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IN GROWING NUMBERS

Youths say no to Pentagon wars

Recruiters pushed out of many schools

By John Catalinotto

Young people's passive resistance to the Iraq occupation is driving Army recruiters into early retirement, depression and thoughts of suicide. In addition, active resistance is growing at all levels, from pickets at recruitment centers to troops refusing orders to Iraq. Individual military resisters are becoming spokespersons and role models for other troops.

The Pentagon faces a serious dilemma: either retreat from Washington's global offensive or consider bringing back military conscription—the hated draft.

It fears such a step because a new draft would bring millions of youth into political life. A movement to fight draft reinstatement is already underway, with actions planned March 31 and a conference on April 16.

News of this growing struggle has hit the media since the March 19 protests marking the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Reports from Fayetteville, N.C., say that 20 active-duty GIs joined the protest there March 19. (GI Special, March 25) The resistance is beginning to reach new layers of the population every day.

The hottest point involves military recruiting. A March 27 article in the New York Times was entitled, "For Army recruiters, a hard toll for a hard sell."

Recruiters are notorious for exaggerating the benefits and options of enlisting in order to reach their quotas. Now, no matter what the recruiters promise, young people and their families are saying "No." Caught between this hostility and the Pentagon's orders to lure in youths, the recruiters are on the verge of a "nervous breakdown," says the article.

One lifer sergeant and ex-paratrooper named Latrail Hayes found out last year that a cousin he recruited returned from Iraq with psychological trauma. Hayes filed for conscientious objector (CO) status last June, trying to shift out of recruiting work. His appeal was rejected.

Now Hayes plans to get out in December after 10 years instead of staying for 20.

Another recruiter told the Times reporter that pressure from the brass to meet quotas during the Iraq War has given him searing back pain and stomach problems, and that he has con-

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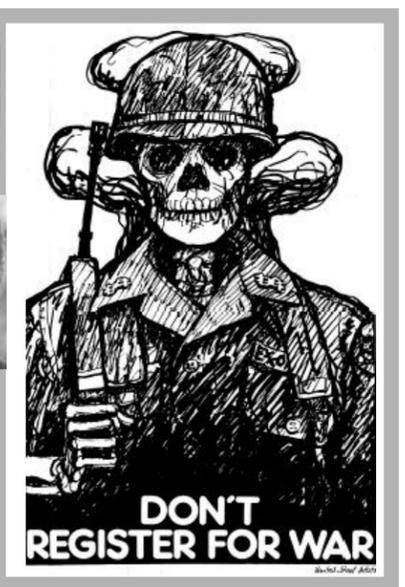
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RSS news feed helps Workers World bypass censors

By Gary Wilson

The digital edition of Workers World newspaper now has an RSS feed. A free subscription to the Workers World RSS feed is available at Workers.org.

RSS—originally Rich Site Summary but now more often said to mean Really Simple Syndication—is an easy way for Web sites to distribute summaries of what is available. An RSS news feed has a list of the latest headlines that are linked to the full article; clicking on the headline will open the full story on the Web.

RSS has become the preferred method of distributing news headlines and updates by all major news sites. The Cuban newspaper Granma is one news site that has an RSS feed.

RSS feeds are immediately available and automatically updated directly from the Web site to your computer. There is no delay, letting you see immediately the latest stories available from the news site.

Web sites with RSS feeds usually have an orange button that says either RSS or XML. XML—the Extensible Markup Language—is the format used for RSS feeds. If you click on one of the links on a Web page what you will see is a page of XML code. To properly read the feed, you need an RSS reader.

RSS feeds have replaced email distribution for many news sites. This was a trend that Editor & Publisher magazine noticed in the summer of 2003.

RSS feeds are not only immediately updated, they are also easy to access. Email distributions have been a problem for several years, particularly because of the rise in junk email, or spam. Service providers and users now often have junk email blockers that will also sometimes block email coming from news list servers.

For political publications and organizations that have a progressive viewpoint, there have been additional obstacles. Workers World's email distribution has been

blocked by some major Internet Service Providers. During the big anti-war protests around the Iraq war, email subscribers using AOL and Earthlink would frequently find that Workers World articles were being blocked from their email accounts by filters put in place by the ISP.

These filters would be lifted only after repeated complaints about the censorship by Workers World subscribers. At other times, individual articles have been blocked by filters put up by service providers that will block all articles on lesbian, gay, bi and trans issues.

