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50¢

MUNDO OBRERO

- FIST lucha contra el racismo 12
- Ossie Davis sobre Malcolm X 12

SBC EATS AT&T

Merger mania costs jobs

4

LYNNE STEWART INJUSTICE

Appeals begin in lawyer's case

3



POLICE BRUTALITY

•LAPD kills 13-year-old

5

•Denver cops brutalize students

5

VENEZUELA OIL REVENUES

Why U.S. business hates Chávez

9

U.S., NORTH KOREA & THE BOMB

EDITORIAL 10

PHILIPPINE COMMUNISTS

Recognize gay right to marry

11

EXPANDING THE WAR?

Bush threatens Syria, Iran

By Deirdre Griswold

Could the adventurist neo-con regime in Washington be poised for yet another aggressive military move in the oil-rich Middle East? Even though the current conflict—the drawnout and bloody struggle with an elusive but effective Iraqi resistance movement that refuses to accept the U.S. invasion and occupation of their country—has earned them worldwide condemnation and hatred, many signs point in the direction of more aggressions to come.

If so, it will not be the first time that U.S. imperialist strategists have tried to rescue a failing colonial adventure by widening the conflict—as they did in 1970 when, faced with fierce resistance from the Vietnamese, they launched a calamitous invasion of Cambodia.

The latest targets of administration hawks are the governments of Iran and Syria. On Feb. 16, after a hasty meeting of high government officials, the two countries announced a common front against outside threats—clearly a reference to the Bush administration.

The trigger for this crisis appears to have been the assassination of Rafik Hariri, a former prime minister of Lebanon, in an extremely powerful explosion. Speculation on exactly what happened and who was behind the blast is rife, but the U.S. immediately withdrew its ambassador to Syria in a move obviously meant to cast suspicion on that country. Syria's ambassador to Washington had already denied and denounced the killing of Hariri, calling it "a catastrophe for Syria."

However, like the kangaroo court in "Alice in Wonderland," the U.S. attitude was "sentence first, verdict afterwards." Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, while admitting that the U.S. has no evidence to accuse Syria formally, called the country a "big problem" in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Feb. 16.

Washington has for some time been trying to pressure Syria into allowing U.S. and Iraqi puppet troops to cross its border in "hot pursuit" of the Iraqi resistance. Syria has turned them down.

At the same time, Iran has charged that U.S. drone spy planes have been spotted many times reconnoitering in areas where Iran is constructing nuclear power plants, and said it will shoot down any unidentified planes that enter its territory. The U.S. is accusing Iran of developing nuclear weapons—a charge that the International Atomic Energy Agency refuses to support and that Iran denies.

The emergency meeting between the Syrian and Iranian leaders is a sure sign that they are trying to ward off an attack. Iran has been bracing for such an eventuality ever since President George W. Bush in 2002 announced it was part of an "axis of evil." In this year's State of the Union speech, in language reminiscent of the false reasons he gave for invading Iraq, Bush singled out both Syria and Iran, accusing them of "promoting terrorism" and seeking "weapons of mass destruction."

Since Jan. 1, over 100,000 new U.S. troops have been sent to the Middle East. They are part of a "rotation" that by the end of March will have seen some 230,000 U.S. soldiers, marines and reservists moved to the area, many of them on a forced second tour of duty.

The administration is desperate to subdue the growing resistance in Iraq. It has a tricky political situation on its hands, since the bloc which got the largest vote in the U.S.-organized elections is that of the Shias, who have always been close to Iran. And the Shia masses expect that a new Iraqi government will tell the U.S. troops to leave.

Whatever happens in the days and weeks to come, the need to get into the streets against this war will only grow stronger. □

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Interview with filmmaker

'Mission Against Terror' wins supporters for Cuban 5

By Cheryl LaBash
Detroit

City by city, the award-winning documentary "Mission Against Terror" is chipping away at the curtain of silence surrounding the case of the Cuban 5—five men from Cuba who are unjustly imprisoned in the United States for preventing terrorism against the Cuban people.

Accompanied by Irish co-writer/director Bernie Dwyer, the national 22-city tour is distributing a new and powerful organizing tool to social justice and Cuba solidarity activists. The National Free the Five Committee and the National Network on Cuba initiated the tour. Its organizers in large and small cities are bringing the fight for the Cuban 5 to wider audiences as the anniversary of their appeal hearing approaches March 10.

Starting in Miami, the tour reached its mid-point Feb. 12 at a Detroit screening co-sponsored by the Justice for Cuba Coalition, Swords into Plowshares Peace Center and Gallery Saturday Matinee Film Series. There university students, union, legal, academic, religious and Cuba solidarity organizers raised funds for a local Free the Five ad campaign.

Just across the Canadian border from Detroit, the Canada Cuba Friendship Association/Windsor had shown the film at the School of Visual Arts at the University of Windsor earlier in the day as part of a film festival. The Windsor committee reported that "two people in the audience, who had a youth soccer team with them at the time, narrowly missed being in the lobby of the Havana hotel that was bombed in July 1997 because of a last minute change of plans."

In New York the week before, an overflow crowd, with dozens turned away, bought all 40 copies of the film on hand. In Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., New Paltz, N.Y., Chicago and Minneapolis, meetings and interviews are introducing people to the Five, their families and the support of their larger Cuban family.

Through interviews with former CIA agent Philip Agee, attorney Leonard Weinglass, Cuban National Assembly leader Ricardo Alarcon and others, woven together with dramatic historic film footage, "Mission Against Terror" artfully and compellingly tells the story of these extraordinary men.

Audience reaction

How are audiences reacting to the documentary? Dwyer told Workers World, "When the film finishes there is usually silence and then applause because the ending of the film is really quite poignant. People do take a moment to reflect when it is over."

"What has really surprised me is not so much that people haven't heard about the case of the Five, because that is a particular case and also there has been a wall of silence around it in the U.S. mainstream media. What really shocks me, because I was brought up in Ireland, is the lack of knowledge about the 45 years of U.S. aggression with the trade blockade, economic blockade and actual physical violence.



"The CIA has backed active anti-Cuban right-wing groups in Miami to carry out assassination attempts on Fidel Castro and also on the people of Cuba. I'll tell you," Dwyer continued, "the people of the United States are really, really shocked when they realize this has been carried out in their name."

When asked why she and co-director Roberto Ruiz Rebo took on this project, Dwyer explained that in addition to her work as a journalist for Radio Havana assigned to covering the case of the Cuban 5, she had been involved in campaigns in Ireland to free Irish political prisoners who were in British prisons.

Similarities with Irish prisoners

"I could see similarities here," said Dwyer. "I could see that thing that goes on—'We have to convict them, we have to charge them, we have to put them in prison.' Also the way family members are treated. Irish families hated going to England to see their family members. Games are played—'We don't have a prisoner by that name,' because the prisoner was taken out the back door. This is happening as well with the case of the Five.

"There was the case of Antonio Guerrero's mother—who is not a young woman—going to the States to visit her son. It's not easy for them. They are treated badly. They are not used to being in a big vast country like this, not knowing anybody. She was there for a week to visit her son on different days.

"On the last day, she went to the prison to say goodbye to Antonio and so he could say goodbye to her. They told her there was no prisoner by that name. He was transferred to a hospital. She couldn't go to the prison hospital. It was too far away and the families can only travel within a certain perimeter. So she had to go back to Cuba without saying goodbye."

Although "Mission Against Terror" is off to the West Coast as the tour finishes, copies of the film are available from Cuba solidarity organizations across the country and it will continue to be shown.

Due to U.S. visa restriction, Cuban co-director Roberto Ruiz Rebo could not participate in the U.S. tour. However both he and Dwyer will continue the international tour together. In April they'll be in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, then in Germany in May. □

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This week ...

★ In the U.S.

- 'Mission against Terror' 2
- Stewart, others convicted on bogus charges 3
- Children, youths suffer most from Bush budget 3
- Jobs threatened as Baby Bell gobbles up AT&T 4
- Detroiters demand free water for families 4
- Students protest anti-immigrant diatribe 4
- LAPD guns down 13-year-old Black youth 5
- Police attack Black activist at university debate 5
- Black worker explains: Racism is a class issue! 6
- Walter Rodney: revolutionary historian and activist. 6
- Mumia Abu-Jamal remembers Ossie Davis 7
- San Francisco: Black struggle commemorated 7
- On Feb. 11 the people say: 'Free Mumia now' 8
- 1950: 'Lavender Scare!' 11

★ Around the world

- Syria 1
- Post-election Iraq, still resistance v. occupation 8
- Venezuela rejects imperialism's 1% solution 9
- Nepal monarch's edicts boomerang 10
- New Peoples Army recognizes same-sex marriage 11

★ Editorials

- Beware the nukes! 10

★ Noticias En Español

- FIST lucha contra el racismo 12
- Ossie Davis sobre Malcolm X 12

WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Sat., Feb. 19
Martin Luther King/Malcolm X
Anti-war Social Justice
Conference and film showing:
Chavez, Venezuela and the
New Latin America. Speakers
include: Clarence Thomas,
Million Worker March; Pierre
Lebossiere, Haiti Action
Committee; Monica
Moorehead, Millions for
Mumia. Workshops and action
plans. SEIU L660, 500 S Virgil
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NEW YORK

Fri., Feb. 18
Workers World Party Meeting.
Analysis of the Bush budget
and attacks on Social
Security. 7 p.m. Dinner at
6:30 p.m. At 55 W. 17 St.,
5th fl., Manhattan. For info:
(212) 627-2994.

Fri., Feb. 25
Workers World Party Meeting.
Special Commemoration of
Black History Month featuring
Imani Henry and Monica
Moorehead. 7 p.m. Dinner at
6:30 p.m. At 55 W. 17 St.,
5th fl., Manhattan. For info:
(212) 627-2994.

Workers World

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Fightback planned

Stewart, others convicted on bogus 'terrorism' charges

By Dustin Langley
New York

Following almost three years of government pressure and media baiting of the defendants, on Feb. 10 a Manhattan jury convicted well-known human-rights fighter and defense attorney Lynne Stewart on five counts of "conspiring to aid terrorists" and "lying to the government."

John Ashcroft's Justice Department targeted Stewart because of her determined defense for her client, Muslim cleric Omar Abdel Rahman, and because of her long career as a fighter for justice. Stewart, who is 65 years old, faces a possible maximum sentence of 45 years.

Stewart's co-defendants—Mohammed Yousry, an Arabic translator, and Ahmed Sattar, a postal worker who acted as a paralegal—were also convicted of all charges against them.

Speaking to the media immediately after hearing the verdict, Stewart said, "We are not giving up, obviously. We are going to fight on. This is the beginning of a longer struggle. I think everyone who has a sense that the United States needs to protect the Constitution at this time understands that struggle.

"And this case could be, I hope it will be, a wake-up call to all of the citizens of this country and all of the people who live here that you can't lock up the lawyers. You can't tell the lawyers how to do their job. You've got to let them operate. And I will fight on. I'm not giving up. I know I committed no crime. I know what I did was right."

The National Lawyers Guild, anti-war organizations and civil-rights groups have rallied to Stewart's defense following what they called "a travesty of justice."

Stewart's indictment in April 2002 was announced by Attorney General Ashcroft

himself on the David Letterman show. It was the first time that the federal government prosecuted a defense attorney in a terrorism case. Lawyers around the country have said that they fear the government's goal is to silence dissent and scare lawyers away from defending clients that have been demonized.

The prosecution claimed that Stewart helped to communicate a message from Rahman to his organization in Egypt, the Islamic Group, by passing on a press release expressing his opposition to a cease fire with the Egyptian government. The government claimed that this was a violation of the "Special Administrative Measures" (SAMs) against Rahman. SAMs severely limit the ability of certain federal prisoners to communicate with the outside world.

However, as even the New York Times admitted, "The government never showed that any violence resulted from the defendants' actions. The Islamic Group never canceled the cease fire. The defendants were not accused of terrorism in the United States."

