrounds sent overseas to kill so the rich in this country can get richer come back with a heightened sense of class consciousness. They realize that Iraqis and Afghans are not the real enemy.

As Pablo Paredes put it, the Iraqi people have "done nothing to us." The true enemies of the people—here and there—are those that send youths to kill in the name of profits: the Halliburtons, Bechtels, ExxonMobils, transnational banks, weapons contractors and the whole capitalist ruling class.

There's no valor in an illegal and unjust war. The real valor belongs to those who stand up and refuse to kill for the empire. □

## ALL OUT FOR MARCH 19 Anti-war coalition denounces phony elections

By LeiLani Dowell  
New York

An important news conference was held by the Troops Out Now Coalition on Jan. 31 to expose the phony nature of the Jan. 30 "elections" in Iraq. The speakers also urged support for the March 19 protest in Central Park on the second anniversary of the U.S. war on Iraq.

Brenda Stokely, co-convenor of New York Labor Against the War and the Million Worker March, said she was appalled by the racism and national chauvinism she has seen in the U.S. media surrounding the Iraq "elections."

She reminded the press that calling these elections the first time for democracy in Iraq negates 1,000 years of history. She also noted that it was typical and ironic that the United States, which disenfranchised its own people in its last elections, would have the audacity to talk about bringing democracy to another country.

Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center, called the elections an enormous public-relations

campaign. "Democracy means rule of and by the people," she said. "This election was to reinforce government by and of the U.S. occupation."

She described the candidates selected by the weekend spectacle, who will have no executive or legislative authority.

She said that many inside and outside of Iraq would have supported the elections if it would have meant a withdrawal of U.S. troops. Instead, Bush will use the "elections" to keep the troops there.

She cited the elections that occurred during the U.S. war against Vietnam, which changed nothing in terms of U.S. aggression or the resistance to it.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark remarked on the contribution of the United States to the misery of the Iraqi people for the past 14 years—with the first Gulf War, 12 years of sanctions, and Bush's "shock and awe" campaign—and noted that despite all this suffering, the Iraqis have not submitted.

Speakers included parents of children sent to Iraq. Gloria Jackson said that she couldn't afford to send her daughter to college, so she persuaded her to join the mil-

itary. She said, "Now she's back from a year in Iraq and still can't find a decent job, has no health care, and receives \$250 for unemployment!"

Kim Rosario, a member of SNAFU—Support Network for an Armed Forces Union—whose son is in Iraq, told reporters that she and others will continue telling the government that it cannot use their children as disposable commodities. She said nobody should be fooled by the elections when there continues to be a war waged against the children of both the United States and Iraq.

Speakers also connected the wars at home and abroad. Erik Anders-Nilsson, co-founder of the Jersey City Peace Movement, held up two Jersey City newspapers with headlines stating that homelessness is on the rise. He called it outrageous that while this is occurring Bush is set to ask for another \$80 billion for war.

Nana Soul of Artists and Activists for Peace said: "It's the people that will bring liberation. This is the time for us to constantly speak out, to show that we are really serious and concerned, that we feel the effects of a war miles away."



WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Gloria Jackson

She stressed that while all eyes are on Iraq, people of color in the United States are under attack.

William Camacaro of the Venezuela Solidarity Network denounced the use of U.S. taxpayers' money to overthrow democratically elected presidents, including in Haiti and the attempts in Venezuela.

Teresa Gutierrez of the New York Committee to Free the Cuban Five closed the news conference by saying, "New York promises to be out on March 19, standing in solidarity with the people of Iraq, Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela and beyond." □

## The fight for community control

# Labor and community activists unite for summit

By Stevan Kirschbaum & Rachel Nasca  
Boston

In spite of heavy snowstorms, organizers throughout Boston gathered at Dudley Library Jan. 27 to map out a strategy for mobilizing for the Feb. 3 School Bus Safety Summit at historic Freedom House. Organizing behind the slogan “Equal, Quality Education Requires Safe, On-Time Transportation” activists are taking to the streets to kick off a movement demanding safety on Boston’s school buses.

The mobilizers meeting was chaired by City Councilor Chuck Turner, Frantz Mendes, School Bus Union United Steelworkers of America 8751 union vice-president, and David Ebony Allen Barkley of the Alliance of Black Union Workers and Service Employees International Union Local 888. In attendance were parent activists including leaders of the Boston Parent Organizing Network; Work 4 Equality Coalition, the site council of the Renaissance School and teachers from other schools. Also in attendance were school bus union stewards and officers; students; activists from New England Human Rights for Haiti; Women’s Fight-back Network; International Action Center Boston as well as other community and union activists. Organizers are planning a comprehensive campaign including the mass distribution of over 25,000 union printed leaflets to build for the summit.

From Councilor Charles Yancy’s office came a proposal to help coordinate outreach to the churches in the community and a suggestion to establish “community safety inspection squads” to go to the bus yards with “unsafe bus” stickers to enforce safety guidelines. A 35-year teacher, bus coordinator at the Trotter School, and IAC activist reported that she had organized the other teachers at her school to get the word out.

The summit is being sponsored by a core of Black and Latin@ political leaders including City Councilors Turner, Yancey, Felix Arroyo, State Representative Gloria Fox, and State Senator Dianne Wilkerson. It is designed to fight against the system-wide problems created by the Boston School Department, which are motivated by racism and the result of recent budget cuts.

The sponsors are demanding monitors on all buses, who can concentrate on all the needs of students—their health and safety—as well as freeing bus drivers to give full attention to negotiate Boston’s roads. Students are jammed on to buses with no regard to safety and bus routing is based on budget cuts not student/parent/community needs.

The demands include adequate Boston School Department and First Student, Inc. emergency safety personnel. It is critical that lost students, health and behavioral emergencies demand immediate attention. The School Department/First Student have only four persons to service the whole city for the whole day. For instance, there is one person assigned between 6-8 a.m. for the entire city for hundreds of bus trips.

Unexpected emergencies occur and there is need for an adequate number of drivers, including those assigned to routes, and those available as substitutes. No more late or no-show buses!

Information is necessary for efficient student rider services—rosters of names

and contact information for students by bus stop, and a fully detailed bus report provided to the bus driver. Genuine school department/bus company hotlines should respect the parents’ and communities’ concerns, and deliver prompt, efficient, satisfactory solutions to their problems. Most important is the maintenance and repair of the bus fleet and replacement of necessary vehicles.

In his opening remarks, Turner explained the key role the bus ride to school has played in equal, quality education. He stated that the students’ trip to school could set the tone for the whole day. He sent letters to all 140 school principals to enlist their support for the effort. He was joined by a community coordinator from Parent and Family at the Renaissance School who took on phone banking to other school coordinators. Boston Youth Opportunities took 5,000 leaflets to cover 15 community centers and transit stations. A Haitian community leader reported that he was building for the summit through daily radio broadcasts to the Haitian people.

### Community control and self-determination

For nearly three decades the bus ride to school has always been a struggle for community control. Drivers and students defied the rocks, bricks and insults from anti-busing bigots. They fought the racist budget-cutting axe, which deprived students and parents of the right to safe school transportation.

The battle is ongoing. This time it is in the context of the communities struggle against a broad racist assault against the right to equal education. Earlier this year the community won an important battle against a white racist, segregationist campaign led by the Councilor President Flaherty and Education Committee Chairman John Tobin. The community



WW PHOTO: LIZA GREEN

Left to right, Chuck Turner, Frantz Mendes, David Ebony Allen Barkley Jan. 27

set back an attempt to turn back the clock by restoring separate and unequal education, under the code word of “return to neighborhood schools.”

On another front the community and their supporters are in a fight to restore Turner to the Chair of the Education Committee. As stated in the USWA Local 8751 letter to Flaherty signed by over 100 officers and members: “We feel that it is imperative that the Chair of Education Committee come from Boston’s Communities of Color to best represent the overwhelming majority student and parent population. To continue to appoint two white councilors to be chair and vice chair of a committee dealing with a school system that has 85% children of color would be an outrage to the communities.

Adding insult to injury is the fact that the current Chair and Vice chair both hold positions regarding Boston schools that are in sharp contrast to the Communities of Color. We have all seen during this past year that such an appointment has been viewed by the majority communities in the city as politically motivated and racially divisive.”

The union has joined with Voices for Children and Massachusetts Advocates for

Children, New England Human Rights Organization for Haiti, the Women’s Fight-back Network, the IAC and others in the campaign to restore Councilor Turner to Chair of the Education Committee. The current edition of the Boston Banner, weekly newspaper of the African American community, carried a front-page article and picture.

USWA Local 8751 solidarity with the community has a rich history. Whether fighting to desegregate Boston’s schools, or fighting against budget cuts or fighting for safety on the buses and parent inclusion, the union and community have stood together. Last February, during the battle against the segregationists and the School Department, local 8751 printed 25,000 leaflets and distributed them on the buses. The result was a standing-room-only meeting of over 400 that help to turn the tide.

### Militarizing Boston’s school transportation

There is a concerted plot by Councilors Tobin, Flaherty and Mayor Menino to fit every bus with an anti-union “Homeland Security” Global Positioning Systems. This spy technology campaign has been

*Continued on page 9*

## DETROIT

# Cutbacks spark organizing

By Cheryl LaBash

On Jan. 25, students, laid-off teachers and community members marched into the auditorium at Martin Luther King Jr. High School, disrupting the meeting of the lame-duck appointed school board.

People chanted to demand the ouster of Kenneth Burnley, the appointed chief executive officer. In five short years Burnley ran the school’s budget surplus into deficit and spent the \$1.5 billion construction bond issue.