RSS feeds are not subject to this kind of censorship because they are accessed directly from the Web and do not have to pass through any of those filters.

For those new to RSS, there are several ways to access news feeds. The Firefox Web browser from Mozilla.org lets you put RSS feeds into its bookmarks. And for Web sites that are enabled for live bookmarks, such as Workers.org, an icon appears in the bottom right corner of the browser that lets you instantly add the site's RSS feed to your bookmarks. From the bookmarks, the link will show the list of news headlines that can then be selected to open for reading in the browser.

The Thunderbird email program, also from Mozilla.org, has an RSS newsreader built in. An account can be set up for RSS News & Blogs that will let you then subscribe to RSS feeds and read them in the email program.

Firefox and Thunderbird are free software, produced as part of the free software movement and are available for all types of computer systems—Windows, Macintosh, Linux and other Unix systems.

For users of Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Pluck.com offers a free RSS newsreader. Pluck's Web-based version adds the advantage of being a Web page, making it available from any Windows computer with Internet Explorer. This lets you set it up once and then read your RSS feeds from anywhere you are accessing the Web. □



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BOSTON

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Solidarity with the People's Struggle in Colombia & Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela. Featured speakers: Gerardo Cajamarco, Colombian Trade Unionist; Dario Zapata, Permanent Committee for Colombian Peace; Jorge Marin, MLK, Jr. Bolivarian Circle; Berta Joubert, IAC; City Councilperson Chuck Turner. 6:00 p.m. At USWA Local 8751, 25 Colgate Rd., Roslindale, Mass. For info Int'l. Action Center (617) 522-6626.

NEW YORK

Fri., April 1

Public meeting in solidarity with Palestinian Political Prisoners, co-sponsored by Al-Awda N.Y., the N.Y. Committee to Defend Palestine, and Workers World Party. 7 pm. (Dinner at 6:30) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

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Red Lake, northern Minnesota reservations

'Birmingham of the North'

By Mahtowin Munro
and Stephanie Hedgecoke

As we go to press, it is still not clear whether Jeff Weise acted alone or in concert with other youths.

The violent spiral into tragedy of Red Lake Ojibwe youth Jeff Weise has brought the despair and impoverished living conditions of tens of thousands of Native people in the United States to the forefront.

Weise, a mentally ill Ojibwe youth, killed two family members and killed and wounded several youths and adults at the small Red Lake High School in Minnesota before killing himself March 21.

The Red Lake community has been devastated. With about 5,000 people enrolled in the Red Lake Band, nearly everyone knows each other or is related. Throughout Indian Country searing pain has been felt at seeing so many Native people—mostly young—die so senselessly.

But while the corporate media have compared the tragedy at Red Lake with the Columbine school shooting, many Native people made a sharp distinction. According to Audrey Thayer of nearby White Earth Reservation: "It's a class issue. Columbine [is] an upper-middle-class community. This is not. This is totally different." (Democracy Now! March 24)

Mattie Harper of Leech Lake, another neighboring Ojibwe reservation, also interviewed on "Democracy Now!," detailed the history of genocidal attacks on Native sovereignty and culture that began with the boarding schools program in the mid-1850s. She said: "Kids died of malnutrition. They were starved. And they were forced to speak English."

Harper traced a direct progression of those conditions to the poverty, alcohol and substance abuse and related violence experienced today.

Thayer said that in the six-county northern Minnesota area including Red Lake, Leech Lake, and White Earth, 97 percent of those incarcerated are Native. "We are considered the Birmingham of the north," she said.

She slammed Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, "who has completely massacred programs that would affect Indian people, state programs. We have an administration that does not serve any dollars for Indigenous people."

Minnesota has a racist history of attacks on Indigenous peoples, including the lynch mob movement against Native fishing rights that was at its height in the 1980s.

"When compared with other groups ... Indians of all ages are 670 percent more likely to die from alcoholism, 650 percent more likely to die from tuberculosis, 318 percent more likely to die from diabetes, and 204 percent more likely to suffer accidental death." Native alcohol-related deaths are 17 times the national average. (Washington Post, March 25)

Bush cutbacks of Indigenous programs

Racism, poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities, inadequate housing, drug and alcohol abuse all lead to an appallingly high Native youth suicide rate two to three times the national rate.