Stewart's behavior was in no way linked to any violent acts. Yet the prosecutor tried to paint Stewart as a terrorist, even showing videotapes of Osama Bin Laden to the jury in attempt to link Stewart to Al Qaeda.

The seven-month trial of Stewart and her co-defendants was held in the same New York federal courthouse where the Rosenbergs were tried for conspiracy to commit espionage more than a half century ago. The prosecution introduced approximately 85,000 pieces of evidence, including transcripts and audio and video clips gleaned from spying on private phone calls, e-mails, and meetings. These included conferences between Stewart and the jailed Sheik—conferences that are supposed to be confidential.

The jury deliberated for 13 days before delivering a guilty verdict.

Jury intimidation

Just prior to her conviction, Stewart reported receiving a threat taped to the door of her apartment in Brooklyn. It was reportedly from the Jewish Defense Organization, an offshoot of the Jewish Defense League, a right-wing terrorist group.

In addition, the group taped fliers on lampposts near the Manhattan federal courthouse branding her a traitor for representing Omar Abdel Rahman and calling upon jurors to put Lynne Stewart "in a cage." Although the organization denied contacting any jurors, journalist Jennifer Monroe, who interviewed members of the JDO, concluded that they were engaged in jury intimidation.

Judge John Koeltl called upon law-enforcement authorities to investigate the organization, which threatened to run the lawyer/defendant out of town for being an "enemy" of the U.S. and Israel.

Koeltl set Stewart's sentencing for July 15. Because she was convicted of a felony, Stewart will be immediately disbarred. She remains free on bail, but is confined to New York State.

A statement issued by the National Lawyers Guild in response to Stewart's conviction said, "The U.S. Department of Justice was resolute from day one in making a symbol out of Lynne Stewart in support of its campaign to deny people charged with crimes of effective legal representation. The government is bent on intimidating attorneys from providing zealous representation to unpopular clients."

The Guild called for a National Day of Outrage in response to the Lynne Stewart verdict for Feb. 17.

Speaking on WBAI-Pacific Radio's



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Lynne Stewart

"Morning Show" on Feb. 15, Stewart announced an organizing rally for Feb. 17 at the Community Church in New York at 7 p.m. She said she had been getting e-mails from all over the country and the world and had begun a campaign to send 1 million letters to Southern District Judge John Koeltl demanding he rule in her favor.

She said she hoped "this conviction is the low point for the struggle and we can start fighting back from here."

Sara Flounders, a co-director of the International Action Center, said her group would "support any protests and other actions called to defend Lynne Stewart. She is a real people's hero and has conducted herself with enormous courage and determination. This is an historically important case. She should be included in every mass people's program to give voice to her or her case in every struggle throughout the country."

To find out more and to assist in her defense, go to www.lynnestewart.org or write to the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 351 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10013. □

Children, youths suffer most from Bush budget

By Heather Cottin

The Bush budget will literally take food out of the mouths of babes.

In a rampage that leaves no child untouched, George W. Bush has taken a meat cleaver to programs that help infants, children and youths across the country. Nearly one-third of the cutbacks are to education and programs that feed hungry children.

Bush's rapacious slash-and-burn campaign targets the 40-year-old Head Start Program with a plan to restrict the right of toddlers and pre-schoolers to attend. Head Start is already starved for funds, and is effectively closed to three-quarters of eligible children, or 3 million pre-schoolers, according to the National Education Association. Bush's budget would cut an additional 59,000 Head Start student slots, reports the Service Employees Web site.

The budget will eliminate child care benefits for 350,000 low- and moderate-income families by 2009.

Meanwhile, Title I, the program that gives additional help and resources to low-income children, will be slashed to 40 percent of its current funding.

Aid for public schools will be \$12 billion short because of the "No Child Left Behind Act" (NCLB). (The Advocate,

Baton Rouge, Feb. 15) The states will have to pick up the tab for funding the test-centered NCLB program. States are already struggling with a cumulative budget shortfall of an estimated \$100 billion, and education cutbacks and teacher layoffs have been spreading across the country.

In addition, programs which were set up under the NCLB will now exclude 700,000 children from after-school help. (NEA) Disabled children face a budget which receives less than half the funds they received in 1975 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Defense spending has increased, but domestic spending has gone from 15 percent to 1 percent of the budget. Education for children of military personnel is on the cutting block. Defense Department schools overseas ended the school year a week early last year because of a lack of money. Now children of soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan face additional cuts of more than 30 percent.

Push more students into debt

The Bush administration touted its great goals to improve education in 2001, but there are few education programs that have not been brutally scaled back. Public college students are already reeling from last year's massive tuition increases. Now

they face more increases, and also lower Pell Grants for all but the poorest college students. Bush wants to substitute lifelong debt, so he increases "Perkins Loans" for students eliminated from the Pell Grants system.

Bush cut Pell grants by \$270 million for the 2004-2005 academic year. The new cuts will deny scholarships to 84,000 students who currently qualify for support. They also freeze the amount of money Pell Grants offer at the same levels they were in 2001, despite increases in tuition and college costs since then.

Cindy, a student at La Guardia Community College in New York City, said, "The removal of my Pell Grant has made my education nearly extinct. The government says I can take out a loan, but my life will be devoted to paying it back."

Another La Guardia student said, "My little sister now has to work two jobs to pay for school. She questions her ability to continue her education." Rosalind, who works as a security guard, is attending La Guardia studying to be a teacher. "Without the assistance of Pell, I will not be able to fulfill my dream."

The education cutbacks include over \$250 million that had been marked for teacher training.

Bush's budget doesn't hurt the rich. They get permanent tax cuts, which ear-

mark \$62,500 to each millionaire in the United States, according to the Children's Rights Fund. Wall Street analysts gave Bush high marks for his generosity.

The wars against Afghanistan and Iraq have cost over \$200 billion. Bush has asked for \$82 billion more. This money could be used to lower class sizes with the hiring of 1.3 million public school teachers. In most cities across the country, class size hovers around 40.

Half of the money spent on the war in Iraq could have furnished pre-school education for 10 million children. It could provide a free college education to 4 million students. It could enable school systems to hire 1.3 million new teachers.

Congress is set to give the Pentagon and the military industry a bonanza of half a trillion dollars. Education, which serves all children in the U.S., is scheduled to receive one-tenth of that amount.

This "Education President" is committing a crime against the future. The education cutbacks amount to no less than a coldhearted and cynical crusade against children, parents, teachers and youth.

The Troops Out Now Coalition will demonstrate in New York's Central Park and around the country on March 19 calling for "Money for education, not for war!" For more information, visit www.troopsoutnow.org. □

Jobs threatened as Baby Bell gobbles up AT&T

By Milt Neidenberg

AT&T, once the largest telecommunications monopoly in the world, had a run unprecedented in corporate annals. Now it's a footnote.

AT&T is a classic example of a mega-monopoly that depended on a capitalist government and its regulatory agencies to protect its assets, profits and investments.

Founded almost 130 years ago when the telephone was invented, AT&T grew in arrogance and comfort, confident that its monopolistic control of the local and long distance phone companies and its subsidiaries—the Baby Bells and Western Electric, which assembled phones and other parts—would assure its place as the foremost telecommunications leader. This worked for the better part of the 20th century.

In 1984 the Reagan administration was forced to deregulate the industry. The AT&T monopoly was broken up into seven regional corporations known as Baby Bells. The dismemberment of AT&T 20 years ago was a reaction to the revolutionary changes in technology, including microwave radio transmissions.

SBC Communications was one of those Baby Bells, known as Southwestern Bell in 1984. On Jan. 31, SBC concluded a \$16.3 billion deal that swallowed up AT&T.

Since 1984, AT&T had fallen prey to predatory capitalist cut-throat competition, spurred on by the revolution in technology that found it ill-prepared for the explosion of new hi-tech companies with deep pockets. Its downfall began following a series of ill-fated miscalculations.

According to the Jan. 31 New York Times, AT&T was undone by "cheaper internet technology, growth in the cell phone industry, where it has no role, and regula-

tory changes that squeezed it out of the local phone industry." The monopoly never recovered.

According to an Economist article on Feb. 5, headlined "The Fall of a Corporate Queen": "For much of the century, AT&T was the envy of the corporate world—the largest firm on the planet. ... No share was more widely held—the firm was so solid it was considered ideal for 'widows and orphans.'

"Their legendary research arm, Bell Laboratories, was responsible for some of the 20th century's greatest inventions, from the transistor to the laser, and fielded seven Nobel Prize winners." Unfortunately for AT&T, Bell Laboratories was spun off to become Lucent Technologies.

A whole new generation of hi-tech telecommunications corporations sprouted from the Baby Bells and other well-financed corporate entities that capitalized on the new technology in telecommunications.

When the break-up came in 1984, AT&T had around one million employees. Currently, there are fewer than 47,000 workers worldwide. AT&T Chief Executive Officer David W. Dorman, "in his drive to sell the company, sharply reduced AT&T's debts, eliminated tens of thousands of jobs, and retreated from the consumer markets to stem losses." (New York Times, Jan. 31)

What is SBC?

How did SBC, a regional Bell, become the shark that swallowed up the corporate monopoly which had totally dominated the telecommunications industry for 128 years?

Located in San Antonio, Texas, SBC is made up of Southwestern Bell, Ameritech,

Pacific Bell, Nevada Bell, SNET and Sterling Commerce. SBC provides local phone service to more than 50 million customers in 13 states and holds a 60-percent stake in Cingular Wireless. Along with Bell South, Cingular bought out AT&T Wireless to become the nation's biggest mobile phone company.

Now, in one shot, SBC will become the largest long-distance carrier and provider of phone and data service to Corporate America. SBC currently employs 163,000 workers.

Before major Wall Street institutions Lehman Brothers and Rohatyn Associates, Morgan Stanley and Credit Suisse First Boston closed the deal, and before regulatory agencies and shareholders approved the merger, SBC announced plans to lay off 13,000 workers. It expects 60 percent of the cost savings from the AT&T acquisition to come from job cuts.

Technology and competition breed layoffs

Edward E. Whitacre, SBC's chief executive officer, who will head the newly merged telecommunications giant, announced plans to save around \$15 billion (almost the cost of buying AT&T) by closing overlapping offices, cutting and combining information technology as well as networking its business services such as sales and other operations.

Wall Street sycophants and their academic mouthpieces are trying to sweet talk around this explosive development. They believe the information highway will create more and more jobs for skilled workers and scientific personnel with higher wages and better benefits and avoid the capitalist boom-and-bust cycles. Not true.

It was only four years ago that the bubble burst in the high-tech industries. Particularly hard-hit were thousands of baby boomers in Silicon Valley and Boston's Route 128, who had been brought into the market with Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). During a one-year recession in 2001, over 9 million jobs were lost, exposing the notion that the information-gear economy is more humane or immune from the driving force of high tech.

The buyouts and acquisitions are fundamentally different from those in the decades before the 1984 breakup. People thought of AT&T as a monopoly, but also as a benevolent employer that rewarded a lifetime of service with job security and economic benefits.

Today, the merger frenzy is happening during U.S. capitalist instability, intractable debt and deficits in a shrink-

ing world market. The owners are driven by cut-throat capitalist competition in their war-like drive to push down wages and benefits to control the telecommunications markets.

Sprint acquired Nextel Communications to become the third largest wireless company. Verizon, the nation's largest regional phone company and a former Baby Bell, just bought MCI, formerly known as Worldcom, a company that recently emerged from bankruptcy. Market power is being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands and layoffs are inevitable.

Adding to the explosive character of the high-tech, low-pay crisis in telecommunications is the Wal-Martizing of the service-oriented industries.

Stormy days ahead for labor

The Communications Workers represents 15,000 employees at AT&T and 95,000 at SBC. According to a statement by CWA President Morton Bahr, "SBC's purchase of AT&T makes good business sense, and it could be good news for customers and employees as well as the shareholders of both companies."