Burnley’s contract was not renewed. But he has not been ruled out as the future “interim” director.

The action keeps the heat on in the fight for community control of Detroit’s schools as the struggle enters a new phase: the transition from the state-appointed take-over board to one fully elected by Detroiters.

In the November 2004 election a grassroots campaign mustered 60 percent of the vote for the right to an elected board of education, the same as the other Michigan school districts have. The vote marked an important victory defending

equal rights of the majority African American residents here. But a fully elected school board will not in and of itself solve the crisis in education.

The same forces that recommend teacher and maintenance layoffs and contracting out to anti-union firms like Aramark and Torre and Bruglio landscaping are now maneuvering for control of the new board that won’t be elected until 2006.

For example, Tom Watkins, the Michigan state superintendent of schools, resigned to take a post with Wayne State University School of Education. Although the departure is reportedly due to a long-standing battle between the governor and Watkins over his “ineffective” leadership, the move makes Watkins available for the Detroit school board either on an interim basis or in 2006. Until recently, Watkins also held a position on the appointed Detroit board, until a conflict of interest with his state position forced him to quit.

The \$200 million deficit facing the Detroit school district is only one part of the general crisis in Detroit. On Jan. 29 Michigan Welfare Rights sponsored a town hall meeting where public housing

tenants reported that crews are sealing the doors to vacant units to prevent homeless people from taking residence.

“The National Low Income Housing Commission estimates a full-time worker in Metro Detroit must earn at least \$15.48 an hour to afford a two-bedroom unit. A minimum wage worker in the area can afford a rent of no more than \$268, while fair market rents in Metro Detroit are \$670 and \$805 for one and two-bedroom apartments, respectively.” (Detroit News, Jan. 28, 2005) According to the same article, 9,500 families are on the Section 8 waiting list when the federal government is cutting funds for housing subsidies.

City of Detroit workers are picketing public buildings regularly—including the International Auto Show on Jan. 19—and organizing to fight layoffs and budget cuts as contract negotiations begin. Operating Engineers Local 547 will host a Feb. 12 meeting on the health-care crisis. Detroit Million Worker March organizers have initiated a petition drive to keep 24-hour bus service, leading up to a fight-back forum to unite all the issues, on Feb. 5 at UAW Local 22. □



From left,  
Michael Schwerner,  
James Chaney,  
Andrew Goodman

## Brother of slain civil rights activist Ben Chaney tells WW:

Workers World Managing Editor Monica Moorehead interviewed Ben Chaney, the brother of slain civil-rights activist James Chaney, at his Manhattan office on Jan. 27. African American James Chaney, along with two other white civil-rights activists, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, were killed by the KKK and other racists on June 21, 1964 in Philadelphia, Miss. No one was ever convicted of murder in this case. Last month, 40 years later, a murder charge was brought against one of the masterminds of these killings, Edgar Ray Killen. (See WW, Jan. 20, 2005.) Following are excerpts from the interview.

**Workers World:** You were 11 or 12 years old when your brother James was murdered. What are some of your memories of him?

**Ben Chaney:** My brother was an asthmatic. He was captain of the football and track team. He had to take me to get a haircut one day and we had to go to the other side of town. Some of his high school friends were hitting me on the head. He beat them down. Another memory is that he bought me my first football outfit when I was 9 or 10 years old. He tried to teach me to play and I played a little bit in the little league.

**WW:** Did he ever talk to you about why he was so invested in the civil-rights movement?

**BC:** It really wasn't necessary because of the conditions. Everybody knew what was going on. When you got to be 6 or 7 you'd have to get off the sidewalk when white folks were walking by. So everybody knew what was happening. And when somebody was out demonstrating, you knew why. The biggest conversations that ever occurred in my house were about the Freedom Rides. And that's because my brother was involved and you could see on the TV the Freedom Riders getting beat up when they got off the bus. And that was one of my mother's main concerns.

But as far as doing voter registration work in the community, he would return, usually late at night. I would be asleep, but he would be talking to mother. My mother has these stories that she's been telling ever since I was 4 or 5 years old. She was telling more of them back then about lynchings that she had seen growing up, her first lynching that she witnessed, about her great-uncle being lynched. I think she was telling these stories to keep my brother safe, to let him know about the danger that was out there.

Once you get to be a certain age, you know what's happening. You can just open up your eyes and see that society has made a difference in the two different peoples—Blacks and whites. So you don't need to talk about it, just need to act on it.

**WW:** Where did you all grow up?

**BC:** Meridian, Miss., about 45 minutes from Philadelphia, Miss.

**WW:** Did you know Andrew Goodman or Michael Schwerner before they were murdered?

**BC:** The first time I saw Mickey, he and his wife had just gotten to Mississippi and my brother had brought them home. When I woke up that morning, they were sleeping on our living room floor. Andy came to the house, but he was only in Mississippi for the one day before he was murdered. He had breakfast that Sunday morning at our house. Mickey and Rita used to come by and eat my mother's homemade chocolate cake all the time. And her homemade biscuits.

### 'Just some whitewash'

**WW:** Just a few months ago, the Department of Justice decided to re-open the case of your brother's murder—along with the case of Goodman and Schwerner's murders—more than 40 years after the KKK got a slap on the wrist from the Mississippi courts. Do you think real justice will be served by the reopening of the case?

**BC:** It wasn't the Justice Department that decided to reopen the case. It was the state attorney general. In

1967, the Justice Department tried them for violation of civil rights. In March of last year we requested that the state attorney general follow the same model in this case that was used in the 1963 Birmingham church bombing case—that an independent investigation and a special prosecutor be appointed.

The Mississippi attorney general, instead of going by our suggestions, issued a press release saying that he was turning the case over to the Justice Department. As a matter of fact, he did not. What he did was that he conducted his own investigation. He did so because he targeted one individual—Preacher Killen—who is probably one of the most unrepentant racists in the state.

He did so because he wanted to protect the rich and powerful people that were involved in the case that have gotten away. And as a result, this is where we are today—one person is being prosecuted, where there are seven others who the state attorney general is not going to even attempt to prosecute.

It appears that in order for justice to exist, everybody who was involved in the case should be prosecuted. But there's a former state legislator that the state attorney general refuses to go after because his son has taken his place. There's a very rich landowner in Neshoba County, Philadelphia, Miss.; Olin Burge is his name. The bodies were found on his land. Burge put up some of the bail money for Killen. So the state attorney general is staying away from the rich and powerful.

He's going after the one Klansman that hasn't changed his appearance. These other people have changed their appearance. They have gone from being members of the White Citizens Council (WCC) to members of a new group started by the WCC, called the Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC). If you go to the Southern Poverty Law Center web site, it's listed as one of the most racist groups in the country.

CCC wear the suit and tie; they got these big positions as judges and lawyers, and even the governor of Mississippi, Haley Barber, is a supporter of the CCC. He's on their web site at a fundraiser he attended to raise money for the group so they can keep segregation and perpetuate their busing into parochial schools so they won't have to integrate the schools in Mississippi.

To get one person and not to get everybody else is a miscarriage of justice. This is just some whitewash.

**WW:** Why do you think they are doing this knowing it is a whitewash?

**BC:** They're trying to change the image of Neshoba County and Mississippi. They want to put this case to rest. So one way to say that justice is being served is to get Preacher Killen now.

Killen is a key figure in these murders. He organized the lynch mob. He was the recruiter for the Klan in the 1960s and it was his job to get approval from state officials for the murder. The Klan would not have committed the murders unless a state official approved it. Whether or not that state official is a member of the Ku Klux Klan, he was probably a member of the Sovereignty Commission and a member of the WCC.

In the mid-1950s, the state of Mississippi formed this state agency called the Mississippi Sovereignty



Ben Chaney Jan. 27.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Commission. Their job was to spy on civil-rights workers and to try in any way they could to derail the movement. They got some of their favorite Negroes and some of the moderate whites and they tried to form a civil-rights organization that could be the spokesmen for Black folks in Mississippi other than the organizations that were already working there at the time.

That didn't work because the civil-rights workers used simply too much activism, too much demonstrating, too much heat that prevented that. They got Negroes in the community and they paid them money to spy on civil-rights workers. The Negroes would tell the commission what the civil-rights workers were doing and where they were going and give them identifications of cars they were driving and who were with them. The commission would tell the WCC, which would in turn would tell the KKK and law enforcement.

### 'How my brother was murdered'

In a book by Prof. Neil McMillan that talks about racism in Mississippi, he explains that the commission was made up of state leaders, including the governor, the lieutenant governor, the leaders from the state senate and the house—and they were all members of the WCC. So when the commission got the information, the Klan had the information—because the WCC gave it to the Klan.

This is how my brother was murdered. There was a Negro agent at the training session in Ohio along with my brother and Goodman and Schwerner. When the church was burned in Philadelphia, Miss., they made plans to come back to Mississippi. In the Ohio planning session was a state representative for the NAACP (they called him Agent X). He called the Sovereignty Commission and told them that they were coming down. He gave the commission the license plates numbers on the car, described the car they were driving and their names.

On Sunday morning, June 21, the day that they left to go to Philadelphia, Miss., another informer spoke to Cecil Price, who was a deputy sheriff there.

On that same Sunday, they were returning from the church and talking to the people who would be coming back to Meridian where we lived and that's when the sheriff's deputy stopped them, about 4 p.m. He took them to jail and held them until about 10 o'clock, until Preacher Killen could organize the lynch mob. Once he organized the mob, the deputy sheriff turned the three loose. He re-caught them and he turned them over to the Klan.