A 2004 survey of Minnesota Native youths found that of 56 ninth graders, 81 percent of the girls and 43 percent of the boys had contemplated suicide.

Nearly half the girls and 20 percent of the boys said they had attempted suicide. (AP, March 26)

Sister Patricia Wallis, who works at a Red Lake church mission school, spoke of "grinding, dehumanizing, relentless poverty. . . . If something happens, or someone dies, or there's been an accident, [students] don't come regularly. Some stay at home because they have to babysit their siblings or they have to help out." (AP, March 26)

In 2004, 80 percent of Red Lake High School students met U.S. poverty standards for school lunch benefits.

Many voices across Indian country criticized President George W. Bush's failure to express sympathy with the Red Lake Nation. Bush was busy pushing anti-worker Social Security "reforms" and posturing about Terri Schiavo; he apparently could not be bothered to notice the devastating tragedy in Indian Country.

American Indian Movement National Director Clyde Bellecourt said: "From all over the world we are getting letters of condolence, the Red Cross has come, but the so-called Great White Father in Washington hasn't said or done a thing. When people's children are murdered and others are in the hospital hanging on to life, he should be the first one to offer his condolences. . . . If this was a white community, I don't think he'd have any problem doing that." (Washington Post, May 24)

As a result of public outcry, Bush finally mentioned Red Lake on March 25. But he confined his terse remarks to recognizing the role played by the high school's security guard.

Bush's true feelings for Indigenous people are shown by administration plans to cut more than \$100 million from Native programs—already pared to the bone—next year alone.

The role of Prozac

Jeff Weise's father committed suicide four years ago. His mother shortly thereafter suffered permanent brain damage as the result of an alcohol-related auto accident. Weise was abused by his mother's boyfriend and possibly others. When he returned to Red Lake to live with other family members, he felt isolated and friendless.

Clearly, this youth needed help. But Native people have limited access to health services, which on the reservations are solely dispensed through the U.S. government-run Indian Health Service. Access to mental health care is especially limited.

What Weise got from IHS was minimal counseling and a prescription for the antidepressant drug Prozac. His dosage of Prozac was increased shortly before the incident.

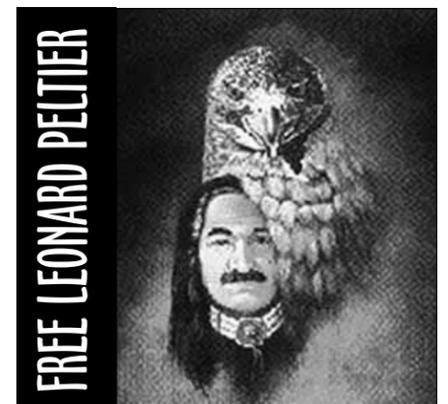
Many articles have questioned the safety of prescribing Prozac for adolescents. Some scientists believe it can increase suicidal behavior. Dr. Frank Ochberg, former associate director of the National Institute of Mental Health, told the New York Times that recent research had changed his mind on the question of a link between the drugs and homicidal acts. "Suicidal and homicidal intentions

together could theoretically follow the same path."

The mainstream media made much of the fact that Weise had recently posted to neo-Nazi websites, as though that provides the entire answer to the question of why this tragedy happened. Many have asked how a Native youth could possibly identify as a neo-Nazi.

Weise was clearly alienated and felt hopeless. Like some other young people in his circumstances, he may have been attracted to the simplistic answers provided by reactionary or fascist programs. He had spent his whole life suffering the toxic effects of the capitalist system, but did not know how to label that experience. Like some other disaffected youths, perhaps he felt the need to blame others for the ills of capitalism.

There is an important avenue of escape from hopelessness for youth: becoming part of the struggle against racism and for economic and social justice. □



Under guise of keeping city 'safe'

Task force occupies oppressed communities

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Springfield, Mass.

Under the guise of "fighting crime," the state of Massachusetts and city of Springfield started "Operation Safe Springfield" March 20.

This new special task force is composed of almost all white city police officers, state troopers using their K-9 unit and others, bolstering the existing police force on all three shifts with more numbers on the midnight-to-8-a.m. shift.

The task force's goal is to curb crime and make the city "safe." That's according to Massachusetts Public Safety Secretary Edward A. Flynn, who announced its implementation the week of March 13. Flynn said the new measures will be funded by more than \$500,000 in state funds. Springfield will also receive \$900,000 from the state over two fiscal years to pay city police overtime.