No, no, no.

These "could be" promises and class collaboration will only disarm the 110,000 CWA members and thousands of other workers—members of other unions and non-union workers who need to be organized. Many have already been savaged by SBC before the ink is dry on the merger agreement. Their good-paying jobs are up in smoke.

The labor movement must take into account the changes in the current configuration of class forces. The potential for a broad-based strategy that unites labor and the oppressed communities is promising.

The center of organized labor continues to shift from the high-paid, skilled, mainly white and male workforce to the lower-paid service-oriented workers, who are majority African American, Latin@ and women workers. This movement will grow in numbers across industries to organize resistance to the high-tech, low-pay machinations of Wall Street and the White House.

The realities of class truth and the need for independent class-wide struggle will break through the fuzzy class-collaborationist illusions held by many labor leaders. And it will come from below. New forms of struggle will arise, going beyond the narrow restraints of collective bargaining agreements.

Broad-based economic and political strikes and struggles will become the order of the day. □

Detroiters demand free water

Detroit Water and Sewerage Department may want to raise water rates, but residential users loudly expressed a different idea at the budget hearing held Feb. 10. Members of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization (MWRO), Sweet Water Alliance and others told the Detroit City Council that since water is necessary for human life, it must be provided free of charge.

Michigan's official unemployment rate is the highest in the United States, but the actual unemployment in Detroit and the small enclaves of Highland Park and

Hamtramck is many times greater. According to the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, 60-percent adult unemployment and 75-percent overall unemployment leaves at least 120,000 families in Detroit with an income less than \$20,000 per year.

Combined with soaring heat, light and water utility bills, this formula equals life-threatening shut offs for low-income workers, seniors and poor people as a whole. MWRO counter-proposed a Water Affordability Plan limiting bills to 2 percent of family income.

—Cheryl LaBash

Students protest racists remarks

By Ruth Vela
San Diego

Over 100 students, staff, faculty and administrators stood in the rain Feb. 10 for an important rally at Southwestern College called by the newly founded ERACISM Coalition. The rally was called in response to an article written by a student and published by the school newspaper, The Sun, which insulted immigrants.

The article, entitled "Illegal immigrants are taxing on U.S. citizens," called these immigrants "leeches." The article has left many students feeling harassed and insulted. Members of the ERACISM Coalition were furious at the administration and The Sun for failing to recognize the severity of the situation and continuing to try to hide behind the First Amendment. This was true during the

Feb. 10 event as well.

Max Branscomb, advisor to The Sun, took the stage in defense of the writer's rights while assuring the protesting students that the Sun agreed with them. He went on to say, "You are not leeches." Students responded with sarcastic shouts of "Thanks!" before interrupting Branscomb by chanting, "You are wrong!"

During the open-mike portion of the program, Reynaldo Escoto, student and member of the Frente Zapatista Tijuana, shouted, "For generations we have fed you and this is how you repay us ... No human being is illegal!" Repeatedly the crowd broke into cheers, chanting, "La Raza unida jamas sera vencida!"

One protestor, an on-campus employee and member of the California School Employees Association, reminded protestors of the Klan's historical use of the word



WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

leech in their attacks against Black people. Another young man explained that this article was symptomatic of this country's attitude toward working-class people.

While the event was a success, it was only one small stepping stone towards retribution. The Sun has not yet owned up to its mistake or properly apologized.

The ERACISM Coalition recognizes that a retraction is not likely to come anytime in the near future. Nor will there be an end to the fight.

Legal actions against The Sun and the school administration are currently in the works. Plans are in place to launch another campus paper that reflects the cultures and interests of the students. □

LAPD guns down 13-year-old Black youth

By John Parker
Los Angeles

Just days after the city of Los Angeles rewarded two Los Angeles police officers directly involved in the brutalization of Black people with money and freedom from prosecution, police committed another racist killing Feb. 6. This time, like many others in the past, the victim was just 13 years old. He was killed simply for trying to get away from the police.

Devin Brown was shot and killed by a Los Angeles police officer at 83rd Street and Western Avenue. The victim was behind the wheel of a Toyota Camry that police said had backed into a patrol car after leading officers on a short chase.

Police officers Dana Grant and Steve Garcia were on patrol shortly before 4 a.m. when they saw the Toyota drive through a stoplight. As reported in the Los Angeles Times, the Newton Division officers turned on their police car's siren. At 3:49 a.m., Garcia radioed to say they were pursuing a possible drunk driver.

According to the police, the chase was over in minutes after the car skidded turning around a curve and came to a stop. The car's other passenger, a 14 year old, got out and ran away.

According to the LAPD, the Toyota began to move backwards and hit the cop car. The Toyota then drove forward nine feet, coming to rest alongside the police car.

A few minutes and 10 bullets later, the cops called for an ambulance.

According to a senior law enforcement official, Garcia shot at Devin through the Toyota's passenger side windows. Garcia was reportedly standing away from the patrol car when he shot.

Obviously, the shooting cop's life was not in jeopardy. However, he decided that a Black youth who dares to defy him is worthy of the death penalty.

The corporate media is emphasizing the poor disciplinary record of Devin Brown, who was attending a magnet school. They



An earlier photo of Devin Brown.

also emphasize that the car was reported stolen.

However, neither of these alleged facts were known to the cop who shot Brown. All he knew was that he was Black and in an oppressed community where the authorities never punish police brutality, but rather encourage it.

IAC: Disarm LAPD

Following are excerpts from a statement released by the Los Angeles International Action Center after the killing:

"The shooting of 13-year-old Devin Brown was yet another atrocity perpetrated by the most dangerous gang in Los Angeles—the LAPD—who increasingly become more deadly towards youth, especially Black and Latino youth.

"The reaction of Police Chief Bratton is reminiscent of his reaction to past cases of police atrocities committed while he led the New York Police Department. Under former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's direction, William Bratton orchestrated a new level of racist police brutality against innocent victims, including the fatal choking of a young Latino, Anthony Baez, and the shooting death of African immigrant Amadou Diallo, who was shot 41 times.

"It was therefore no surprise that Bratton callously said that the shooting of this 13-year-old honor student last Sunday [Feb. 6] was just a matter of a bad policy he was reevaluating and it would be



Devin Brown's mother, Evelyn Davis, at his funeral.

changed no time soon.

"Likewise, when Stanley Miller was kicked in the head and brutally beaten with a metal flashlight last June by LAPD cops, Bratton excused himself from this embarrassment to his leadership by claiming he was in the process of reevaluating the policy on using metal flashlights as weapons. However, at the time of Miller's beating, Bratton had been in control of the LAPD and that policy for over a year. In fact, the use of metal flashlights as weapons had been going on for many years in Los Angeles.

"Any further excuses of Bratton's performance and any confidence anyone has that either the mayor, police commissioner or any friends of these folks will be able to bring justice to this situation is beyond ludicrous. What was the result in the last two high-profile atrocities involving police—who were actually caught on videotape?

"As former Chief of Police Bernard Parks used to say almost every time a case of police brutality was exposed under his watch, all of these incidents are in fact 'within policy.'

"...Perhaps it's the job?"

"Another excuse for this prevalent abuse by cops is that they have to make 'split-second decisions' and their job is a non-stop merry-go-round of stress and danger. Let's examine that:

"The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics put out a list of the "Top Ten Most Dangerous Jobs" in 2000, and cops are not on it. The

list is based on how many job-related fatalities occurred for every 100,000 workers employed in each job category. Timber cutters are killed the most—122.1 per 100,000. Fishers are next, with 108.3. Airplane pilots are third ... Farmers are 10th with 25 deaths per 100,000. Police are off the chart, with a death rate of only about nine per 100,000.

"The fact is that the 'split-second' excuse does not hold water and is another attempt at covering up the obvious—the LAPD acts in oppressed communities like an occupying force, much like the U.S. forces in Iraq today, who are ordered to kill (with impunity) and target the innocent.

"For this reason it is absolutely irresponsible to allow the LAPD to arm its officers with guns. Allowing the LAPD to carry any weapons provides a dangerous risk to the general public and especially Black and Latino youth.

"...All progressive people, no matter what issue they gravitate towards, should be able to relate to this war on oppressed people. It reminds us of the terror by the INS against immigrants here. It has the stench of genocide being waged against the people of Iraq, Haiti and Palestine and it is an aspect of the repression necessary to try and force a population living in a system that cannot provide jobs, health care and peace into submission.

"This fight has all of our names on it—let's show our solidarity with the people facing police terror and strengthen our voice and might. We will not submit!" □

Police attack Black activist at university debate

By Larry Hales
Denver

Police in the Denver metropolitan area have once again shown their bigotry and brutality. This time the cops were campus police, and they attacked a Black activist at a Colorado University Board of Regents meeting Feb. 3.

The activist, Shareef Aleem, was asking the Board of Regents if it would allow students to speak on behalf of CU professor Ward Churchill. Soon after Sept. 11, 2001, Churchill made statements whose sentiment was that U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East had led to the attacks on 9/11.

Churchill made this as a blanket statement that attacked the victims in the Twin Towers as "little Eichmanns," which he himself now concedes was not a progressive or effective way of explaining his criticism of U.S. aggression in the region.

Right-wing forces have seized on Churchill's statement to launch a witch-hunt and threaten his job.

At the Feb. 3 meeting, when Aleem asked if the students were going to be allowed to speak, he reminded the regents

that the meeting was advertised as being open. Earlier, police had removed a student for asking the same question.

The incident with Aleem was videotaped. On the tape the police are seen approaching Aleem and an older Black woman. They later suggested that her walking stick could be a weapon. Aleem came to the defense of the woman and told the police to remove their hands. A scuffle ensued, and police piled on top of Aleem, breaking his glasses, binding his hands and finally shooting him in his neck with a taser.

Though the whole incident was caught on tape, and many students were outraged by the behavior of the police, Aleem was charged with second degree assault on an officer.

Shareef Aleem is well known as a Cop Watch activist. He spearheaded "Operation Get Tournery." Tournery is a Denver cop who shot Paul Childs and Greg Smith, two disabled Black males, to death.

Now Aleem has been attacked, denied the right to speak at a public meeting and imprisoned for refusing to let the cops silence and brutalize him.

Later, police in riot gear were called to the regents meeting, all to quell the voices of college students who wanted their input to be heard.

A deeper look at the rampant brutality by cops in the Denver metropolitan area exposes a clear picture of bigotry. Almost four months ago, in Aurora, a city adjacent to Denver, a white male shot a Black couple. Aaron Davis died and his companion, Benita Coleman-Davis, was hospitalized in critical condition.

The shooter, Glen Eichstedt, was never even taken to the police station, although he was still holding his gun when police arrived. He was asked a few questions at the scene, allowed to leave and presented his statement through a friend.

As of Feb. 14, no charges have been brought. Eichstedt, a business owner, walks free. Some would say that there are some good cops that try to be good, but one need only look at a picket line or demonstration, or at this public meeting and see how the cops behave. Cops are instruments of control. Their role is to pro-



Police seize Shareef Aleem and drag him from discussion.

tect the ruling class and their interests.

The police have always been used to silence poor and oppressed workers fighting for a better life and trying to voice dissent. Racism is part of being a cop and upholding the status quo—hence the brutality displayed when the police deal with Black, Latino, Native or any oppressed people.

Aleem is fighting the charges, and the community of left political activists has rallied to support him, even putting up his bail money. It should be a clear-cut case, but there is rarely a clear-cut case when prosecuting cops for their brutality. There is justice only when the public demand is so overwhelming that the city is given no choice, and that is what must happen in this case. □

Black worker explains

Racism is a class issue!

Following is a talk given by Julius Dykes, an African American auto worker, at the Nov. 13-14, 2004, National Fightback Conference.

One reason it is imperative to keep the struggle against racism linked to the class struggle is that racism is, and has always been, the main tool of division of the ruling class against the working class and oppressed.