Preacher Killen was not there. But he had arranged for where they would be stopped at. He had arranged for the posse to be there. He had arranged for the site to bury the bodies. He had arranged for the bulldozer to be there to cover the bodies up. So he's a key figure in these murders.

But he's not the only key figure. There's this former state legislator who has, for the past 40 years, stopped

# Reopening of case is 'whitewash'



Ben Chaney with his mother, Fannie Chaney, at the funeral of his brother in 1964

The mainstream media identifies who's going to represent us and they push them to the forefront. So I think he would have been sort of disappointed because of the fact that in the 1960s a grassroots movement meant that poor people came together and got their resources together and got things done.

Now, poor people don't really come together. We rely upon these rich, liberal organizations to supply us with the funds. And as a result, the issues that are most affecting our community are not being addressed. The leadership is not going to address them. And the poor people are not equipped to address them.

Right now, young poor people are being taught that you can't do anything unless you've got some backing or support from some major leader or major organization. When in fact we know that the civil-rights movement started without any white folks. It started with poor Black folks in the south. The sit-ins

started with Black students from Black college campuses taking the lead. And it was years later before these liberal volunteers really got involved.

In fact, when they were looking for my brother's body, they found the bodies of nine other Black college students that had disappeared over a three or four year period doing voter registration.

**WW:** Can you tell us about the James Earl Chaney Foundation? How and when did it get started? What are its goals?

**BC:** I started the foundation to raise money to repair the vandalism to my brother's grave. But we got involved in a lot of other things that we were not equipped to do. One thing that we got involved in, in 1992 and 1993, was the jailhouse hangings in Mississippi. People were calling us up in '92 saying that Black males were dying in jail and they didn't know what to do in Mississippi. So we went down, we traveled over the state and we determined that there were 25 to 30 deaths. We formed a group called the Mississippi Coalition for Human Rights.

We went to Jackson, Miss., the state capital, and we put on hearings in the Senate chamber room and then the media started doing their own investigation and they uncovered 50-something deaths that were ruled as suicides. We were able to get our information into the hands of Attorney General Janet Reno, and she, under the Institutionalized Persons Act, conducted an investigation into 18 Mississippi jails. She closed down four in order to upgrade eight others. That put us in debt.

Then we got involved in putting on hearings about capital punishment in Pennsylvania and a few other places. From that point on we got involved in youth empowerment, youth education, teaching the history of the civil-rights movement. We did so through Freedom Rides. We'd get a group of young people to board buses in New York and we would visit all the sites in the south.

Just last year we added to that by any stop we go to, we do voter registration. And we feel this is necessary first of all because that's what my brother was doing—voter registration. He and Mickey and Andy were doing that when they were murdered. It was interesting because they were not eligible to vote, simply because of the age limit. You had to be 21 to vote in 1964. Andrew was 20. My brother had just turned 21. And yet they were still out there registering people to vote.

So on our Freedom Rides we have people from 14, 16 on up. Last year we registered 550 people, first-time voters from 18 to 22. That was 90 percent of the people that registered to vote. We're going to be doing this for the next three years, getting ready for the Voting Rights Act, because it is set to expire in three years. And because our leadership has a tendency to wait until the last minute—don't prepare, don't plan, don't organize and don't create strategies until the last minute—they don't want to make a lot of noise, you know, because things don't get done.

any prosecution and any investigation. And there are other rich people involved in these murders. So as far as justice is concerned, right now we are glad that Preacher Killen is being prosecuted, but again, we're back to the whitewash.

This has been a long time coming. In 1989 I met with Mike Moore, who was the Mississippi attorney general at the time, and he promised to prosecute the case. He assigned two attorneys in his office to do the research. And they gave him a memo saying he should prosecute. He came back a couple of weeks later saying that there was not enough evidence.

Again, Mike Moore did the same thing in 1994. And he did it again in 1999. But come to find out, he never requested the evidence from the Justice Department. And what's most important, he never requested the informants' files that the Justice Department had.

So he had no real intentions of prosecuting. He was just leading people on. And it's clear that this new attorney general, Jim Hood, has no real intentions of seeking justice. He wants to simply give the appearance that things have been done, that this case is closed.

There's some very rich people that need to be prosecuted and he's simply protecting them.

**WW:** This is a classic example of government and the extralegal terrorist organizations working hand-in-hand.

What do you feel is the legacy that your brother left for the movement today? If he were alive today, what would he have thought about the state of the movement and the situation that Black people, not only in the South, but around the country and around the world, are facing today?

**BC:** I'm not sure about the Northeast or other places, but I know particularly in the area where he's buried, the legacy is strong among young African Americans. And his grave even symbolizes the desire of young people to buck the status quo. His grave has been vandalized for the past 40 years.

In fact, someone used a high-powered rifle to shoot his photograph out of the monument we had put there in 1989. They've kicked over his tombstone. They've tried to get to his coffin. That's because it has such a strong symbolic gesture for young people in that area. They're trying to destroy just the symbol itself. So I think it means a great deal to young Black folks in Mississippi.

## 'Leadership is something that's claimed'

As far as the state of Black folks today and the state of the movement, I don't know what he would be thinking now, but I've talked to a lot of people who worked with him—in fact, in the last few months I've been talking with those old guys that were in the movement, including Jim Forman before he passed away.

I think he would be sort of discouraged by the fact that there's no real solid leadership in our community.

We decided to begin planning now, so we're going to do a Freedom Ride, leaving the University of Miami in Oxford, Ohio, in June. We're going to go throughout the south. We're going to Miami University because the training sessions in the 1960s took place on Western College, which is part of the school. And they have extended an invitation for us to use that. From there we're going to go into the poorest community in Cincinnati and do voter registration for one day and then we'll go south.

We're going to these various stops, and working with community coalitions, forming community groups in different cities to get young people to help us to identify areas to do voter registration. Also to help us identify areas for resources that we may need like housing and food. We've got a pretty good group of people across the South that are young, they're college students and they're smart.

And they want this because there's no leadership. The problem that I see is where there is leadership, it's weak. So there is a serious need for young people to become leaders. But a lot of them feel that leadership has to be given to them—that leadership is given, it has to be bestowed upon you. But in fact, when you look back at a history of the movement, nobody bestowed leadership on Jim Forman.

So leadership is not something that's given, it's actually something that's claimed—you take it and you act upon it. But we are going through the process of trying to get young people to use their voice. They'll just speak up, simply speak up. And we are giving them the resources to do it by creating community-based coalitions.

**WW:** It is amazing that in the years 2000 and 2004 something as basic as the right to vote is still a big issue.

**BC:** It is a very big issue—in the past election we saw that. One thing we are going to try to do—I'm not exactly sure how to do it yet—is to get an amendment to the Voting Rights Act. The amendment would be that for these electronic voting machines there must be a print-out so you can verify who the person voted for. I think that may eliminate some of the problems. We're going to try to have it on the agenda by end of this year.

For more information on the James Earl Chaney Foundation, go to [www.jecf.org](http://www.jecf.org).



## Ramsey Clark:

# 'Why I'm willing to defend Hussein'

In a commentary in the Jan. 24 Los Angeles Times, Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general, explained why he has offered to help in the legal defense of deposed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Below is a shortened version of that column. The full original is available at [latimes.com](http://latimes.com).

Late last month, I traveled to Amman, Jordan, and met with the family and lawyers of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. I told them that I would help in his defense in any way I could. ...

So let me explain why defending Saddam Hussein is in line with what I've stood for all my life and why I think it's the right thing to do now. ...

Both international law and the Constitution of the United States guarantee the right to effective legal representation to any person accused of a crime. This is especially important in a highly politicized situation, where truth and justice can become even harder to achieve. That's certainly the situation today in Iraq. The war has caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqis and the widespread destruction of civilian properties essential to life. President Bush, who initiated and oversees the war, has manifested his hatred for Hussein, publicly proclaiming that the death penalty would be appropriate.

The United States, and the Bush administration in particular, engineered the demonization of Hussein, and it has a clear political interest in his conviction. ...

Hussein has been held illegally for more than a year without once meeting a family member, friend or lawyer of his choice. Though the world has seen him time and again on television—disheveled, apparently disoriented with someone prying deep into his mouth and later alone before some unseen judge—he has been cut off from all communications with the outside world and surrounded by the same U.S. military that mistreated prisoners at Abu