According to various news reports 10 state troopers, or one-third of the barracks staff, will patrol. Furthermore, the state police undercover unit will be working with the city police forces. (www.masslive.com)

Although the funding is coming from taxpayer funds, Flynn and others involved refuse to disclose how many city cops and troopers are members of the task force, citing the need to keep this information from "criminals."

The deployment of the task force thus far is being concentrated in primarily Black and Latin@ Springfield neighbor-

hoods. These neighborhoods have been decimated by plant closings and other economic and racist attacks, which have resulted in social challenges such as homelessness, health-care epidemics such as addiction, and school closings.

While outside these communities selling drugs, sex work and other jobs are vilified as "criminal acts," they are understood in poor communities as forms of economic survival, even though they may be undesirable. Often the poor and unemployed or underemployed have no choice.

There are no living-wage, union jobs in their communities. Social safety nets have been slashed or destroyed. And the realities of racism, sexism and lesbian/gay/bi/trans oppression are everywhere.

Repression and occupation not safety

Behind the packaged news conferences and media reports, the ruling class and its state, here and nationwide, are fast implementing the repressive apparatus to subdue the working class and oppressed as massive class-wide resistance builds on fronts from student and worker struggles to the anti-war movement. Springfield is an excellent example.

In Springfield the Finance Control Board's relentless attacks on unionized workers, and on the working-class and oppressed communities as a whole, are creating more anger and fight-back sentiment.

The high-profile, savage beating of high-school principal Nicholas Greer by

four white cops in November, and the subsequent acquittal of the cops and rampant police terror in the oppressed communities, are creating a cauldron of anger and resistance.

Awareness that city and state taxpayer money is being stolen to fund the Pentagon's occupation of Iraq is increasing. So is resistance to the economic draft, as working-class and oppressed families increasingly oppose their loved ones entering the military.

Those involved with the task force are banking on the ploy of blaming the victims of capitalism for success in their occupation and repression. A central goal is to divide white workers from oppressed working-class communities by smearing the latter, in the most vile manner, as less than human "criminals."

The only real "safety" the task force and other occupying forces of the state are supposed to protect is the bosses' safety to exploit and super-exploit the working class and oppressed, and to maintain divisions and fractures between them.

Working-class whites must reject the ruling class's racist plans and unite with oppressed people fighting back while respecting self-determination up to and including armed self-defense against the occupying forces in Springfield and elsewhere.

A beginning in Springfield could be a demand to immediately abolish the task force and reallocate the money toward the communities' immediate needs. □

Detroit workers picket 'State of the City' speech

By Cheryl LaBash
Detroit

On March 22, mayoral appointees and the selected audience for Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's last "State of the City" address came face to face with the workers who keep Detroit running, along with welfare-rights organizers and anti-war activists.

"Public sidewalk!" chanted determined Detroit Water and Sewerage workers. A New York-style protest pen across Woodward Avenue sat unused as police tried and failed to push picketers away from the front of Orchestra Hall.

Four out of eight City Council members boycotted the mayor's speech. They submitted a "People's Agenda" at a news conference the following day.

The mayor painted a picture of a sparkling new city rising from the old Detroit. But in his April 12 budget address, Kilpatrick will announce the price: a multi-front attack that includes reorganizing and eliminating city departments, cutting health benefits and wages, and reducing the official city work force via outside contractors.

Federal, State, County and Municipal Employees union presidents in the city of Detroit are calling for a 4 p.m. protest that day at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, rejecting the cuts. Union contracts expire on June 30. That's just a couple weeks before the July 12 All Star baseball game in downtown Detroit—which gives the workers an important bargaining chip in the struggle to stop the cuts.

City workers and residents face what the administration's public-relations consultants term "right-sizing" of city government: a permanent reduction in jobs, benefits, wages and services. This program is presented as a solution to a \$214 million to \$300 million budget deficit for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

In reality, if successful, this plan would extend the restructuring of private industry to the still highly unionized public sector. It's a serious attack on Detroit's mostly African American working class.

Feeding Pentagon, banks

Detroit's reported \$214 million deficit is



CREDIT: THE MICHIGAN CITIZEN/DIANE BUKOWSKI

March 22 protest.

not really a deficit. It is a shift of funds. Detroit paid \$366 million in interest payments to banks and bondholders in the current fiscal year.