It affects the thinking of white workers as well as workers of color. But the effect on Black workers and workers of color is to a greater degree because we have been the direct victims of it.

The effects on white workers are severe because it deforms their thinking and gives them a distorted picture of themselves and people different from themselves. But because the economics of racism and most social policies play in their favor, some white workers learn to live with it or even deny that racism exists.

It affects workers in the Black community because it develops a self-loathing and despair, which so-called Black-on-Black crime stems from. It also develops sweeping hatred of white workers because through the ruling class and their media manipulations we're led to believe that they are our victimizers—when in fact the

ruling class is the victimizer of the working class as a whole.

Growing up as a young Black worker, this affected my thinking for some time. I couldn't see past the direct racism and other harmful social policies that were forced on me and the community I lived in.

I knew I had to work for change, but didn't know quite what direction to go.

I started attending meetings of organizations like the NAACP and the Nation of Islam, which at the time was under the direction of Elijah Muhammad.

But as a worker, working with people of different colors every day, listening to their experiences and seeing them go through some of the same suffering and mistreatment that I was going through, the ideology of these two organizations confused me.

So I decided to venture out further. I started hanging out on the campus of Syracuse University and started talking to some of the anti-war protesters and peace activists and some people that called themselves socialists. And a lot of what they said made sense as far as the working class and how we all are being exploited and victimized by the same source. And around that time I had just read "The Autobiography of Malcolm X."

So all of this brought about more polit-



Julius Dykes

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

ical clarity for me. I started looking at things from a multinational, working-class perspective. And I went through the rest of my years with this type of thinking.

At the same time, I was searching for the right organization.

And finally, when I read about Workers World Party, the bright light came on. Because it had the same thinking that I was carrying around with me, concerning the working class and how we're all exploited, that what was used against us was our color and where we lived.

And WWP spoke out against that, against all reactionary policies against working people—people of color, working-class whites, women, gay people, disabled people.

And I said "This is it. I don't have to look any further."

So we can see the many examples of divisiveness down through the years that the tool of racism has caused, whether it was the Jim Crow laws that kept Black people and white people separated, or the war on drugs that labeled Black people as criminals, or this new war on terrorism that labels all Middle Easterners as "terrorists."

It's the same racism that causes this thinking and divisions in the working class. And many times it stifles the potential for a strong multinational, progressive working-class movement.

That's why it's so crucial that we fight racism and all the reactionary policies that separate the working class. □

WALTER RODNEY

Revolutionary historian and activist

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

"We must understand that we are still locked in struggle. And we are reaffirming our commitment to struggle, and we are saying we are ready to proceed. We are moving forward, we are not intimidated, we recognize the pressures, but we are far from bending under those pressures." — Walter Rodney, June 6, 1980, Georgetown, Guyana



Walter Rodney speaking in Guyana.

This June will mark the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Walter Rodney—an African-Caribbean Marxist revolutionary activist, theoretician and internationalist.

Born in multiracial Georgetown, British Guiana (now Guyana) to working-class parents in 1942, Rodney was involved early on in political activity as a result of his father's participation in the anti-colonial movement with the People's Progressive Party (PPP), led by the Indo-Guyanese leader Cheddi Jagan. Rodney's mother was a domestic worker and a seamstress. His grandparents were farmers.

As a result of this upbringing Rodney was introduced to class relations in Guyana and to an intimate understanding of Britain's (and later the United States') artificially created divisions between different nationalities, including South Asians, Africans, Portuguese, Indigenous people and Chinese.

Under the British colonial system, working-class and peasant students had to win scholarships to attend school beyond a few initial grades, if they attended school at all.

Rodney attended the University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica, majoring in history. He received his undergraduate degree in 1963. He then received a scholarship to study African history at the University of London. He earned his Ph.D. in 1966 at age 24.

To research his dissertation, "A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545 to 1800," Rodney learned to read Spanish, Portuguese and some Italian to decipher the slavery records of these former colonial powers.

Globalizing the struggle

During his short life, Walter Rodney lived and worked on four continents and in several areas of the Caribbean.

He became a Marxist in London, learning the science of dialectical and historical materialism in study groups with leading West Indian Marxists, often led by C.L.R. James.

The London group's work was grounded in works by Amilcar Cabral, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, Marcus Garvey, V.I. Lenin, Marx and Engels, George Padmore and W.E.B. DuBois. Rodney also traveled to the USSR and China.

Rodney first taught history at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, from 1966-1967. He returned to Tanzania in 1969 after a year in Mona, Jamaica, teaching courses in African history.

He applied his Marxist teachings and activities on- and off-campus in Jamaica. He worked with Rastafarians and the super-exploited in the shantytowns and elsewhere. This resulted in the government banning him from the country upon his attempted return from a Congress of Black Writers in Montreal, Canada, in Oct-

ober 1968, which sparked massive demonstrations and a parliamentary crisis for the ruling Jamaica Labor Party.

Living in Tanzania from 1969-1974, Rodney taught courses on the African Diaspora and was a key figure in the socialist movement in Tanzania, where he collaborated with President Julius Nyerere.

In 1972 Rodney's best-known book, "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," was published. This work was an earth-shaking analysis of the economic and social underdevelopment of Africa by European powers, mainly through the slave trade.

Rodney's work refuted the racist bourgeois argument that slavery existed on a large scale in Africa before the Europeans invaded. This fallacy was an attempt to deflect responsibility for the development of the African slave trade from the Europeans to Africans.

Expounding on Eric Williams's "Capitalism and Slavery", Rodney introduced a Marxist analysis "and the concept of the penetration of Africa by, and its subordination to, the world capitalist system of production," wrote Edward A. Alpers in "Weapon of History in African Liberation."

Rodney left Tanzania in 1974 to assume the chair of the History Department at the University of Georgetown, Guyana. He formed the Working People's Alliance with the goal of developing a new independent revolutionary party to help build a true Guyanese socialist republic.

Throughout the 1970s Rodney traveled periodically to the U.S., lecturing at many

colleges and universities.

He connected the Black liberation movement and other oppressed people's struggles to the struggle against imperialism. He also worked closely with progressive and revolutionary leaders in the Caribbean, such as the assassinated president of Grenada, Maurice Bishop.

And in his homeland, Guyana, Rodney always worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the working class, be it in the sugar cane fields or bauxite mines or other work and cultural spaces.

Rodney was assassinated on June 13, 1980, in Georgetown by a bomb explosion. Some say the political forces involved in the bombing were linked to the CIA. There was never an inquest into Rodney's death and to this day no one has been held accountable.

Rodney's funeral cortège was attended by thousands of mourners from inside Guyana and internationally who felt the deep loss of one of the most potent Marxist revolutionaries to have lived.

Marxism—a weapon for the oppressed

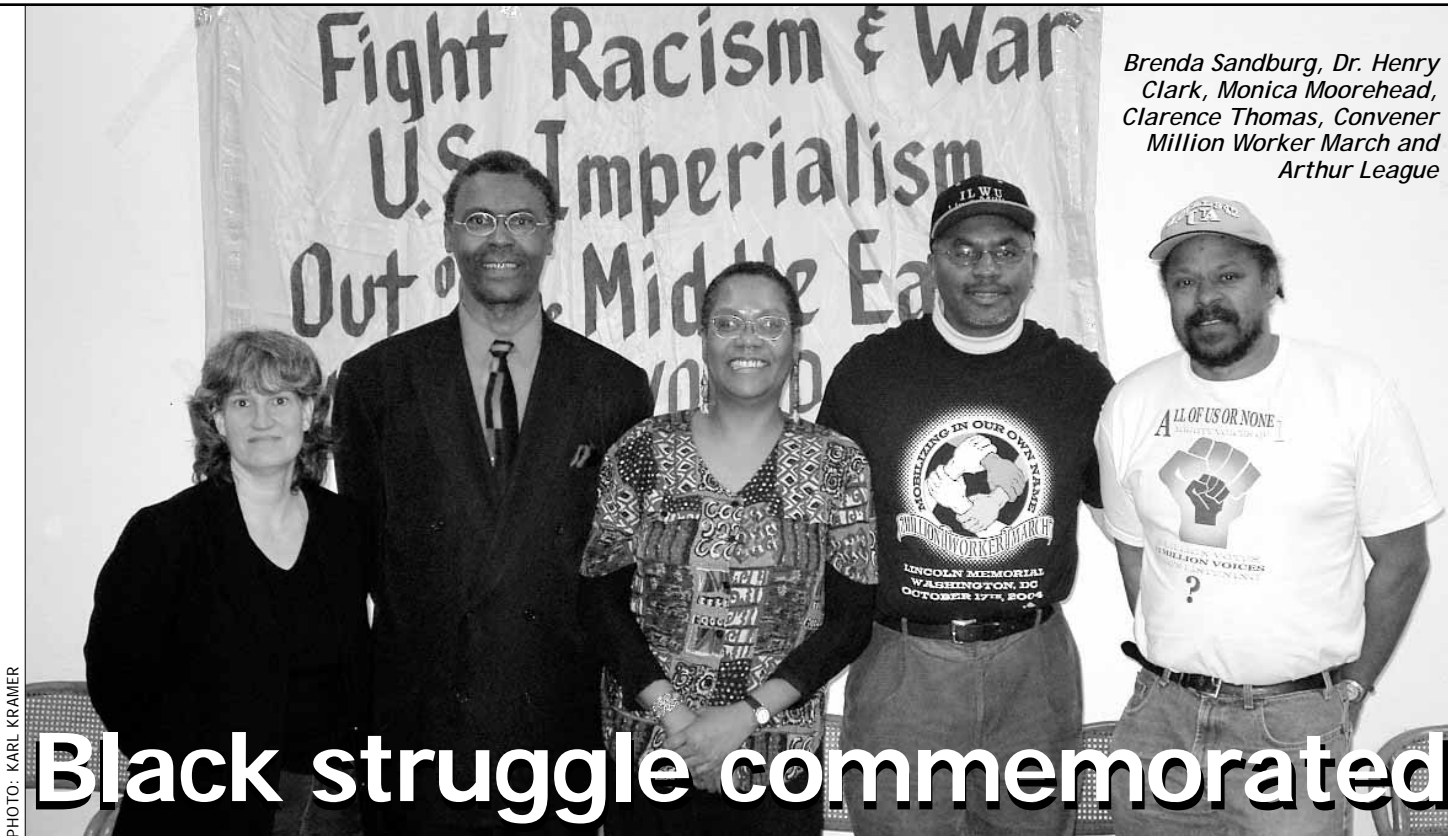
Rodney was an internationalist. He understood working-class and oppressed people's need for their own party for self-emancipation, one that has flexibility in tactics and strategy and that is attempting to build socialism.

And as his "Marxism and Liberation" talk at Queens College in 1975 attests, Rodney rejected racist and bourgeois assertions that Marxism couldn't be applied outside of a European context, which was one of his greatest contributions.

"They seem not to take into account that already that methodology and that ideology have been utilized, internalized, and domesticated in large parts of the world that are not European.

"That it is already the ideology of 800 million Chinese people; that it is already

Continued on page 7



Brenda Sandburg, Dr. Henry Clark, Monica Moorehead, Clarence Thomas, Convener Million Worker March and Arthur League

PHOTO: KARL KRAMER

Black struggle commemorated

By Brenda Sandburg
San Francisco

An extraordinary panel of Black leaders spoke at a Black History Month forum sponsored by Workers World Party Feb. 12. The event was held at the African American Art & Culture Complex in San Francisco.

Dr. Henry Clark, executive director of the West County Toxics Coalition, connected racism to the high unemployment and prison rates and the dumping of toxic chemicals in low income, predominantly Black communities.

"They say, 'look at all the jobs the Chevron Texaco refinery is giving you' in Richmond, Calif.," Clark said. Instead of jobs "we've got high rates of children's asthma, high rates of cancer and 33 percent more lung cancer than the state average."

Just as corporate greed hurts communities of color, so too is U.S. imperialism trying to dominate the world, Clark said. He pointed to the lie of the Bush Administration that it was removing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein because he repressed Iraqis.