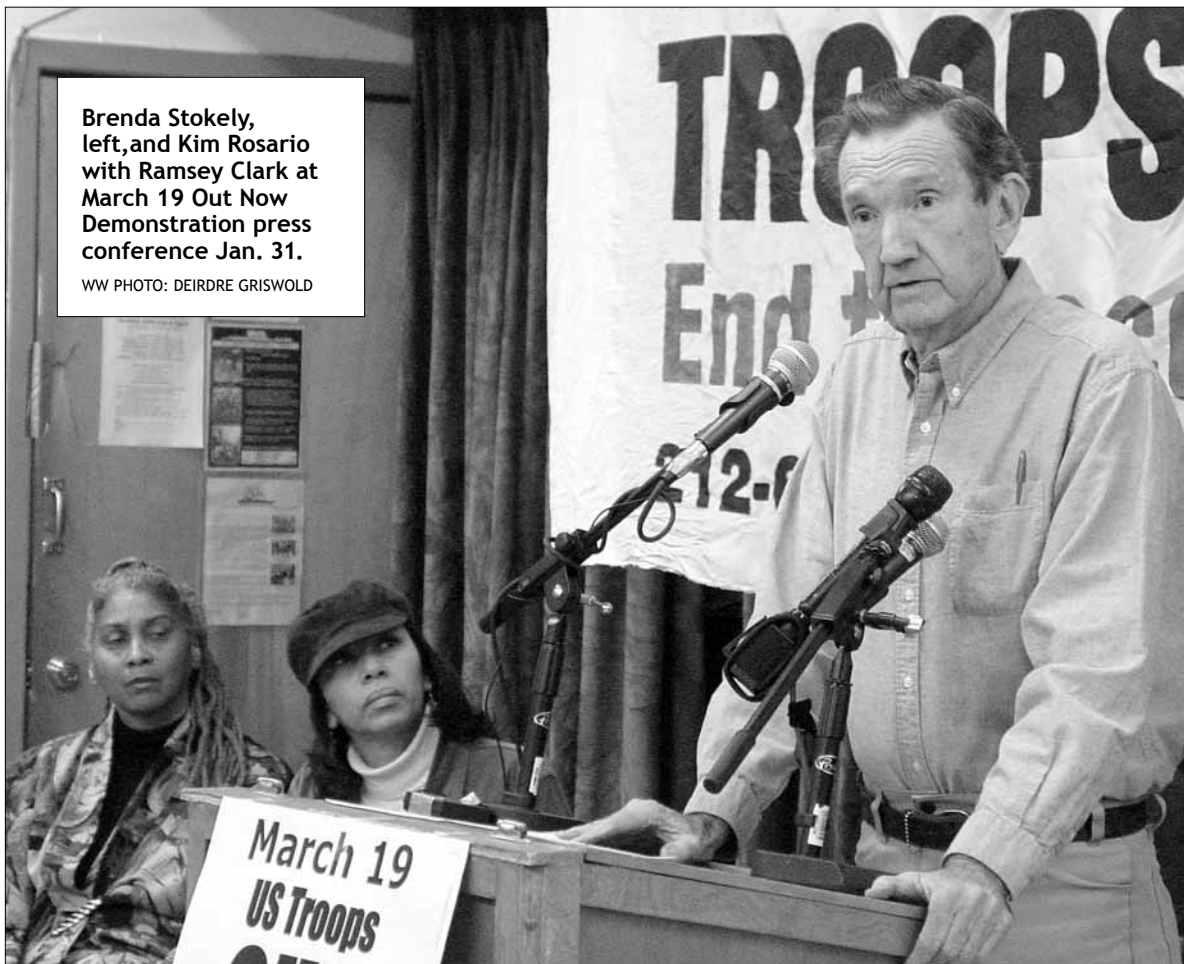
Ghraib and Guantanamo.

Preparation of Hussein's defense cannot begin until lawyers chosen by him obtain immediate, full and confidential access to him so they can review with him events of the last year, the circumstances of his seizure and the details of his treatment. They must then have time to thoroughly discuss the nature and composition of the prosecution and the court, the charges that may be brought against him, and his knowledge, thoughts and instructions concerning the facts of the case. And finally, they must have the time for the enormous task of preparing his defense.

The legal team, its assistants and investigators must be able to perform their work safely, without interference, and be assured that their client's condition and the conditions of his confinement enable him to fully participate in every aspect of his defense.

International law requires that every criminal court be competent, independent and impartial. The Iraqi Special Tribunal lacks all of these essential qualities. It was illegitimate in its conception—the creation of an illegal occupying power that demonized Saddam Hussein and destroyed the government it now intends to condemn by law.

The United States has already



destroyed any hope of legitimacy, fairness or even decency by its treatment and isolation of the former president and its creation of the Iraqi Special Tribunal to try him.

Among the earliest photographs it released is one showing Hussein sitting submissively on the floor of an empty room with Ahmad Chalabi, the principal U.S. surrogate at that moment, looming over him and a picture of Bush looking down from an otherwise bare wall.

The intention of the United States to convict the former leader in an unfair trial was made starkly clear by the appointment of Chalabi's nephew to organize and lead the court. He had just returned to Iraq to open a law office with

a former law partner of Defense Undersecretary Douglas J. Feith, who had urged the U.S. overthrow of the Iraqi government and was a principal architect of U.S. postwar planning.

The concept, personnel, funding and functions of the court were chosen and are still controlled by the United States, dependent on its will and partial to its wishes. Reform is impossible. ...

Finally, any court that considers criminal charges against Saddam Hussein must have the power and the mandate to consider charges against leaders and military personnel of the U.S., Britain and the other nations that participated in the aggression against Iraq, if equal justice under law is to have meaning. □

## Iraqis want their country back

Continued from page 1

possible by the United States military power would reverse, except briefly, the hostility toward their country."

Burns quoted Ahmed Dujaily, 80, a London-trained engineer who was agriculture minister under King Faisal II. Dujaily said of the U.S. government: "Now, we know what they are looking for. They are looking for oil, and military bases, and domination of the new regime. They will have their military headquarters for the region in Iraq, and when they will leave, nobody knows."

### A vote against occupation

Dahr Jamail, a syndicated independent journalist who has been reporting regularly from Iraq, warned against the "misrepresentation" of the election by the mainstream media. After explaining that figures on the turnout were dubious, he added:

"What they also didn't tell you was that of those who voted, whether they be 35 percent or even 60 percent of registered voters, were not voting in support of an ongoing U.S. occupation of their country.

"In fact, they were voting for precisely the opposite reason. Every Iraqi I have spoken with who voted explained that they

believe the National Assembly which will be formed soon will signal an end to the occupation.

"And they expect the call for a withdrawing of foreign forces in their country to come sooner rather than later.

"This causes one to view the footage of cheering, jubilant Iraqis in a different light now, doesn't it?" (Zmag.org, Feb. 1)

The election itself was a massive demonstration of the brutal occupation of 150,000 U.S. troops. Washington organized this so-called "democratic election" with helicopter gun ships, fighter jets, Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and rooftop snipers at polling places throughout the country, backing up Iraqi puppet troops who wore hoods for fear of being identified.

Cities and towns were in lock-down for close to a week. Vehicular traffic was prohibited. Journalists could not travel freely; they could only go where the Pentagon wanted them to. No international election observers were permitted.

The names of the 7,700 candidates were released six days before the election and, except for government figures and religious leaders, are completely unknown to the people. The candidates have been in hiding and the polling places had to be

kept secret until days before the election.

The big business media, from the New York Times to the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal and all the television networks, went into ecstasy over the elections, hailing the upsurge of "democracy" and the turnout—quoting the figures of 8 million and 57 percent as the gospel truth.

### Voting for food rations?

The turnout was nonexistent to low in central and northern Iraq, with the exception of parts of Baghdad and the Kurdish regions. There was no voter registration. The government arbitrarily declared that 14 million people were eligible to vote using the food ration system developed under the Oil for Food program. Voters were sent to food ration centers to vote and there was widespread suspicion that the renewal of food ration cards would be tied to voting.

The puppet electoral commission at first declared that 72 percent of the voters had turned out. It then reduced that to 57 percent, with 8 million voting. This was long before the votes were counted. The communications system in the country is in a shambles and it was physically impossible to come up a count so quickly.

The numbers were given out by Farid

Ayar, spokesperson for the Independent Iraqi Electoral Commission—a stooge of the Allawi government and the U.S. When asked at a press conference about the numbers given, Ayar said, "Percentages and numbers come only after counting and will be announced when it's over... It's too soon to say that those were official numbers."

Meanwhile, the ballots have been brought to the Green Zone and are being counted by the former CIA agent and now puppet prime minister. The world still doesn't know how many votes were cast in Ohio during the U.S. presidential election, and no true results will ever emanate from the process of manufacturing an outcome that the imperialists want.

Undoubtedly participating in this process are the Shiite clerical forces headed by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. The election would not have taken place without the collaboration of al-Sistani. The most prestigious Shiite leader in Iraq, he told his followers that they must vote as a religious duty. This fact is highly important for the U.S. imperialists when they consider the significance of the election.

The turnout for the election in the heavily Shiite areas of the south and in sections



# Report exposes U.S. attacks on Haiti

By G. Dunkel

The Bush regime is hypocritically extolling the Jan. 30 Iraqi elections, conducted under the "protection" of 150,000 U.S. troops, as a shining example of democracy. At the same time, it's hiding the substantial U.S. role in organizing and implementing the overthrow of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the democratically elected president of Haiti—not once, but twice.

However, the Bush regime's cover-up is unraveling, thanks to the tenacious and stubborn resistance of the Haitian people. Though faced with vicious repression, they are determined to win their president's return.

The University of Miami law school has released a report by Thomas Griffin, an immigration and civil-rights lawyer from Philadelphia, of an investigation he conducted in Haiti in November. (See full report at [www.ijdh.org/CSHRhaitireport.pdf](http://www.ijdh.org/CSHRhaitireport.pdf).)

Using very graphic photos, Griffin amply documents the brutal tactics used by the Haitian National Police to suppress dissent. Dead bodies are left in the street. Neighbors and loved ones of the dead are afraid that if they move them the police will kill them, too. People injured by the cops die or suffer at home untreated rather than risk arrest at the hospital.

Police enter poor neighborhoods, where support for Aristide is high, shooting. And they leave shooting.

U.S. diplomats try to blame the human-rights crisis on armed gangs in poor neighborhoods, not on "official abuses and atrocities," according to Griffin's report. This isn't surprising, since the de facto minister of justice, Bernard Gousse, worked for a U.S. government project that inspired and financed groups conspiring to overthrow Aristide.