This shift of public funds to big business has been ignored—except for an unpublished resolution by Councilwoman JoAnn Watson calling for the banks and bondholders to accept the same 10-percent reduction that's proposed for city workers.

But at the "State of the City" demonstration, workers chanted, "Cut the debt, not city services."

Detroit's share of the price tag for the first year of the Iraq war was \$429 million. Planning is under way for a Conference to Stop Starving the Cities to Feed the Pentagon, to take place in the fall.

During the late 1970s and 1980s, the city tried to stem racist disinvestment by offering tax abatements to locate industrial facilities in Detroit, including the General Motors' Poletown, Chrysler Jefferson East and Pepsi bottling plants.

This process has been refined and intensified with enterprise zones, renaissance zones and other creative ways to channel tax dollars to benefit huge corporations and banks.

GM received a \$25 million grant to rebuild public roads and infrastructure around the Renaissance Center, now its world headquarters on the Detroit River. With these tax dollars, the development profits of GM-owned parking lot properties ballooned.

Why not demand a worker-community audit of the city books on these kinds of schemes before public services are cut?

The administration claims that workers' wages and benefits equal 60 percent of costs "before a street light bulb is changed." Health-care and pension funds are specifically targeted.

Why not start a public campaign for national health care? Workers, employed and unemployed, unionized and unorganized, could caravan to Washington, D.C., to demand national health care and expanded Social Security.

Many Detroiters already suffer without heat, light and water. An expedited foreclosure program by Wayne County is seizing homes for non-payment of taxes. The city's nuisance abatement enforcement will penalize slumlords, but what about the people who live in those substandard homes? Will they be guaranteed the right to relocate into affordable housing?

The People's Agenda Legislative Response to the mayor's "State of the City" demands immediately: implementing a water affordability plan; setting aside 20 percent of units for low-income housing in the Fox Creek development; a land bank controlled by Detroit; supporting a proposed ordinance to prevent foreclosures and an anti-predatory lending ordinance; neighborhood schools; and a public, free recreation center.

The People's Agenda states: "At the federal level, precious resources are being used to fund a protracted, disastrous and costly war and to provide tax loopholes for the top 1 percent of the wealthy few, instead of funding people's programs in the cities where they live. At the state level, it is estimated that closing the tax loopholes for wealthy businesses would guarantee a state surplus.

"Cuts in revenue sharing and income tax rates have surely hurt Detroit's ability to provide for the people." □

ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

Living wage victory at Georgetown

It took students at Georgetown University three years of campaigning, nine days of hunger striking and 270 pounds lost to get the administration to agree to pay a living wage to 450 campus employees—both those directly hired and those outsourced.

On March 23 the university agreed to pay the mostly custodial, food service and security workers a minimum wage of \$13 an hour, up from \$11.35, starting July 1 and \$14 an hour by July 2007. Yearly raises thereafter will be based on the Consumer Price Index. The university also affirmed that the workers have the right to freely associate and organize and to vote for union representation without intimidation.

The agreement came just hours before a midnight deadline set by Metro Council President Josh Williams, who vowed to lead labor, religious and community activists in a series of 24-hour solidarity hunger strikes starting at noon on March 24. ("Union News," Metro Washington Council, AFL-CIO)

Liam Stack, a senior, said the 26 strikers' "main demand is that Georgetown commit to paying its workers a wage that allows them to support their families with one full-time job." (Washington Post, March 21) Students at Swarthmore, Cornell, University of Wisconsin at Madison and American University, as well as other Georgetown students and alumni overseas, held "solidarity fasts" to support the effort.

Westchester bus strike

The 568 bus drivers and maintenance workers at the Bee-Line, the bus company serving New York state's Westchester County, went on strike for better pensions on March 3. Members of Local 100 of the Transport Workers want to retire at 57 with full benefits after 20 years. The strike means big hardships for the low-paid workers and public school students. But Liberty Bus Lines, which owns Bee-Line, could care less. It's refusing to negotiate with the drivers.

Yonkers teachers demand contract

Teachers in Yonkers, the biggest city in Westchester County, who have been without a contract for nearly two years, picketed outside several schools from March 21 to 23 to publicize their grievances. At the top of the list are layoffs of 450 teachers, program cuts and mismanagement by the district. It seems School Superintendent Angelo Petrone received a large salary increase in 2004 right before the district began layoffs and spending cuts.