"In terms of using their own people, no one can beat the U.S. government," Clark said. "The U.S. government dropped bombs on the people of Philadelphia. The FBI's Cointelpro killed people in the Black Panther Party and Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. The government is still holding Black Panthers and Leonard Peltier in prison."

Monica Moorehead, a Workers World Party national leader, spoke about the political and economic inequality that exists between Black and white—the disparity in income, education, health care and mortality.

Racism, sexism and lesbian/gay/bi/trans oppression are special oppressions because they occur on top of the exploitation workers face, Moorehead said. Bush's 2006 budget calls for the slashing of more than 150 social programs, which will hurt

Black people and other people of color in grossly disproportionate numbers while giving more funds to the warmakers.

"This is all-important to bring up because there are those in the progressive movement who still cling to the erroneous view that the class struggle is over here and racism and other special oppressions are over there, as if one is divorced from the other—that somehow even within the working class we are all equal when in reality there is inequality," Moorehead said.

"Racism is the center of the class struggle in this country. Racism is the main weapon that the bosses use not only to super-exploit and super-oppress whole peoples based on their nationality, but to divide and conquer the multinational working class to keep us from uniting against all of the injustices."

Moorehead said the only way workers can win the struggle against the bosses, who are trying to take back all the gains won in the 1930s and 1960s, is to merge the anti-war struggle with the struggles of workers and the oppressed. And the way to do that, she said, is with strong working-class leadership—like that provided by the leaders of the Million Worker March movement.

Clarence Thomas from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, a national co-convener of the Million Worker March, spoke about the legacy on which the MWM movement is based. A group of Black trade unionists launched their own MWM—the March on Washington Movement—in 1941. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters planned to bring 100,000 people to the National Mall to protest discrimination, particularly in the defense and civil service industries.

The march was called off when President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order calling for an end to discrimination in these industries and established the Fair Employment Practices Commission.

Thomas also recalled the great strike of

1934 when dock workers demanded the right to a union hall, to control the dispatching of jobs and to have collective bargaining. "At the time Black workers were used as scabs to cross the picket line," Thomas said.

Harry Bridges, a founder of the ILWU, went to the Black congregations in Oakland and San Francisco and told them he'd make them members of the union if they refused to cross the picket line.

"Harry was a Marxist ... and understood that racism was a tool of the bosses," Thomas said.

"The white working class needs to understand that the struggle to end racism is right up there with the class struggle because they're linked together—there is no either-or," Thomas continued.

Thomas said the call of C.L. Dellums, an organizer of the railroad car porters—"Fight or be slaves"—reminds him of the Million Worker March slogan, "Speaking and mobilizing in our own name independent of Republican and Democratic parties."

He called for reclaiming May Day with the slogan: "Stop feeding the Pentagon and starving the cities."

Arthur League, a member of All of Us or None, stated: "When people fight back this place is set up to make the most extreme examples of them. They won't walk out of prison unless and until everywhere we stand and everywhere we speak we remember these people."

League said All of Us or None is fighting the sanctioned discrimination that former prisoners face. Convicted felons are unable to get jobs, are cut off from welfare, are denied housing and food stamps. The group recently held a demonstration outside Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown's house after he announced plans to impose a curfew on parolees.

"If you've been convicted of a felony," League said, "you're a legal slave in the United States."

Sandburg chaired the Feb. 12 forum.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL REMEMBERS OSSIE DAVIS

'A Lion has fallen'

The following column was transcribed from a Pacifica radio interview with the death row, political prisoner on Feb. 7:



Ossie Davis, our own Black shining star. A lion has fallen.

Ossie Davis, the deep-voiced, proud and majestic man who has performed on stage, film, television and community centers, has passed from this life at the age of 87 years, leaving behind him the radiant and talented Ruby Dee, his co-star on life's broad stage, and millions of mourners the world over.

In whatever role he accepted, he projected a rare and matchless dignity. Ossie Davis was a brave man who didn't just play one on TV.

At a time when it was personally, politically and career-wise dangerous, he stepped forth to support the civil-rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s and wrote his legacy large in Black America's history when he delivered the touching and heartfelt eulogy to the Black nationalist leader, Malcolm X. His words leavened with love and courage were as much a tribute to Malcolm as they were to himself, for they reflected a deep and abiding love for Black people, even though seen as enemies of the state.



Mumia Abu-Jamal



Malcolm X

BLACK HISTORY

Of Malcolm, he would say, he was our own Black shining prince who didn't hesitate to give his life because he loved us so. Many years ago, perhaps around 1980, I had the pleasure of interviewing Ossie Davis and his lovely wife Ruby.

I found a generous, humorous, sweet and deep soul. Ossie talked about what being in the arts meant to him.

From that spark of inspiration and the magic of a marriage to the wondrous Ruby Dee, the arts under both of their singular talents have been rewarded. I asked him about the impact of their politics on their careers and he easily answered that they always found something to do, if it was a play in a Black college or neighborhood community center, for there was no community that closed their doors to their talent and their spirits. He added that he didn't need much.

But for most young people, perhaps the grizzled old guy in Spike Lee's movie, "Do the Right Thing," sparks memories. In the flick, Davis plays Da Mayor, a street figure who pines for the attention of his love interest, played by Ruby Dee. This very role reflects the essence of what Davis and Dee have done for generations now: taken rather ordinary roles and imbued

them with grace and dignity, a reflection of how they touched the lives of millions of ordinary people by reflecting the best that is within them.

A country boy from Cogdell, Ga., Ossie Davis inspired millions through decades of performances in various media with the essential elements of dignity and the love for one's people. He was a lion, and though he has passed,

may his brilliant life inspire the lions and giants to come.

From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. □

Reparations group tells Chase 'We are outraged'



The Millions for Reparations committee held a press conference and noon time rally on Feb. 9 in Manhattan to bring public attention to JP Morgan/Chase Bank's recent acknowledgement that it had supported and profited off the heinous U.S. slave trade. The powerful capitalist institution recently announced that to make amends, it plans to set up a \$5 million

scholarship fund for African Americans.

The committee stated that Chase's crime of supporting slavery "can certainly not be resolved by it deciding what the overall scope and amount of money the penalty should be." Black lawyers presented in a class action lawsuit back in 2001 that banks and corporations that profited off the slave trade and slavery amount over \$2 trillion today.

The committee has submitted two bills to the NY City Council—one would establish a commission to investigate NY business involvement in the slave trade and the other would require corporations that have dealings with city government to open up the books exposing their historical relationship to the slave trade.

— Monica Moorehead

WWW PHOTOS: ANNE PRUDEN

On Feb. 11 the people say:

'Free Mumia now'

By Susanne Kelly
Philadelphia

Prompted by the cancellation of a state court hearing on the case of political prisoner, acclaimed journalist and death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal, his supporters held a Day of Action Feb. 11 in Philadelphia. Hundreds attended from the city and around the country. An international delegation came from Paris, France.

Abu-Jamal was convicted of the 1981 murder of Philadelphia cop Daniel Faulkner. Since that time, serious questions have been raised about the trial, including prosecutorial misconduct, a racist presiding judge, falsified and conflicting evidence and coerced witnesses. The Feb. 11 court date was to have focused on Abu-Jamal's petition for habeas corpus.

The Day of Action included a demonstration and march, a People's Hearing, and a hip-hop concert in the evening.

At the demonstration, hundreds of his supporters marched through downtown Philadelphia to the criminal justice building, chanting and filling the streets with blue balloons blowing in the wind. Organizers held a news conference outside the criminal justice building.

At the People's Hearing, witnesses and experts presented testimony showing how the prosecution falsified evidence in order to convict Abu-Jamal. This falsification included manipulating purported eyewitnesses to falsely identify him as the shooter.



PHOTO: ANNE LAMB

Mumia supporters hit Philadelphia's streets Feb. 11.



WW PHOTO: ANNE PRUDEN

People's court.

Speakers included attorneys Michael Coard and Leslie Jones, Ramona Africa and Pam Africa, Fred Hampton Jr., son of assassinated Black Panther Fred Hampton, and many others.

The international delegation included two members of the City Council of Paris representing the mayor of Paris, and a city councilperson from St. Denys, France. They came to Philadelphia to add their voices to the millions around the world who are demanding a new trial for Abu-Jamal.

The Day of Action ended with an exciting concert. Artists included Immortal Technique, Seeds of Wisdom, and Dynamax, who came with the Paris delegation.

Philadelphia Mayor John Street reneged on a promise to hold a reception for the international delegation on the evening of

Feb. 10. Later, pressure from Abu-Jamal's supporters forced Street to welcome the international visitors by giving them the city's "Liberty Bell" award.

It is 2005 and Mumia has been on death row for almost 23 years. Since 1982 a massive movement of millions worldwide has formed to educate people about the injustice of his case, to keep pressure on the courts to demand a new trial and to push for his release.

In 2001 a decision was handed down by a federal court which confused many people into thinking Abu-Jamal was no longer on death row—but nothing could be further from the truth. He is still on death row, and unless action is taken, every single day is closer to another death warrant being signed.

If new evidence is not allowed in the

state courts—which includes the signed confession of Arnold Beverly that he killed Daniel Faulkner—the only evidence allowed in the federal courts will be the lies that were presented at the trial in 1982.

According to Pam Africa and the International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the government hopes that eventually people will give up and forget about Abu-Jamal so they can murder him or keep him in a cage for the rest of his life.

The daylong events on Feb. 11 were another significant step in the fight for his life. This fight impacts all people and movements because he is on death row as a result of his outspoken vigilance for the oppressed.

Now it is more important than ever that we stand with Mumia Abu-Jamal! □

In post-election Iraq, it's still resistance v. occupation

By John Catalinotto

In the first two weeks after the Jan. 30 Iraqi election, 296 people were reportedly killed in battles involving the U.S.-led occupation forces and the puppet Iraqi army on one side and the Iraqi resistance on the other. All evidence points to this struggle continuing as it has for the past 20 months, despite the election.

The U.S. government and its media present the Jan. 30 Iraqi election as if it was an honest poll of the wishes of the people living in Iraq. It is a step to stability and international acceptance of the new Iraqi regime, they say.

Accepting this approach leads to a series of unanswered questions:

How, the day after the vote, could the U.S. authorities say that 8 million Iraqis voted, before there was a count? How did they know this was 57 percent of possible voters, when there has been no census of Iraqis? Why did it take two weeks to count the vote? Why did the Shiite coalition around al-Sistani wind up with only 48 percent of the vote, when early media estimates had showed it with 60 percent? How did the Kurdish parties wind up with as much as 25 percent of the vote?

Mahdi Ibrahim, a prominent member of the Association of Muslim Scholars (AMS), the highest Sunni religious authority, has strongly challenged British and U.S. claims that the election was a success, putting the turnout at no more than 30 percent.

These questions are difficult to answer if you accept the U.S. framework. But make a different assumption: namely, the election was an elaborate farce organized by the U.S. occupying forces; the vote totals were decided on beforehand and the

voting totals were adjusted to allow the U.S. occupation to continue.

The goal of this farce was to establish an interim regime that gives an appearance of stability and fairness, but which is weak and unable to take steps to end the occupation. This was difficult, as the vast majority of Iraqis want an end to U.S. rule of their country.

Major groupings in the new puppet assembly

The U.S. puppet ruler, Iyad Allawi, did poorly. Even the adjusted totals gave him less than 15 percent of the vote. Of all the candidates, he was most clearly an occupation puppet.

The largest grouping is an alliance of mostly religious and some secular parties from Iraq's South, gathered around the Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani, a religious leader of the Shiite community. This grouping, called the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), refused to join the boycott called by secular and Sunni parties in the center of Iraq. It went along with the U.S. election, which many of its voters looked to as a step toward ending the occupation.