The tool Washington used in the run-up to the Feb. 29, 2004, "coup-napping" of Aristide was the International Foundation

for Electoral Systems. This entity implemented a series of multi-million-dollar projects as a subcontractor for the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The chairperson of IFES is a member of the board of the International Republican Institute, which receives its funding from the National Endowment for Democracy. The NED is infamous for its involvement in military coups and death-squad rampages through the Western Hemisphere.

Beginning in 2001, IFES started pumping money to people like Gousse, whom they called an expert in the Haitian justice system, and Philippe Vixamar, a former law student. The current de facto prime minister and president, Gerard Latortue and Boniface Alexandre, also received grants for their work on "sensitizing" the international community to alleged civil-rights violations under Aristide.

IFES established a formal association of business-sector groups to "provide economic force" to the opposition movement, which became the Group of 184, under the Haitian bourgeois Andy Apaid.

This movement also drew in the student movement at the state university in the capital, Port-au-Prince. Some of the "sensitization" meetings at the university became anti-Aristide rallies. At one rally, anti-Aristide demonstrators broke the legs of the university rector.

In early 2004, armed groups began moving on Port-au-Prince. They first gained control of Gonaives. Gousse went to that city in an ambulance with the markings of the U.S. Agency for International Development for "protection." This allowed him to provide aid to the contras.

The political agitation and defamation organized by IFES was one wing of the campaign against Aristide's government. Sometimes it had direct contact with the mercenaries, Macoutes and ex-army officers who supplied the muscle.

IFES began shutting down its programs

in the summer of 2004. Its job was done.

The Feb. 29 coup-napping of Aristide was not the first coup the United States organized against him.

The first successful coup against him was staged on Sept. 30, 1991, by the Haitian Army. The army needed a terror agent, so it called upon Toto Constant, a CIA operative in Haiti, to organize one. He called his group FRAPH—the Revolutionary Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti. It rapidly became one of the more vicious and violent paramilitary groups in Haitian history. In particular, FRAPH led a campaign of terror against women, involving mass rapes.

Constant slipped out of Haiti after Aristide's return to power and managed to enter the United States legally. When he was threatened with deportation, he responded by threatening to go on the TV show "60 Minutes" and expose the CIA's

role in Aristide's overthrow. Constant got parole, has lived comfortably in southeast Queens, N.Y., and has had a variety of businesses since the mid-1990s.

On Jan. 14, a process server handed Constant papers ordering him to appear in court. Three brave Haitian women are suing him for rape and assault done under his direction. Their lawyers, from the Center for Justice and Accountability, hope not only to impoverish Constant but to gain access to documentation of his connection with the U.S. intelligence apparatus.

The women are remaining anonymous for the time being to protect their families still in Haiti. But one of them told Haiti-Progress newspaper, "We hope that the suit will deter at least some of the violence, by sending a message that anyone who commits atrocities will no longer be able to visit or live in the U.S. with impunity." □

## Fight for community control

*Continued from page 5*

accompanied by the most ugly, anti-union, anti-worker vilification against the union leadership, their contract, and the multinational rank and file drivers.

As the Greater Boston Labor Council stated in their Dec. 7, 2004 resolution, "If ... the City were really concerned about bus safety, they would cease the union-busting GPS hoax, and they would listen to the parents, students, drivers and political leaders...who have been demanding monitors on the buses, [and] more safety personnel ...". "Elected officials have ... acted as agents of the company in an unseemly campaign ... to violate the sanctity of the private collective bargaining agreement."

This last statement refers to the fact that GPS was expressly defeated during recently concluded union contract negotiations.

The actions of the Mayor and Councilors clearly demonstrate the truism that racism and anti-unionism come from the same poison well. In the best tradition of showing which side they are on, the sponsors of the summit state in their leaflet: "In a time of limited resources, we need money to be spent for real safety measures, not false 'cures' like a Global Positioning System, a costly and inefficient plan that provides no safety."

The Jan. 27 mobilizers meeting ended on a high note that the Feb. 3 summit will be the first step in a protracted campaign to end racism and union busting and unite the powerful forces of labor and the community.

*Kirschbaum is chief steward with USWA 8751 and Nasca is an IAC organizer.*

of Baghdad does not show support for the occupation. What Washington needs most of all in Iraq is to build a social base so that it can stabilize a neocolonial regime, take over the oil, complete its military basing project and reduce its military presence.

What the election showed was not that the U.S. has expanded its base, but that al-Sistani still has a social base. And while he may have agreed to collaborate in the elections for opportunistic purposes, the fact is that the masses are expecting him to press for an end to the occupation.

Salim Lone, who was director of communications for Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN special representative killed in a bombing in 2003, wrote a piece in the London Guardian of Jan. 31 entitled: "An Election to Anoint an Occupation." Lone wrote that "The U.S. has little support in the country. It has, however, won the support of the extremely influential Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who tolerates an occupation most of his followers hate."

### Mass pressure to get out

Therein lies the new contradiction that will face U.S. imperialism in the aftermath of this phony election. George Bush should have heeded the old saying, "Be careful what you wish for, because you might get it." Bush wanted an election. Given that the occupation will continue, the basis for the insurgency remains very strong.

The election now opens another political avenue for mass pressure to end the

occupation. Any politician in Iraq who wants to retain mass support is going to have to push to end the occupation, restore sovereignty and begin the rebuilding of the country. This is precisely what U.S. imperialism is opposed to.

Sami Ramadani, a political refugee from Saddam Hussein's regime who is a senior lecturer at London Metropolitan University, wrote in the Feb. 1 edition of the London Guardian:

"George Bush and Tony Blair made heroic speeches on Sunday implying that Iraqis had voted to approve the occupation. Those who insist that the U.S. is desperate for an exit strategy are misreading its intentions. The facts on the ground, including the construction of massive military bases in Iraq, indicate that the U.S. is digging in to install and back a long-term puppet regime. For this reason, the U.S.-led presence will continue, with all that entails in terms of bloodshed and destruction.

"An honest analysis of the social and political map of Iraq reveals that Iraqis are increasingly united in their determination to end the occupation. Whether they participated in or boycotted Sunday's exercise, the political bond will soon reassert itself—just as it did in Vietnam—despite tactical differences, and despite the U.S.-led occupation's attempts to dominate Iraqis by inflaming sectarian and ethnic divisions." □

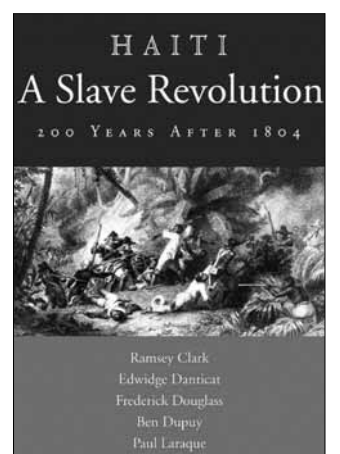
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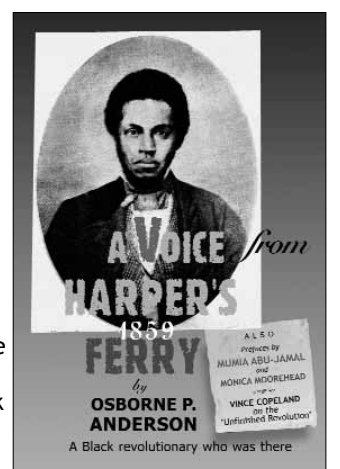
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## Good news is bad news

**H**ow can good news be bad news? Because there's no such thing as absolute goodness. What's good for one class in society can be pretty awful for another.

Take the latest statistic on orders to factories for durable goods. Those who live well off the profits produced by someone else's labor are feeling quite happy. The Commerce Department reported on Jan. 27 that orders for durable goods—everything from computers to refrigerators to cars—rose last year by almost 11 percent. It was the biggest increase in a decade.

The owners of these factories were smiling all the way to the bank, because it meant a tidy increase in their profits.

Workers, on the other hand, aren't smiling. Since July 2000, 2.9 million manufacturing jobs in the United States have vanished. Even with the substantial increase in factory output last year, few workers were hired back. The number of workers in manufacturing rose by only 76,000. This means that for every 30 workers who lost their jobs over this period, less than one was hired.

When output rises this much without a significant increase in workers, the bosses call it a gain in productivity. Workers have another name for it: speed-up.

Capitalist competition has brought about a rapid revolution in science and technology, so that today labor is many times more productive than in the past. This system's killer contradiction, however, is that increased productivity only leads to greater exploitation. It's the first economic system in which greater abundance and greater poverty go hand in hand.

Even under ancient slavery and feudalism, the people could expect an improvement in their conditions if the harvest was good and better techniques allowed them to produce more goods. There was spontaneous joy when a good

harvest came along and the people could celebrate nature's abundance.

But capitalism brought in something new: destruction of goods in order to keep profits up, throwing workers out on the scrap heap when new technology proves cheaper than wages.

Slavery in the United States and the Caribbean was different than ancient slavery. Because this modern slavery was to produce sugar, rum and cotton for a seemingly limitless capitalist market, the intensity of exploitation of the enslaved peoples, kidnapped from Africa, was like nothing ever seen before.

Karl Marx referred to capitalism as a system of wage slavery. It is the worker's labor power, rather than the worker herself/himself, that is bought and sold. But without class consciousness and organization, the workers have no control over the processes that constantly drive down wages and destroy their jobs.

Today this system of wage slavery is worldwide. The capitalists endlessly drum up patriotism when they want working-class and oppressed youths to fight their wars, but they have no loyalty to the people whose labor has made them rich. If they can exploit workers elsewhere even more, they'll pull up stakes and leave the wreckage behind. Unemployment, vanished pensions and lack of health coverage stalk the land.