The Yonkers Federation of Teachers is taking its grievances to a mediator on April 5. Steve Frey, president of the federation, told the March 23 New York Times that if mediation did not produce results, the teachers would strike.

Black lesbian wins UPS lawsuit

By Leslie Feinberg

"According to my former supervisor, I wasn't 'feminine' enough," Kathy Hoskins recalls. Hoskins, an African American out lesbian, sued her former employer, United Parcel Service, for what she described as severe, widespread and ongoing workplace harassment that led to wrongful firing.

After looking at the facts in her case, a San Francisco Superior Court jury agreed.

The panel questionnaire concluded "that Hoskins was subjected to 'unwanted harassing conduct' that was severe enough to create a hostile work environment." The jury also found that UPS bosses did not take action to stop the abuse and that she was unjustly terminated. (PlanetOut Network)

As a result, the week of March 11 the panel awarded Hoskins \$13,670 in economic damages, \$50,000 compensation for emotional distress, and ordered the company to pay her attorney's fees and costs.

Hoskins was a package car driver at the



Kathy Hoskins

PHOTO: FENTON COMMUNICATIONS

San Bruno, Calif., facility of the world's biggest package delivery company for 14 years—from September 1988 to February 2003. Court records reveal that when she was hired there were only three other women in the work force of 200 drivers, and only one other African American woman.

The supervisor who reportedly harass-

ed her about her gender expression did not hire a single woman during his five years in management at San Bruno. During his whole 22-year career in UPS management he only promoted one woman.

Hoskins and her lawyer, Waukeen Q. McCoy, announced plans to appeal an earlier decision by another court. That ruling had barred Hoskins from suing UPS for sex discrimination under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

"The outcome of this case," declared McCoy, "sends a clear message to UPS and the rest of corporate America that harassment based on gender stereotypes will not be tolerated. Discrimination in the workplace must stop, and stop now. We will continue to fight this case against UPS at the appellate level." □

The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression

A Marxist View By Bob McCubbin This ground breaking pamphlet was originally published as the Gay Question in 1976, during the first flush of the modern lesbian and gay movement. Its unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how lesbian and gay oppression developed.

WW PUBLISHERS Order from leftbooks.com \$6.99

Bankruptcy law is bonanza for banks

By Larry Hales

On March 14 of this year, the Senate passed the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005. The bill is grossly misnamed.

This is no consumer protection act but a boon to predatory banks and credit card companies that will persecute and prosecute the multinational workers and the poor. The Bush administration is railroad-ing the bill through Congress. President George W. Bush plans to sign it as soon as the House passes the legislation after returning from recess. It will be implemented later this year.

Bankers' dream, consumers' nightmare

Banks and credit card companies are receiving presents early this year. It's Christmas in springtime for them, thanks to not just the conservatives in the Senate, but the liberals as well. The bill will amend Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 bankruptcy

laws, which under current law free up consumers/workers from the crippling debt that weighs heavily on over 50 percent of adults in this country.

Many workers and poor people are saddled with medical bills, have lost jobs or have been victims of predatory lending practices such as exorbitant interest rates, illegal penalties and fees for late payment. The new law is racist and will be especially hard on the long-term unemployed and those exploited by poverty wages.

As prices of consumer goods and energy go sky high, and tuition costs hit millions of students, it becomes evident that the possibility of becoming debt-free is a myth. Under current law, Chapter 7 bankruptcy provides at least some relief for those burdened by unforeseen catastrophes because it virtually frees people from debt, or the major part of it. Over 70 percent choose Chapter 7 over Chapter 13, which merely lowers monthly payments. The courts monitor that repayment process.

Under the amended law, it will be

extremely difficult, if not impossible, for families to petition for bankruptcy. The bill seeks to establish a means test for Chapter 7 filing; the median household income would be the bar, and if the household income is above the state's annual median, then the household would be ineligible for filing under Chapter 7 and would be relegated to Chapter 13 repayment over a five-year program.

The would-be filer would have to attend credit counseling classes for at least six months and pay for them. And if the hurdle of eligibility for filing Chapter 7 is cleared, lawyers will be charging higher fees to the filer because of added paperwork and almost inevitable increased court time. The IRS will determine what is an essential household expense and what is not, all in an effort to force repayment and squeeze the living standards of the people to avoid incurring debt, which is almost impossible.