First estimates put the UIA at 60 percent of the vote. This would give them a large majority of seats in the National Assembly and a chance to structure a new Constitution. The mass movement supporting the UIA would likely refuse open collaboration with the occupation. For this reason, the U.S. worked to diminish the UIA's role in the government. In addition, Washington suspects links between this grouping and the Iranian regime.

So 60 percent somehow shrank to 48 percent by Feb. 14. More votes than expected turned up instead in the count

for major Kurdish parties. These are the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani, the Iraqi Kurdish leader likely to be named president, and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), led by Massoud Barzani.

These leaders have been cooperating with the CIA since the 1970s in an attempt to win more power for themselves, in the name of Kurdish autonomy. Since the northern, majority Kurd section of Iraq was virtually separated from the rest of Iraq in the 1990s, they have worked in close alliance with the U.S.

In the early stages of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Turkish government prevented the Pentagon from launching an assault from Turkey. The U.S. turned to cooperation with the Peshmerga, an armed Kurdish group allied with these two parties, to put pressure on Iraq's armies from the north.

Since the occupation began in April 2003, the majority Kurdish region has been the one that suffered least under the occupation troops, and where there has been the least friction between the troops and the population. The Pentagon has even used Peshmerga troops against the Arab population further south. They were the only "Iraqi" forces that joined the U.S. bloody assault on Falluja last November, and have consequently become a target of the resistance, at least throughout central Iraq.

"In Mosul the bodies of 12 men—six Iraqi national guardsmen and six Kurdish security guards—were dumped in two areas of the city, the Associated Press reported. Notes left near the guardsmen's bodies said, "This is the destiny for those who participated in besieging Falluja." (Feb. 13, New York Times)

By inflating the success of the PUK and the KDP in the votes, the U.S. has turned the National Assembly into a bargaining marketplace for posts of leadership. Right now there is speculation that Talabani will be named president, which is described as a "symbolic" position. Ibrahim al-Jaafari, the United Iraqi Alliance leader and current interim vice president, is likely to be named prime minister.

Strangely enough, Ahmad Chalabi is al-Jaafari's main competition for prime minister. Chalabi, notorious for his corruption, was the first Iraqi exile promoted by the Pentagon as the leader of post-Baathist Iraq. A year ago Chalabi was forced out in disgrace. U.S. troops even occupied his party's offices. Now it seems Washington may need him again.

Resistance continues, and occupation

That's the struggle for the National Assembly, which is really just a talk shop, especially if none of the main groupings has a permanent majority. It does not determine who has power in Iraq.

Real power in Iraq comes from control of the state. That means the ones who can give orders to an armed force and impose their will on the rest of society.

In Iraq there are only two such forces struggling for power. On one side are the armed forces of the U.S. and Britain, with diminishing symbolic aid from a collection of allies and client states.

On the other side is the Iraqi resistance. Even without an established national leadership, this resistance has denied Washington control of most of central Iraq, including most of Baghdad:

"After the relative calm during the vot-

Oil, poverty and revolution

Venezuela rejects imperialism's 1% solution

By Deirdre Griswold

Sometimes a single figure can speak volumes. Keep in mind the figure 1 percent when discussing Venezuela with your friends and co-workers.

For almost a century, the Venezuelan economy has depended on selling oil abroad. It has a rich supply of petroleum and was at one time—before the development of Middle East oilfields—the second-largest oil producer in the world.

Oil has been Venezuela's main source of revenue, amounting to 80 percent of its exports. The Rockefeller-owned Standard Oil Co. for years controlled Venezuela's oil, but promised that its exploitation of this precious resource would make the country rich. It did make the Rockefellers fabulously rich, and it made some Venezuelans comfortably rich. But most Venezuelans never saw that money and lived in great poverty.

Until now. The Bolivarian Revolution, which began with the election of Hugo Chávez to the presidency and has now become a vast popular movement for profound social change, is changing all that.

Today, Venezuela's oil revenues are paying for a broad range of social programs, including a huge literacy campaign, land reform that is revitalizing agriculture and raising the standard of living in the countryside, and a free public health system that has already reduced infant mortality and maternal deaths.

Now comes the figure 1 percent. That's what foreign oil companies—including ChevronTexaco, whose origins go back to Standard Oil—had been paying until recently in royalties to the Venezuelan government for the extra-heavy crude oil they extracted there.

Iraq

Continued from page 8

ing, when most of Iraq was placed under a security clampdown that banned traffic and put massive numbers of troops and police on the streets, a pattern of abductions, assassinations, sabotage and car bombings has returned. Some roads are again controlled by guerrillas, and there has been a sustained rebel assault on a police outpost." (Los Angeles Times, Feb. 13)

Washington's attempt to set up an Iraqi puppet army continues to fail badly.

Because the Pentagon has fudged how it reports the Iraqi troop count, the U.S. administration can "claim that it is halfway to meeting the target of training almost 270,000 Iraqi forces, including around 52,000 troops and 135,000 Iraqi policemen. The reality, according to experts, is that there may be as few as 5,000 troops who could be considered combat ready." (The Independent [Britain], Feb. 13)

Thus the prognosis for post-election Iraq is that the resistance will continue to grow and that the Bush administration will continue to keep large numbers of U.S. troops there. Withdrawal from Iraq would mean an admission of defeat by U.S. imperialism.

All the more so must the demand for immediate withdrawal remain central to the anti-war movement here. It is the one demand that has the current support of the vast majority of Iraqis and the potential support of the vast majority of workers, students and also soldiers, sailors and marines from the United States. □

One percent is like nothing. These multibillion-dollar companies were getting the oil virtually for free, even though Venezuela had technically nationalized its oil back in 1976.

Hydrocarbons Law and the coup

In November 2001, after several elections in Venezuela had established a new Constitution and a new National Assembly dedicated to eradicating poverty, the Hydrocarbons Law was passed. Under this law, Venezuela reasserted its control over its most vital resource. The royalty on light and heavy crude was raised from 16.7 percent to 30 percent. On extra-heavy crude, which costs more to produce, the royalty was raised from 1 percent to 16.6 percent.

But almost immediately, before the law could be implemented, a vigorous anti-Chávez campaign took to the streets. Within five months a coup had taken place in which Venezuela's business leaders, allied to elements in the military, kidnapped Chávez and declared themselves to be the new government. There was no question that Washington—which speaks so glowingly of democracy and free elections—was in total support of the coup against the elected Chávez government.

The coup lasted two days. After hundreds of thousands of angry people surrounded the presidential palace, and many soldiers began questioning the orders they were getting from the high command, Chávez was rescued and the coup was smashed.

That was in April 2002. Almost immediately, changes began to be made in PDVSA. Although nominally the state oil company, PDVSA had been in the hands of a privileged elite who were completely tied to the big imperialist oil companies. A detailed and fascinating report on the history of PDVSA, written by a free-lance journalist living in Venezuela, Gregory Wilpert, shows how it functioned as a "Trojan Horse" for these transnationals. ("The Economics, Culture and Politics of Oil in Venezuela," www.venezuelanalysis.com)

Wilpert describes how after the failed coup, the new head of PDVSA, Ali Rodriguez, tried to reorganize the company, both to make it more efficient—it was top-heavy with cushy supervisory jobs—and to break it away from the control of foreign capital.

Some of PDVSA's most sensitive func-

tions had been outsourced to U.S. companies. Since 1996, the U.S. company Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC) had managed all of PDVSA's data processing needs through a joint venture called INTESA. In other words, they controlled PDVSA's computers—and it was costing a lot of money. Rodriguez wanted this work taken over by Venezuelans.

But before this change could be implemented, the bureaucrats who had been running PDVSA organized a "strike" that shut down Venezuela's oil production. INTESA was part of the strike. When the government, with the cooperation of some of the workers, started to get oil production going again, everything had to be done manually.

"The result was that PDVSA could not transfer its data processing to new systems, nor could it process its orders and bills for oil shipments," writes Wilpert. "PDVSA ended up having to process such things manually, since passwords and the general computing infrastructure were unavailable, causing the strike to be much more damaging to the company than it would have been, if the data processing had been in PDVSA's hands."

The "strike" failed to bring down the government, which has since reorganized the oil industry. In the process, it made some interesting discoveries.

Wilpert wrote in 2003, "... INTESA, which controlled all of PDVSA's information, is in turn controlled by SAIC, a Fortune 500 company (revenues in 2002: \$6.1 billion) that is deeply involved in the U.S. defense industry, particularly as it relates to nuclear technology, defense intelligence, and computing technology. Its managers included two former U.S. Secretaries of Defense (William Perry and Melvin Laird) and two former CIA directors (John Deutch and Robert Gates). Its current Board of Directors includes the former commander of the U.S. Special Forces (Wayne Downing), a former coordinator of the National Security Council (Jasper Welch), and the former director of the National Security Agency (Bobby Ray Inman). Whether or not SAIC was actively involved in the PDVSA strike and whether it passes crucial company information on to other oil companies is unknown."

The last thing the oil companies and their friends in the political/military/

intelligence establishment of the U.S. government want is to have the public know the specifics of their dirty dealings around the world.

Why oil execs are worried

Last November, Chávez announced during his weekly television program that the government would begin implementing the rise in royalties for extra-heavy crude oil from 1 percent to 16.6 percent. The oil companies pretended to be surprised and shocked, even though Chávez was merely affirming what had been passed in the Hydrocarbons Law of 2001.

Recently, two U.S. companies that had been drilling for oil offshore were told to suspend their operations by the Venezuelan government. At the same time, Venezuela has signed contracts to sell more oil to China.

In the business pages of the corporate press, articles are appearing about how worried U.S. oil executives are over developments in Venezuela. In the mass media, however, the line is that U.S. consumers could suffer from the revolutionary changes in that country.

A popular slogan in the large anti-war demonstrations of recent years was "No blood for oil." To say that the war in Iraq, or U.S. hostility toward the revolutionary process in Venezuela, is over oil is catchy, but it is not adequate. Many pro-war, pro-imperialist elements will also say that the issue is oil, and they mobilize mass sentiment with the argument that the population here will be deprived of oil and gas for heating their homes, driving their cars and so on unless the U.S. military polices the world.

What has to be made clear is that imperialist intervention is not for oil itself, as a useful product, but for oil PROFITS. The government in Washington that decides where to send troops and who to put under sanctions is a government owned lock, stock and barrel by big capital—and there are no capitalists bigger than the oil capitalists.

The people of the U.S. will need oil until the economy can be reorganized around safer and sustainable sources of energy. And many countries want to sell that oil. What we don't need are the oil companies that want us to fight and die for their profits. □



Workers World Party is commemorating Black History Month with a series of national public forums (Partial List)

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Thurs. Feb. 17 | Baltimore | LeiLani Dowell | 410-235-7040 |
| Fri. Feb. 18 | San Diego | Monica Moorehead | 619-692-4496 |
| Fri. Feb. 25 | Philadelphia | LeiLani Dowell | 610-453-0490 |
| Fri. Feb. 25 | Chicago | Larry Holmes | 773-381-5839 |
| Fri. Feb. 25 | New York | Imani Henry, Monica Moorehead | 212-627-2994 |
| Sat. Feb. 26 | Detroit | Larry Holmes | 313-831-0750 |
| Sat. Feb. 26 | Boston | Imani Henry | 617-983-3835 |

For information on a listed event, call the local phone number.

For more info and updates, call the national office at 212-627-2994.

Beware the nukes!

The duplicity of Washington's position on nuclear weapons was recently underscored by a report that, a decade and a half after the end of the Cold War, the U.S. still deploys approximately 480 nuclear warheads in Europe.

The report of the Natural Resources Defense Council, entitled "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe," is based on declassified documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, military publications, commercial satellite imagery and other documents. The U.S. weapons currently are located at eight air force bases in six European countries: Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and Britain.

The report points out that the United States is the only country in the world with nuclear weapons stationed outside its borders, and that most Europeans have no idea they are there.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia withdrew all its tactical nuclear weapons from the former Soviet states. The U.S. withdrew thousands of its weapons, too—but left in place in Europe what is still the largest arsenal of nukes in the world, after the overall figures for the U.S. and Russia. The 480 are more than those held by either Britain or France, the European countries that are the world's next-largest nuclear powers.