Capitalism is driving society into the ground. The revolutionary struggle of the workers to take control of what they have created is inevitable. Socialism—a system based on social ownership of the means of production (no, not of your toothbrush or your favorite chair)—is needed so that each 11 percent rise in productivity can be translated into a shorter work week, a cleaner, sustainable environment, free health care and education for all, and the equitable sharing of the world's resources by all its peoples. That will be the good news. □

## Sixty years later

**T**he Soviet Red Army liberated the Auschwitz death camp on Jan. 27, 1945.

Maj. Anatoly Shapiro, 92, who commanded the first troops to enter Auschwitz, told those gathered for a commemoration at the site in Poland, "I would like to say to all the people on the earth: This should never be repeated, ever."

So what was Vice President Dick Cheney doing there?

After all Cheney is thought by many to be the mastermind of the Bush administration's war on Iraq. He's the top insider of an administration that has authorized torture "up to but not including life threatening events" for prisoners from Guantanamo to Abu Ghraib. The Bush-Cheney team has promoted religious hatred against

Muslims, and has echoed the Third Reich's claims of a right to occupy foreign lands in order to stop alleged threats to the people of the homeland. Cheney is a cheerleader for naked imperialist aggression.

What is the lesson to be learned from Auschwitz?

According to Cheney, it is to support the U.S. occupation of Iraq. The Jan. 27 Washington Post noted that the vice president did not directly compare the U.S. "war on terrorism" to the campaign to defeat the Nazis during World War II, but that was clearly his message.

But Auschwitz was about imperialism; genocide in the pursuit of imperialist domination. How can it not mean the necessity to resist imperialism? This is the lesson to be learned. □

## Letter to the editor

### Mathematician takes on Summers' sexism

Lawrence Summers, president of elite Harvard University, has recently had to apologize for publicly suggesting that biological factors, more than discrimination, account for the fact that in this country, far more men than women are employed in the fields of mathematics and science.

Did he raise this alleged imbalance in order to demand early intervention for baby girls, or training for teachers at all levels on how to stretch female students to their fullest potential? Did he denounce the highly profitable cosmetics and fashion industries that pressure young women to develop their appearance rather than their intellect, starting at pre-puberty—prior to which most studies find equal aptitude among boys and girls?

Or was the implication instead that institutions should not bother recruiting and retaining female professors in certain subjects? In practice, Harvard under Summers has decreased its offers to women applicants for tenured positions to just four out of 32, even though one-third of mathematics doctorates recently awarded to U.S. citizens went to women. What about the implication that women students should not even try to excel in those subjects since they just "don't have it in them"?

Summers need not look very far to find contradictions to his own statement. For one example, the late Dr. Etta Zuber Falconer, herself a college president (at historically Black and predominantly female Spelman College), earned her doctorate in mathematics in 1969. Successful in abstract research, she turned her skills toward creating programs to bring women of all ethnicities into math, science and engineering. Falconer's legacy continues. This April, Spelman will host the Infinite Possibilities Conference of scholars from under-represented groups in the above-named fields.

Falconer and many other determined women have overcome well-documented discriminatory attitudes and practices. According to an article by Meghan O'Rourke in *Slate*, in 1983 "M.A. Paludi and W.D. Bauer conducted a study in which 180 men and 180 women were asked to grade a [mathematics] paper on a five-point scale. When the author was 'John T. McKay' rather than 'Joan T. McKay,' the men on average graded the paper a point higher," and even the women gave higher average scores by a little less.

Other articles covering the Summers remarks cite a more recent experiment in which Princeton students were asked to evaluate two highly qualified candidates for an engineering job—one with more education, the other with more work experience. When there was no information about the sex of the candidates, these students chose the more educated candidate

75 percent of the time. When the experienced candidate had a male name and the educated candidate was designated as female, suddenly she was chosen only 48 percent of the time.

It is nothing new for the powers in a sexist, racist, class society to cite "evidence" that certain groups are innately less capable, as part of denying members of those groups a fair chance to reach their actual capabilities. A book titled "Even the Rat Was White" describes how some branches of psychology focused on "measuring intelligence" for no other purpose than to support the racist theory that African American people were not worthy of equal rights; indeed, to strengthen the superexploitation of one part of the working class. Meanwhile there is no universally accepted definition of intelligence, so how can it be measured without cultural bias?

Summers' own bias is clear when we consider the example he gave to back up his assertions: that his little daughter played with toy trucks by calling them "daddy truck" and "baby truck." His apparent conclusion: Females are too involved with social relationships to be mechanical.

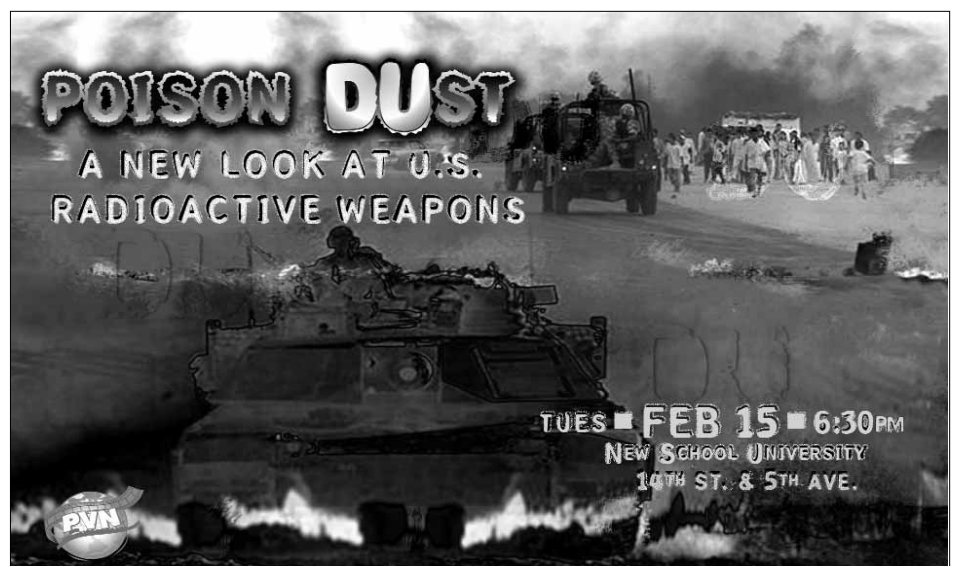
The conclusions of a math educator (this writer): She grasps the concept of relative size!

The conclusions of a mother (this writer): My toddler son does the same thing with his bathtub ducks, so what is the big issue? Both children use words from their frame of reference to label bigger and smaller objects that belong in the same "family." They would not say "daddy duck" and "baby truck," so they are also using classification—another science skill!

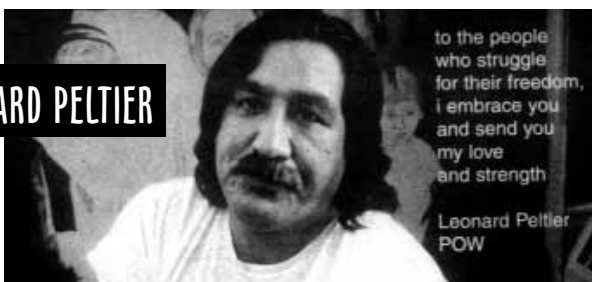
This brings us to the misguided notion that logic and analytical thinking are the only components of mathematical or scientific discovery. Any real examination of it (e.g. any Math History course) shows that intuition and imagination play a large role. To this we should add: patience and perseverance. No one dares claim that women lack these qualities, but the Summers incident has renewed the debate on women's rationality. Why should women scientists have to interrupt their work to argue that they can handle it?

What is impressive is that so many women and oppressed people have continued to excel in math and science in spite of discouraging remarks, financial inequities, harassment and discrimination in hiring. Imagine how many more women could produce research that would blow Summers' small mind, if society provided free education and child care—and enforced laws against institutionalized male chauvinism.

—Sara Catalinotto, M.A.  
Pure Mathematics



FREE LEONARD PELTIER



## WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

# Anti-war support for Iraqi resistance strong

By Berta Joubert-Ceci  
and John Catalinotto  
Porto Alegre, Brazil

Of the 150,000 to 200,000 people who attended this year's World Social Forum, which took place here in Brazil from Jan. 26 to Jan. 31, some 95 percent in one way or another showed their solidarity with the struggle of the Iraqi resistance to push the U.S. occupation out of Iraq.

The assembly of social movements endorsed the call for demonstrations March 19-20 with the common slogan: "Troops out of Iraq now! No more wars!" Groups were urged to hold actions in their own countries.

By far the overwhelming majority of this year's participants were from Brazil. There were many young people, especially young women. Since the rules were changed to allow people to register as individuals, there were tens of thousands who were not themselves members of organizations or political activists. This gave a different character to this fifth World Social Forum.

Among the bigger public political events at the WSF were appearances in a local sports arena on two different days by Brazilian President Lula da Silva and Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. Both drew big, enthusiastic crowds, and Chávez especially stole the hearts of those at the forum, with the crowd overflowing outside the arena.

Support for the Iraqi struggle showed not only in organized meetings and demonstrations, but also in the reaction to leaflets. The International Action Center had prepared an appeal to the WSF to (1) support demonstrations March 19 worldwide, (2) extend political support to the Iraqi resistance, and (3) call for the United States to end the occupation immediately

and unconditionally.

Wherever this leaflet was distributed, it met an overwhelmingly positive response. This was also true at a demonstration on Jan. 30, the day of the Iraqi elections. People along the route cheered the calls for solidarity with the resistance.