The blatant disregard for workers and the poor is obvious and inevitable in this



society. The shock waves from the ramifications of this bill have yet to be felt.

Add the dismantling of the welfare system and the proposed privatization of Social Security, and one gets the sense that the boom in the prison-industrial complex will go nuclear as more and more people have fewer and fewer options.

Rarely reported is how the bill will affect youth, especially recent college graduates. Partly because of student loans for rising tuition and housing costs and credit card debt, adults from 25 to 34 have the second-highest rate of filing for bankruptcy. Those in the 35 to 44 category have the highest rates.

During the first week of school on college campuses, credit card companies are ubiquitous. They give out t-shirts, sports

Continued on page 9

Schwarzenegger cuts ignite protests

By Jim McMahan
Los Angeles

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger wants to loot the state treasury on behalf of banking and corporate interests by initiating massive state budget cuts. Behind the current fiscal crisis is the state's priority on paying back \$27.4 billion in state loans, including \$9 billion in interest payments, borrowed from Wall Street banks in the past. The public employee unions are fighting to keep education, health care and other services intact for the workers and poor.

On March 16, 1,000 workers—nurses, hospital workers, teachers, students, firefighters and others—protested budget cuts at the Century Plaza hotel in Los Angeles. Schwarzenegger was appearing at a fund raiser to help raise \$50 million. The donation from super-rich VIPs was \$89,000 per person. The \$50 million is for the governor's upcoming ballot initiative plan to attack the workers with his reactionary program. The hotel was blocked by the mass of demonstrators. The governor had to enter the hotel through the loading dock.

A week later, 2,000 workers and supporters demonstrated in the pouring rain at another fund raiser at the Hyatt Regency in Irvine. "He's just looking out for corporate interests rather than patient interests," said Lois Sanders, a nurse. The

demonstrators carried signs against the cuts and attacking Wall Street.

Schwarzenegger is a front man for the corporate and banking elite, much like his Democratic predecessor, Gray Davis. Since Schwarzenegger has taken office, he has followed the George W. Bush strategy of massively attacking the workers and communities.

Schwarzenegger has three goals in mind: Establish "merit" pay for teachers; get rid of the state workers' pension plan and set up a 401(k) "no guarantee" plan in its place; and implement massive budget cuts in health care, education and elsewhere by getting the legislature to allow him to make emergency mid-term cuts if the budget becomes imbalanced.

Merit pay for teachers would smash their seniority and solidarity. Schwarzenegger's plan would do away with a secure pension for all state workers, including teachers, who can't receive Social Security benefits.

Schwarzenegger's cuts in state programs are also being dictated by the Wall Street banks. These banks want to sink their greedy hooks into California's \$83 billion in state revenues—equivalent to the world's sixth-biggest economy. In the last four years, California schools have been hit by \$9 billion in cuts. Students of color make up 67 percent of the school system.

The state's nurses are outraged at the governor's decision to stop a state regulation that mandates a ratio of one nurse for

every five patients, eroding patient care in a state where 50 hospitals have closed since 1990. The King/Drew Medical Center, one of the country's biggest trauma units and located in the Black and Latin@ communities of South Central L.A., is one of those being threatened with closure.

Schwarzenegger insulted the nurses at a state women's convention in December. When nurses stood up to interrupt his speech, he said, "Pay no attention to them. They are the special interests. I am always kicking their butts." Outraged nurses were demonstrating by the thou-

sands the next month in Sacramento, chanting, "Arnold, Arnold, you can't hide; we can see your corporate side."

Since then nurses, teachers, firefighters, health care workers and others have trailed Schwarzenegger all over the country, demonstrating against him in Ohio, Chicago, New York City, Washington, D.C., and Indian Wells, Calif.

The California Nurses Association and other workers will be demonstrating on April 5 when Schwarzenegger goes to the Ritz Carlton in San Francisco for another one of his VIP fund raisers. □

HIV emergency in Boston's communities of color

By Gerry Scoppettuolo
Boston

AIDS activists from the Black community, led by Rev. Franklyn Hobbs from Healing Our Land Ministry, together with HIV Call to Action, New England, the International Action Center and other supporters will be demanding that a state of emergency be declared in Boston for communities of color being devastated by HIV. A city-wide public hearing in front of a Boston City Council Committee will be held on March 29.