Why is there no outcry about the dangers posed by this deployment of the most fearsome weapons ever devised? One accident could be catastrophic in densely populated Europe. And the possibility that the U.S. government might deliberately use them in a conflict—either in Europe or the Middle East—cannot be discounted.

It's not as though the U.S. has a record of peacefully staying within its own borders. No other country on Earth has sent so many troops abroad and carried out so many wars over the last 60 years. And Washington is forever branded by its decision to use atomic bombs in World War II against civilian targets—the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which were obliterated by bombs tiny in comparison to the destructive power of today's nukes.

Nor should it be forgotten that the Bush administration has also backed out of earlier U.S. commitments never to be the first to use nuclear weapons. For many countries around the world on this administration's hit list, the nuclear threat has become very real.

And now the Rumsfeld gang at the Pentagon are demanding money to

develop a whole new generation of nuclear weapons—so-called "bunker busters" and tactical battlefield "mini-nukes"—to make up for the fact that fewer young people in this country want to die on foreign battlefields for the likes of ExxonMobil and Halliburton.

Yet, with all this, both parties in Washington and the corporate media that parrot their line are obsessed today with North Korea's announcement that it has built a few nuclear weapons. And they speak ominously of Iran's development of nuclear power for civilian use, even though the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohammed El Baradei, continues to say there is absolutely no proof that Iran is building weapons.

In fact, Washington's response has been to press hard to remove El Baradei from his post. (Associated Press, Feb. 9)

Only people poisoned by class and national hatred and the venom of imperialist arrogance can fail to see that poor countries vulnerable to attack turn to developing nuclear weapons only as a last resort. If any real architecture to prevent imperialist wars and aggressions existed, they would not have to risk so much on self-defense. But there is none.

The United Nations didn't prevent the Korean War—rather, it was used by the U.S. as a cover for its aggression. And some 4 million Koreans died. The UN never even voted on the Vietnam War, which was universally seen as illegal, brutal and unjustified. It didn't try to stop the U.S. invasion of Grenada, or Somalia, or Panama, or Yugoslavia, or Iraq (twice). The majority of the countries of the world may have a few brief moments to orate in the General Assembly, but they have no power to deter the imperialists, who dominate the Security Council.

Thus, a country like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has suffered on a level unimaginable to most people here from both direct U.S. aggression and decades of economic sanctions, must find another way to ensure its survival or become yet another victim of U.S. "regime change."

What the world needs is an anti-war, anti-imperialist movement on every continent so strong that it can stay the hand of the interventionists and war profiteers. In the meantime, progressives can at the very least speak out against the lynch-mob rhetoric of the politicians and media toward countries like North Korea and Iran. □

Walter Rodney, revolutionary historian and activist

Continued from page 6

the ideology which guided the Vietnamese people to successful struggle and to the defeat of imperialism. That it is already the ideology which allows North Korea to transform itself from a backward, quasi-feudal, quasi-colonial terrain into an independent industrial power. That it is already the ideology which has been adopted on the Latin American continent and that serves as the basis for development in the Republic of Cuba.

"That it is already the ideology which was used by Cabral, which was used by

Samora Machel, which is in use on the African continent itself to underline and underscore struggle and the construction of a new society.

"It cannot therefore be termed a European phenomenon; and the onus will certainly be on those who argue that this phenomenon, which was already universalized itself, is somehow not applicable to some Black people..." ("Yes to Marxism" pamphlet, February 1986, People's Progressive Party of Guyana)

As Alpers wrote, "...What stands out is that to the very end of his life Walter

Nepal monarch's edicts boomerang

People's struggle grows

By David Hoskins

Nepal's absolute monarch, King Gyanendra, dismissed his appointed government and assumed direct control over the state in early February. In the aftermath of his emergency declaration, Gyanendra immediately moved to suspend constitutional rights by censoring the press and locking up prominent leaders of the parliamentary opposition. In addition, telephone wires were cut and all flights into and out of the country have been grounded.

The king's actions are in response to the increasingly powerful revolution waged by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) or CPN(M).

Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, leader of the dismissed government, proved unable to force the revolutionaries to the table for peace talks. Meanwhile, Gyanendra was faced with the risk of losing his throne as the rebels continued to grow in size and capability. His assumption of dictatorial powers is a last-ditch effort to prevent the overthrow of Nepal's monarchy.

Since its inception in 1996, the CPN(M)-led People's War has successfully rooted itself in the peasantry and oppressed castes of Nepali society. In the beginning, the revolutionary forces were small and lacked adequate arms. Today the People's Liberation Army stands close to 15,000 strong and another 50,000 revolutionaries are organized into local militias. (BBC News: "Q & A: Nepal Crisis," Feb. 1)

The rebels currently control almost 80 percent of the country and millions are now living in liberated zones. ("Dispatches from the People's War in Nepal" by Li Onesto, Dec. 1, 2004) Revolutionary government structures are being built along-

side the construction of sanitary, health care, and education facilities in the base areas.

Despite years of imperialist intervention from the United States and Britain, the armed struggle continues to advance.

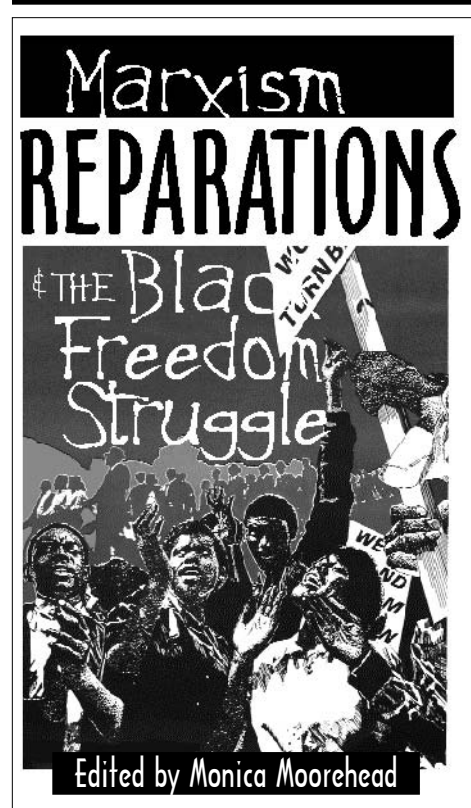
It is unlikely that King Gyanendra's gamble will pay off. Even the imperialist media has run headlines proclaiming the move as the "Nepal king's biggest gamble" and "Nepalis divided over royal coup." (BBC News) The pro-government forces are weakened by the division between the royalists and the parliamentary parties affected by the king's recent diktat.

The Nepali Congress Party (NCP) and the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist-Leninist (UML) have been forced underground by the harsh measures against dissent. It is possible that certain progressive elements, particularly within the UML's youth wing, will now join with the revolutionary forces to bring down the monarchy once and for all. In fact, this is exactly what the CPN(M) has called for in a recent statement articulating the need for a broad united front against the king.

Meanwhile, the measures appear to have done little to diminish the power of the CPN(M). Just last week, militants attacked a prison in southwestern Nepal and freed 150 inmates, including many rebels. At least five policemen were killed in the incident. (CNN, Feb. 10)

The struggle in Nepal highlights the authenticity of scientific socialism. No amount of foreign intervention or maneuvering by the king has squelched the flames of revolution. The people of Nepal continue to march forward despite the obstacles.

It looks as if it is only a matter of time before victory will belong to the people of Nepal as they embark on a new journey to construct a revolutionary state. □



Now in its second printing

The history of people of African descent includes the holocaust of the slave trade and centuries of brutal racism and discrimination. Yet this history—along with many heroic acts of resistance—are scarcely taught in the schools, and the capitalist government continues to resist the payment of reparations.

This pamphlet illuminates much of this oft-forgotten history and the continuing struggle against racism and economic exploitation.

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PHILIPPINES

New Peoples Army recognizes same-sex marriage

By LeiLani Dowell

On Feb. 4, the New People's Army (NPA) conducted the first same-sex marriage in the Philippines. Two guerrilla fighters who have participated in the armed struggle against the pro-U.S. regime in Manila, Ka Andres and Ka Jose, exchanged their vows before their com-



New Peoples Army comrades hold first same-sex wedding.

rades, friends and local villagers.

The ceremony was full of symbolic imagery of the two comrades' commitment to each other as members of a couple, as well as their commitment to the revolutionary struggle. The two men held each other's hand throughout the wedding, and a bullet in the other as a representation of their commitment to the armed struggle.

During the ceremony, Ka Andres and Ka Jose were draped in a sequined flag of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which was secured by a long, beaded rope around the couple and their sponsors. The rope and flag, according to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, symbolized that their marriage would be made stronger with the help of both their comrades and the masses.

A choir of the New People's Army serenaded the couple with revolutionary love songs.

In response to the marriage, representatives of the Philippine government have condemned the NPA for lacking religion. A spokesperson for the Air Force generals told reporters, "This proves that they have no god and their morality is very much in question."

Although proposals in support of same-sex marriage have been introduced several times to the Philippine legislature, none have passed so far.

The Progressive Organization of Gays (ProGay) responded to the NPA marriage with a challenge to the administration of President Gloria Macagapal Arroyo to enact legislation that would formalize equal rights for lesbian and gay Filipinos.

Michael Falguera, secretary general of ProGay, said, "Instead of branding homosexual marriages as immoral, the government should be taking steps to follow the example of the NPA by legalizing domestic



partnerships and honoring gay families."

Speaking on gays in the NPA, newlywed Ka Andres said, "Gay cadres adhere to the strong party discipline. They enhance the prestige of gays in the movement. This has gained positive results through the years. Comrades (male and female) and even the masses have learned to respect and recognize gays and their contribution to the revolution."

Ka Jose said, "What we have to do now—with the help of the party—is to work on our marriage and to be strong while serving the people." □

1950: 'LAVENDER SCARE'!

By Leslie Feinberg

Life got a whole lot harder in the U.S. during the late 1940s and early 1950s for people who were attracted to others of the same sex, who were considered gender-different, or who lived in a sex other than the one assigned them at birth.

The domestic witch hunt of the McCarthy era, whose main purpose was to crush any opposition to the Cold War, also led to the firing, red-listing and publicly outing of people who didn't fit the straight-jacketed classification of "straight." And anything considered "queer" was branded "subversive."

As early as 1947, some congressional Republicans veiled their partisan political attacks against the State Department with claims of "concern" about homosexuals working there.

In 1948, a public attempt to link anti-capitalists and homosexuals was promulgated in blaring media coverage that suggested Whittaker Chambers had an amorous fondness for Alger Hiss.

Chambers, a Time magazine editor and journalist and former Communist Party member, was accused of collecting intelligence information for the Soviet Union. Chambers flipped and offered "evidence" for the anti-communist campaign. He implicated Alger Hiss, who headed the Carnegie Endowment, in Soviet espionage. Chambers also allegedly told the FBI that while a member of the Communist Party he had been sexually active with men.

But the "Lavender Scare"—like the other hue of terror and repression, the "Red Scare"—began in earnest in 1950.

Before it ended, the two had become inextricably linked as one vicious slur: "pinko f-g."

While this kind of language is painful to reprint, it is important to get a feel for the tenor of that period.

'Panic on the Potomac'

On Feb. 9, 1950, notorious red-baiter Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R-WI) waved a piece of paper before the cameras that he claimed contained a list of 205 "card-carrying Communists in the State Department."

Alger Hiss had been convicted of per-

jury on Jan. 21, just weeks before this now-infamous Wheeling, W. Va., speech.

McCarthy railed that the Democratic Truman administration was harboring traitors who were plotting to give away top-secret information.