Naturally in such a vast happening as the WSF, there is no way a few people could see and report on everyone's attitude. The IAC delegation was mostly concentrated in those areas of the WSF concerned with either anti-occupation actions or struggles in solidarity with Cuba and Venezuela, in support of the workers' struggles throughout Latin America and the world, and against Plan Colombia.

### Worldwide support for Iraqi struggle

Nevertheless, even a sample of the events gave a picture.

On Jan. 26, the opening day of the forum, according to the local press, 200,000 people marched through downtown Porto Alegre. Many of the banners brought attention to the occupation of Iraq, calling for its end or for solidarity with the resistance.

An important meeting took place on Jan. 27. CEBRAPAZ, a recently formed Brazilian anti-war organization supported by the Communist Party of Brazil, held a meeting of 1,000 people with speakers from all over the world on this important issue.

While not the only question under discussion, the occupation of Iraq was central. Nearly all the speakers saluted the heroic struggle by the resistance, all to cheers from the audience.

Those organizations that had called the demonstration on Feb. 15, 2003, when 10 million people came out all over the world in an attempt to stop the war on Iraq, also met during the WSF. People raised a num-

ber of proposals, but the central one was to hold demonstrations worldwide on March 19-20 to end the occupation of Iraq.

The groups represented included the British Stop the War Coalition, the anti-war movement in Italy and anti-war networks in Mexico. From the United States both the International Action Center and United for Peace and Justice were present.

A survey showed that groups in 25 countries from all continents had already set plans for protest on that day. This action was then proposed to the entire WSF for approval.

On Jan. 30, the day of the so-called election in occupied Iraq, an ad-hoc alliance of Brazilian groups, Iraqi spokespeople and some European and U.S. groups held a march of about 500 people in the WSF area—which extended for about two miles—in solidarity with the Iraqi resistance. This too got cheers and thumbs up along the way.

The main speakers at this action were Iraqis Sami Alaa of the Iraq Patriotic Alliance and Shaik Jawad al-Khalesi, a renowned Muslim scholar and the leader of a multi-party coalition boycotting the elections in Iraq. Both denounced the elections as illegal and only serving to justify the occupation.

Al-Khalesi had been taking part in many of the individual forums and seminars held around the WSF on Iraq, along with other Iraqis who oppose the occupation. The only objection to a call for "immediate withdrawal" of troops or of support for the resistance came from people from North America or Europe who were connected to pacifist or openly social-democratic organizations.

### The 'South' supports action

From the oppressed countries, which at this forum meant mainly Brazil and the

rest of Latin America, there was nearly 100-percent support for the Iraqi resistance and for the demonstrations of March 19-20.

For example, at an important meeting of union leaders from the World Federation of Trade Unions, there was support for the IAC call for March 19 actions. Ubiraci Oliveira, the vice president of the General Confederation of Brazilian Workers, said he endorsed the March 19 actions and that his unions would discuss holding a march in Sao Paulo on that date.

With Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, South Korea, Turkey, Philippines, Iraq and Palestine among the list of countries with groups supporting March 19-20 actions, it seemed likely that this series of protests would get a higher percentage of support from the countries that were colonies—from what is called the "South"—than was true on Feb. 15 and March 15, 2003.

The other countries where groups are already organizing are the United States, Italy, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Britain, Macedonia, Cyprus, Australia, Hungary, Poland, Canada, Austria, Spain, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

Whatever happens on that day, there was a general consensus among the more revolutionary forces at the WSF that the Iraqi resistance had not only tied down the Pentagon in Iraq, stopping further invasions, but had encouraged further struggle throughout the world. The Iraqis have shown that it was possible to prevent a victory for U.S. imperialism—and it is up to the rest of the world to help them drive the United States all the way out of Iraq.

*Joubert-Ceci and Catalinotto attended the WSF representing the International Action Center.*

# Massive protest shuts down Kolkata

By Heather Cottin

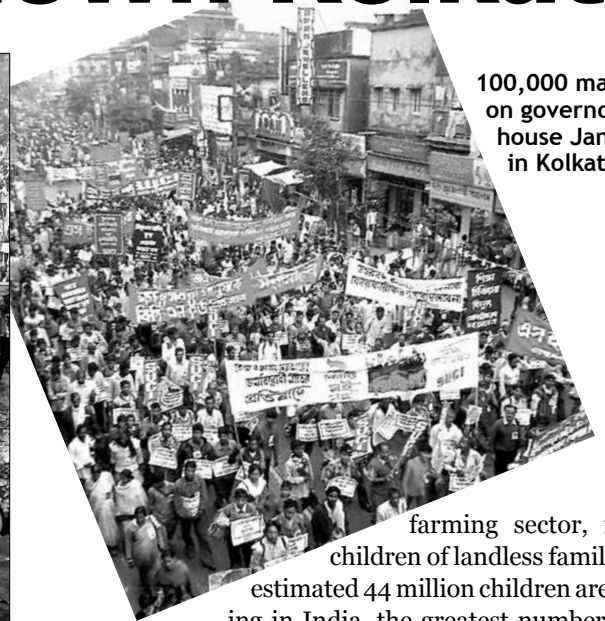
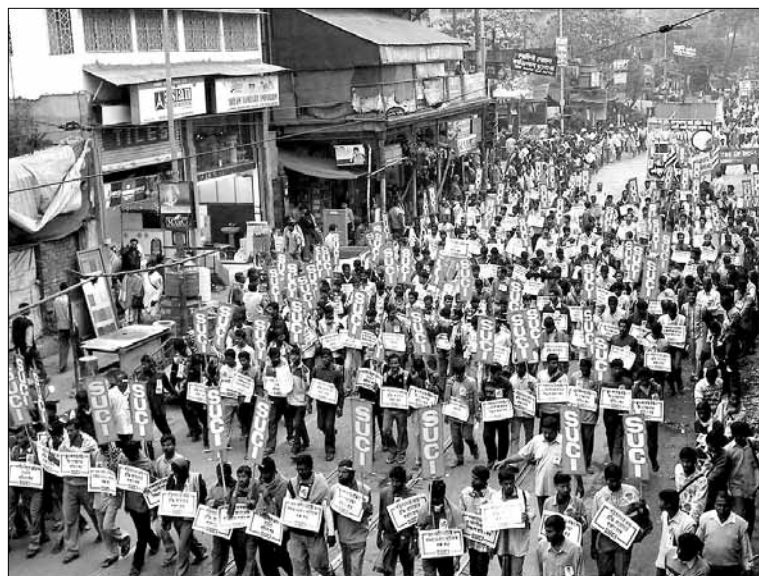
More than 100,000 activists from the Socialist Unity Center of India thronged the streets of Kolkata in the pouring rain on Jan. 28. The spirited march effectively clogged the city's major roads for over four hours. Police could do little to maintain the flow of traffic. The Times of India reported that the city had "run riot." (Jan. 29)

The huge SUCI protest called for an end to unemployment and for withdrawal of hikes in transport fares, hospital rates, school fees, property taxes and petroleum products. SUCI called for the opening of closed jute mills and a ban on foreign investors getting land and electricity at low rates.

SUCI presented government officials with 19 demands covering the problems of students, workers, women, peasants and youths. "We collected around two crore [20 million] signatures today which we will submit," said Pravash Ghosh, SUCI state secretary.

SUCI also called for a two-day "bandh"—work stoppage—to follow the protest.

SUCI was founded in 1947 when it was part of the armed struggle against Britain. SUCI and its All-India organizations have organized in virtually every area of India.



100,000 march on governor's house Jan. 28 in Kolkata.

In the past three months SUCI has stepped up the number of anti-government, anti-capitalist, anti-globalization protests.

On Nov. 17, workers and peasants called successful bandhs in Assam, Tripura, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh. They protested hikes in petroleum, diesel fuel and cooking gas. (Proletarian Era, Dec. 1, 2004)

On Dec. 1, the All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan, the SUCI women's mass organization, marched through New Delhi, demanding punishment for crimes against women. Photos showed a sea of women sitting down and taking over the

main thoroughfares of the capital city. AIMSS presented a list of demands to the government, noting that many of the attacks on women come from police and members of the armed forces.

Much of India's economy is dependent on the super-exploitation of women workers who make ready-made garments in factories and earn less than \$30 per month. (Daily Star, Bangladesh, May 19, 2004)

SUCI women have repeatedly called for protection of the country's children. One-fifth of India's Gross National Product is generated by children working in the

farming sector, mostly children of landless families. An estimated 44 million children are working in India, the greatest number in the world. (Asia Times IT, Sept. 9, 2004)

SUCI is also planning mass rallies on March 19 to commemorate the second anniversary of the U.S./U.K. war against Iraq. It will protest the Indian government's "military and strategic cooperation with U.S. imperialism's... heinous designs in Iraq." (Proletarian Era, Dec. 15)

SUCI plans more resistance. "The overwhelming success of the [Kolkata] bandh has put greater responsibility on our shoulders. We shall fight to the last to realize the people's demands," said state SUCI Secretary Pravash Ghosh. □

## ¡FELIZ AÑO NUEVO!

# Las tasas de interés, el déficit y la inflación crecen

Por Milt Neidenberg

Comenzó no con un bang, sino con sollozo.

Desde el comienzo del 2005, la bolsa de valores, New York Stock Exchange, NASDAQ, Standard & Poors 500 se han estado deslizándose y saltando por todas partes. La Dow Jones Industrial Average ha terminado en el rojo por cuatro semanas consecutivas.

Por primera vez desde 1977, la Dow Jones y S&P 500 comenzó el año nuevo con tres semanas bajas. No está supuesto a suceder así. Los optimistas de Wall Street estaban prediciendo cosas buenas para el 2005: Un mercado de acciones en continuo crecimiento, una expansión económica y el crecimiento de la productividad estimulado por un dólar de menor valor y bajas tasas de intereses.

Pero no ha sido así, en vez una oscura realidad se está acomodando mientras los precios se elevan para el petróleo, alimentos, viviendas, transporte y otros. El déficit en el comercio y el presupuesto continúan elevándose a tasas alarmantes. Los gastos del consumidor han bajado precipitadamente a la vez que la inflación se aferra. Estas tendencias están sembrando las semillas de incertidumbre y confusión dentro de la clase gobernante.

### ¿Qué está pasando?

Debajo de sus dudas hay facciones dentro de la clase gobernante que tienen diferentes puntos de vista sobre la dirección de la potencia imperial sosegada por gigantescas deudas agravadas por los gastos militares y la ocupación de Irak.

Esto no se trata de un caso entre los Republicanos y los Demócratas, sino que involucra a poderosos jugadores dentro del círculo de las altas finanzas. Alan Greenspan, presidente de la Junta de la Reserva Federal (JRF), quien pinta las cosas de color rosa y Timothy F. Geithner, presidente del Banco de Reserva Federal de Nueva York, un pesimista, son un reflejo de las divisiones.

Geithner advirtió que la actual cuenta de déficit ha alcanzado “una escala sin precedente y la comunidad financiera no está preparada para choques inesperados y posibles resultados adversos en un mundo incierto.” (New York Times, enero 23.)

Ambos tienen puestos comandantes en el Comité del Mercado Federal Abierto (CMFA), el cual toma decisiones que pueden producir cambios dramáticos en la economía global. El CMFA controla las políticas monetarias que afectan las tasas de intercambio de largo y corto plazo.

Con manipular las tasas de interés, ellos pueden influenciar las tasas de ganancias, empleo, producción y los precios de los artículos y servicios.

Ambos tratan de mantener un curso fijo para el sistema monopólico capitalista/imperialista. El tener líderes con

diferentes ideas es algo difícil para los cambios de acciones.

El cambio de acciones se debe ver más ampliamente ya que tratan de concentrar toda las industrias, agricultura, comercio y los medios de producción en las manos de los operadores de los cambios de acciones.

Estos operadores son los presidentes de los bancos transnacionales, los jefes de las corporaciones, el Banco de la Reserva Federal, los presidentes de los cambios de comunes y agencias gubernamentales como la Comisión de Intercambio de Seguridades.

El Departamento de Estado también está involucrado. Hasta antes de su confirmación como secretaria de estado, Condoleezza Rice nombró a Robert Zoellick como su segundo en responsabilidad. Por los últimos cuatro años, Zoellick ha sido el representante comercial clave de Bush. Él empujó, amenazó, coaccionó, y sobornó a ministros de comercio extranjero para asegurar acuerdos comerciales para resolver el enorme desequilibrio en el balance comercial entre los Estados Unidos imperialista y sus socios comerciales —una necesidad absoluta si los EE.UU. van a mantener su dominación mundial como la única superpotencia.

Según los datos divulgados en noviembre, el déficit comercial de los EE.UU. alcanzó otro récord. A \$60,29 mil millones eclipsó el récord previo alcanzado en octubre cuando llegó al récord \$56 mil millones. “La cifra récord de noviembre provoca dudas que un declive en el dólar puede remediar los problemas”, declaró un título en el periódico Wall Street Journal el 13 de enero.

El artículo dice: “La publicación hoy ... sigue confundiendo a los ‘expertos’ que han predicho que un dólar más débil sería la cura por el desequilibrio comercial actualmente estallando. ... entre más que cae el dólar, más alto crece el déficit”.

Esto no es el guión que elaboró Alan Greenspan por Wall Street y América corporativa. El dólar devaluado fue calculado a incrementar las exportaciones, disminuir el déficit en el balance de comercio no favorable y reducir los cuentas corrientes en déficit.

Después del fin de la recesión de 2001, Greenspan mantuvo las tasas de interés muy bajas menos de uno por ciento— por casi tres años para estimular la economía. Su política desencadenó una política de moneda floja, resultando en el incremento sin precedente de moneda de papel barata y accesible. El fruto fue una adicción a préstamos y gastos (especulaciones) que tragó un 85 por ciento de la economía y creó la crisis actual de endeudamiento de

proporciones monumentales.

El déficit comercial se espera exceder a \$600 mil millones—casi un 6 por ciento de la economía entera de los EE.UU.— y esta cifra sigue subiendo. El déficit presupuestario federal está aproximando a \$500 mil millones. Esto va a devastar a gobiernos estatales y locales.

Para financiar los déficits a las cuentas corrientes con el resto del mundo, principalmente con China y Japón, los EE.UU. tiene que importar \$2,6 mil millones por día. China ha acumulado más de \$140 mil millones en reservas de dólares, pero por razón de la deuda de los EE.UU. muy arriesgado, China tiene nada más \$16 mil millones en notas del Tesoro. Más reducciones se están aproximando.

China, junto a otros prestamistas, quiere que la Junta de la Reserva Federal suba las tasas de interés por mucho, una tendencia que probablemente va a conducir a la administración de Bush planear una campaña peligrosa en contra de China.

Greenspan admitió que reclamos internacionales de los EE.UU. ahora igualan a un nivel sin precedente de un 25 por ciento del producto doméstico bruto. Este PDB es el valor de la suma de todos los productos y servicios.

### Tasas más altas, inflación o las dos cosas

Greenspan ha comenzado el intento de revertir esta crisis inmanejable por apretar la política monetaria. Recientemente él subió la tasa de interés cinco veces hasta un nivel de 2.5 por ciento, pero sin dar resultado mientras que crecen los déficit. Greenspan envió una señal a Wall Street y la administración de Bush que él va a seguir subiendo las tasas de interés cuando la Junta Federal de la Reserva se reúne a principios de febrero.

Cada alza de la tasa de intereses disuade a los banqueros de Wall Street, los financieros y las corporaciones de invertir capital. Pero para los trabajadores y los oprimidos, esto significa precios más altos para las necesidades de la vida, recortes de los sueldos, beneficios del estado, y más desempleo.

El índice de Precios de Consumidores ha subido 3.6 por ciento cada año. El año pasado sucedió el aumento más grande en 14 años. El Índice de Precios de Productores se bajó en diciembre, pero tuvo un aumento de 4.1 por ciento por el año.

Un titular en el New York Times del 15 de enero, “Hojas de té y dólares: los leen los inversionistas y lloran,” expresa llanamente el dilema y la confusión en Wall Street y dentro de los Estados Unidos corporativo, entre los banqueros, financieros

y las corporaciones. Están confusos por estas tendencias del mercado, y el artículo implica que los inversionistas podrían estar más seguros si fueran a buscar los servicios del adivino más cercano. Billones de dólares se vacilan según las tendencias de la tasa de intereses.

Toda inflación de precios es síntoma de la inestabilidad del sistema capitalista. La manipulación de la moneda corriente es un síntoma de la inestabilidad intrínseca de todo el sistema capitalista. La inflación de los precios es debido a la centralización de capitalismo monopólico y los medios de producción en menos manos. El capitalismo monopólico está arreglando la estructura de precios para garantizar ganancias e inversiones.

La combinación de súper producción y el bajo consumo está fuera de control. Greenspan y la FOMC están tratando de curar los síntomas.

### Entre la boca y la taza

Los objetivos imperialistas de Bush exigirán más sacrificios de parte de los trabajadores multinacionales. La estrategia que sigue parece ser la Wal-martización del movimiento laboral internacional y de los pueblos oprimidos. El objetivo más inmediato de Bush es eliminar la seguridad del Acto de Seguridad Social de 1935, lo cual fue legislado como respuesta a las huelgas y las luchas heroicas de esa década. Así fue también el beneficio progresista de bienestar social, Ayuda a Familias con Hijos Dependientes—también ganado por las masas y destruido por el antecedente Presidente Demócrata Bill Clinton. Hay señas crecientes de resistencia entre los trabajadores y la gente oprimida. La ofensiva de Bush para privatizar la Seguridad Social se está despertando a una oposición amplia que incluye a los movimientos laborales, las comunidades oprimidas, los de edad mayor, progresista y contra la guerra.

Una amenaza reciente lanzada por los trabajadores de los hoteles en Washington a salir de huelga durante la inauguración de Bush abrió paso a un contrato espléndido.

La fórmula para el éxito es una estrategia de lucha más la habilidad de aprovechar del momento oportuno. Hay que darle duro a la clase gobernante y sus títeres en Washington en los momentos apropiados. Pero para esto se requiere la preparación y la organización. Eso es lo que hizo el movimiento de la Marcha de un Millón Trabajadores el 17 de octubre pasado cuando miles de personas revelaron una visión de un movimiento independiente y consciente de clase que liga las cuestiones de las guerras imperialistas de ocupación sin fin a la guerra contra los pobres en este país.

Ya ha llegado la hora de un ataque político contra la administración de Bush que llevaría miles y miles de trabajadores, sus sindicatos, y las comunidades oprimidas a Washington, algo semejante a lo que está pasando ahora mismo en Francia, Alemania, Italia e Inglaterra. □

## Libertad para los Cinco Cubanos

ANTONIO GUERRERO • RAMON LABANIÑO  
GERARDO HERNÁNDEZ • RENÉ GONZÁLEZ  
FERNANDO GONZÁLEZ