John Peurifoy, undersecretary of state, denied the charge in February before a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing investigating "subversives." But he did raise the specter of a sinister "homosexual underground" in Washington that was in cahoots with the "Communist conspiracy." ("Becoming Visible: A Reader in Gay and Lesbian History")

He said that 91 "sexual deviants" were among those who had been dismissed from the State Department as "security risks."

This sounded a tocsin, observes David K. Johnson in his book "The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government."

"Members of Congress demanded to know who hired the 91, whether they found jobs in other government departments, and if there were any more. Seeming to confirm McCarthy's charges about subversives in the State Department, Peurifoy's revelation prompted concern and outrage throughout the nation, heated debates on the floors of Congress, congressional committee investigations, countless newspaper articles and numerous White House meetings.

"It eventually led to the ouster of thousands of government employees. It marked the beginnings of a Lavender Scare."

While some politicians labeled the campaign the "purge of the perverts," some journalists ridiculed it as the "panic on the Potomac."

McCarthyism, not just McCarthy

While the domestic witch hunt of lesbian, gay men and gender-variant people was an integral component of McCarthyism, Joe McCarthy himself was not the mover and shaker behind the anti-homosexual frenzy, and perhaps for good reason.

True, the senator from Wisconsin did pepper his tirades with references to "Communists and queers." (The Lavender Scare)

But as the political crusade took off, McCarthy was nowhere to be seen.

"Though he was a member of the congressional committee that spent several months examining the homosexuals-in-government issue, McCarthy mysteriously recused himself from those hearings," Johnson notes.

McCarthy, the middle-aged, perennial bachelor, was vulnerable to questions about his own sexuality that were to circulate soon enough.

Instead, senior colleagues took up the cudgel, including Senators Styles Bridges (R-N.H.), Kenneth Wherry (R-Neb.) and Clyde Hoey (D-N.C.).

In April 1950 Republican National Committee Chair Guy Gabrielson charged that a "conspiracy" was underway. Gabrielson's statement read in part, "Perhaps as dangerous as the actual Communists are the sexual perverts who have infiltrated our government in recent years."

While Gabrielson claimed the media was not doing enough to alert the population to the "homosexual menace," this was merely self-serving demagoguery. The media helped whip the frenzy to a fevered pitch. The New York Times took the lead, running at least seven stories promoting this

anti-homosexual campaign in May and June of 1950.

In May 1950, Wherry quoted "reliable police sources" that 3,750 homosexuals were ensconced in federal jobs. A month later, the Senate authorized an official investigation, the first of its kind in U.S. history. It was popularly dubbed the "pervert inquiry." (gltq)

The politically motivated results of these hearings, issued in December, charged the Truman administration with indifference toward the danger of homosexuals in government. The official "justification" for this witch hunt against gay and lesbian employees was cited as "lack of emotional stability" and "weakness of ... moral fiber" that allegedly made them likely victims of Soviet propaganda and recruitment.

By November of that year, close to 600 federal civil workers had lost their jobs. In the State Department alone, security officials bragged that they were firing one homosexual per day, more than twice the rate of those charged with political disloyalty to capitalism.

Wherry concluded in December, "You can't hardly separate homosexuals from subversives. ... Mind you, I don't say that every homosexual is a subversive, and I don't say every subversive is a homosexual. But [people] of low morality are a menace in the government, whatever [they are], and they are all tied up together." (New York Post, December 1950)

Next: Publicity dies down, anti-gay witch hunt does not

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SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

FIST lucha contra el racismo en campus universitario



Por Ruth Vela
San Diego, California

El capítulo en San Diego de la organización Lucha Contra el Imperialismo—Unámonos, (Fight Imperialism—Stand Together, F.I.S.T.) fue creada y opera desde el colegio Southwestern, al sur de California. La mayoría de sus estudiantes son de descendencia mexicana. Algun@s viven en Tijuana, México, y deben viajar a los Estados Unidos todos los días para ir a la escuela.

Much@s estudiantes no son ciudadanos@s “legales”. Y como tal, muchas veces pagan tarifas más altas, no califican para ayuda financiera y no pueden solicitar becas. Además de las tareas y los exámenes, ell@s también tienen que preocuparse por encarcelamientos y deportaciones.

Recientemente en el periódico del Southwestern College, llamado The Sun, apareció un editorial escrito por uno de los mismos escritores del periódico titulado, “Inmigrantes ilegales son una carga para los Ciudadanos Americanos.” El artículo era un claro ataque contra l@s inmigrantes. Decía que, “Es hora de quemar los parásitos de nuestra sociedad y caer sobre la gente que toman ventajas de las riquezas y prosperidad de América.”

Algun@s estudiantes creen que el artículo también incluyó citas ficticias, como esta de Marjorie De La Cruz: “El gobierno necesita estrechar o cerrar sus fronteras sureñas para proteger a sus ciudadanos y a los inmigrantes legales de la inevitable pobreza y enfermedades que esa gente trae.”

Como respuesta a este ataque racista, miembros de FIST, MEChA y otras orga-

nizaciones universitarias formaron una coalición llamada ERACISM. La coalición lanzó una campaña que ha recaudado más de 700.000 firmas de estudiantes que se sienten atacad@s, acosad@s y decepcionad@s por el Southwestern College, el periódico The Sun y la administración de la escuela.

La administración ha respondido enviando a la policía para acosar a l@s estudiantes y tratar de prevenir la distribución de papeletas y la recolección de firmas. Ha estado tratando de callar al movimiento.

Mensajes de correo electrónico en los cuales se mencionan los nombres de algun@s de l@s miembr@s de FIST y en los cuales se refiriere al grupo como “sólo uno o dos estudiantes molestos” han estado circulando entre los administradores quienes valoran más sus posi-

ciones que a los estudiantes.

El 27 de enero, representantes de organizaciones estudiantiles y sus consejeros se reunieron con los editores y profesores encargados del periódico para tratar de aplacar la situación.

Las siguientes demandas fueron presentadas a los encargados del periódico: 1) Una disculpa impresa del The Sun a los estudiantes del Southwestern College; 2) la retirada de las palabras que dicen, “Es hora de quemar a los parásitos de nuestra sociedad ...”; 3) que se impongan límites sobre lo que se puede publicar en el periódico; 4) que la refutación de la coalición estudiantil sea impresa sin censura; 5) que el periódico de la escuela se abstenga de propaganda racista.

Desafortunadamente la reunión terminó cuando el escritor del artículo, Nathaniel Pownell, gritando dijo, “¡yo no soy racista. ...yo no me disculparé por el artículo, nunca me disculparé por el artículo!”

El 31 de enero, el periódico envió una carta a la coalición ERACISM en la cual no cumplía ninguna de las demandas. En vez, ofreció espacio gratis para propagandas de futuros eventos. ERACISM respondió prometiendo que la lucha no ha terminado.

Se ha convenido una manifestación para el 10 de febrero. ERACISM ha recibido un fuerte apoyo de estudiantes y miembr@s de las comunidades sindicales y anti-guerra.

FISTS declaró: “¡La administración de la escuela, el periódico y la ciudad entera necesita saber que esto no será tolerado! Esperamos que esta acción recuerde a l@s que se les necesita recordar, y enseñar a aquell@s que no han aprendido, que este país fue erigido sobre las espaldas de la esclavitud africana e inmigrantes, que la tierra fue robada de l@s indígenas que habitaban las tierras antes de que l@s inmigrantes llegaran, y sobre todo que, ¡NO HAY FRONTERAS EN LA LUCHA OBRERA!”

Cartas en apoyo a las demandas de ERACISM al periódico The Sun y la administración ayudarían en esta lucha. Envíen sus cartas a eracismswc@hotmail.net antes del 17 de febrero.

Vela es una organizadora del capítulo de FIST. □

Ossie Davis sobre Malcolm X

‘Al honrarlo, honramos lo mejor en nosotros’

Extractos del tributo pronunciado por el recién fallecido Ossie Davis—gran actor y luchador social—en los actos fúnebres de Malcolm X, el 27 de febrero de 1965.

Aquí—a esta hora, en este tranquilo lugar—Harlem ha venido a saludar y a despedir una de sus esperanzas más brillantes—ahora extinguida, y separada de nosotros para siempre. Porque Harlem es donde trabajó y donde luchó y batalló—su verdadero hogar, el lugar de su corazón, y donde está su gente—y por todo esto, cabe que nos reunamos de nuevo, en Harlem, para compartir estos últimos momentos con él. Porque Harlem siempre ha sido compasiva con aquellos que la han amado, que han luchado por ella y que han defendido su honor hasta la muerte.

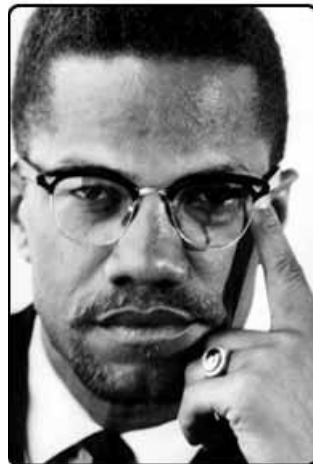
No está en la memoria de la humanidad que esta comunidad asediada y desafortunada pero orgullosa, haya conocido un joven campeón más valiente y más galante que este hombre afroamericano que aquí yace ante nosotros, invicto aún. Malcolm, afroamericano, era sumamente meticuloso con el uso de palabras. Nadie sabía mejor que él el poder que tiene la palabra sobre la mente de los seres humanos. Malcolm dejó de ser un “negro” hace años. Esa palabra se había vuelto muy débil para él. Malcolm era más grande que eso. Malcolm se había convertido en afroamericano, y quería —desesperadamente— que su gente también se volviera afroamericana.

Hay aquellos que consideran su deber, como amigos de la gente negra, decirnos que le rechazamos, que huyamos, incluso de la presencia de su memoria, que nos protejamos borrándolo de la historia de nuestra turbulenta época. Muchos se preguntarán qué es lo que Harlem honra en

Malcolm X y Ossie Davis

este joven capitán tempestuoso, controversial y audaz, y nos sonreiremos. Muchos dirán que evitemos a este hombre, porque es un demonio, un monstruo, un subversivo y enemigo de la gente negra —y nos sonreiremos. Dirán que él es un hombre de odio, un fanático, un racista, que sólo puede traer el mal a la causa por la cual ustedes luchan. Y les contestaremos diciendo: ¿Alguna vez hablaste con el hermano Malcolm? ¿Alguna vez lo tocaste, o le viste sonreírse contigo? ¿Lo escuchaste realmente alguna vez? ¿Hizo él alguna vez algo malintencionado? ¿Estuvo él involucrado personalmente alguna vez en un acto de violencia o un disturbio público? Porque si así fuera usted lo conocería. Y si usted lo hubiera conocido entendería por qué tenemos que honrarlo.

¡Malcolm era nuestra humanidad negra viviente! Esto fue lo que él significó para su gente. Y al honrarlo, honramos lo mejor en nosotros. El año pasado, desde África, él escribió estas palabras a un amigo: “Mi viaje”, dice, “casi se acabó, y ahora tengo una perspectiva mucho más amplia que cuando comencé, lo cual creo agregará vida y una nueva dimensión a nuestra lucha por la libertad y la dignidad en los Estados Unidos. Estoy escribiendo estas cosas para que sepas como un hecho, la tremenda simpatía y apoyo que nuestra lucha por los derechos humanos goza entre los estados africanos. Lo más importante es que mantengamos un Frente Unido donde nuestra energía y tiempo



más valioso no sea malgastado peleándonos entre nosotros”. Como sea que hayamos tenido nuestras diferencias con él, o entre nosotros sobre él, hagamos que su partida sirva para unirnos ahora.

Depositando estos restos mortales en la tierra, madre común de todos, seguros de que lo que colocamos en la tierra ya no es un hombre, sino una semilla, que luego del invierno de nuestro descontento, volverá para reunirse con nosotros. Y lo conoceremos entonces por lo que era y lo que es, nuestro propio y brillante príncipe negro, que no hesitó morir, porque tanto nos amaba. □

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