Hobbs initiated this action to respond

to the extremely disproportionate impact of HIV on communities of color in Boston, made worse by cutbacks earlier this month in the Ryan White bill that once helped fund medical and social care in the Boston area. The \$1.2 million cut from the Boston HIV budget for the current year will affect the direct health care of thousands of people with HIV. This sum represents about six minutes' worth of funding of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For more information, contact www.iacoboston.org, newhiv3@aol.com, or www.healingourland@yahoo.com. □

ON THE PICKET LINE

D.C. workers picket Schwarzenegger

Chanting "They say privatize, we say organize," more than 150 workers, community activists and union members in D.C. braved sleet and snow outside a fancy fundraiser for Arnold Schwarzenegger on March 8 at the St. Regis Washington. The activists were protesting his plan to privatize pensions in California, converting a stable insurance policy into a risky 401(k) plan. They also demanded protection for all benefits and a secure retirement. ("Union News," Metro Washington Council, AFL-CIO) □

UMass students lead the way



Valerie Louis (at podium), newly elected Student Government Association trustee at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, spoke on a March 24 panel of campus community members against an administration proposal to restructure independent registered student organizations. A fight-back campaign led by the SGA, the progressive Take Back UMass Coalition (www.takebackumass.com) and community organizations, is under way. The goal is to beat back this anti-union, anti-student, racist attack—which, if successful, would place student organizations under administration control, destroying over 30 years of student autonomy on campus won as a result of massive student rebellions in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

—Story and photo by Bryan G. Pfeifer

By Mumia Abu-Jamal from death row

The war against us all

The following commentary was played at March 19 anti-war rallies in the United States:

The war against us all.

This war in Iraq isn't the end; it's the beginning

of wars to come all around the world at the whim of the neo-cons in the White House.

This is the Bush Doctrine come to life: war, war, and more war. War brought to you by the big corporate masters who run the show.

This isn't just a war on Iraqis or Afghanis or even Arabs or Muslims. It is ultimately a war on us all. That's because the billions and billions of dollars that are being spent on this war—the cost of tanks, rocketry, bullets, and yes, even salaries for the 125,000-plus troops—is money that will never be spent on education, on health care, on the reconstruction of crumbling public housing, or to train and place the millions of workers who have lost manufacturing jobs in the past three years alone.

The war in Iraq is, in reality, a war against the nation's workers and the poor who are getting less and less while the big defense industries are making a killing—literally. What's next? Iran? Syria? North Korea? Venezuela? We've already seen the corporate media play megaphone to the White House to build and promote a war based on lies.

It's been a long time ago, but that great Russian revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, said, "War is utilized by the imperialists, first and foremost, to crush internal enemies." We're seeing the truth of his insight when we see the sad state of American education, the rush of seniors to buy affordable medication from the Canadians because American drugs are just too expensive, the threatened privatization of Social Security, and the wave of repression that comes with an increasingly militarized police. Does the Homeland Security Department make you feel any safer?

In Black America things get grimmer every day as resources that are already scarce begin to shrink even further. Young people feel that prisons are a rite of passage, an inevitable place to visit. And a decent job seems like a distant dream.

This is a war on all of us, and the struggle against war is really a struggle for a better life for the millions of folks who are in need here in this country. The fight against the war is really to fight for your own interests, not the false interests of the defense industries, or the corporate media, or the White House.

Down with the wars for empire! □

Order books by Mumia Abu-Jamal at www.leftbooks.org

Free Woodfox & Wallace

By Marina Drummer

April 17 marks the 33rd consecutive year that Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace, members of the Angola 3, have been held in solitary confinement at Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. Their case has been championed by Ramsey Clark, Workers World Party and others since the 1998 retrial of Woodfox.

The Angola 3 are former Black Panthers. Robert King Wilkerson, the third member, was released from prison in 2001 after 29 years of solitary confinement. Wallace and Woodfox were falsely convicted

of murdering a white prison guard in 1972. During that time, Louisiana State was widely known as the "bloodiest prison in America."

Despite demonstrable and growing evidence of their innocence, Louisiana's racist and conservative courts have so far refused to consider their appeals. The state's elected judges run for office on tough-on-crime, pro-death penalty platforms like other politicians. Because Woodfox and Wallace are politicized Black men who refuse to acquiesce to their own

oppression, the Louisiana penal system hopes to torture them until they die. The prison itself is a former slave plantation, named "Angola" after the national origin of kidnapped African slaves brought to the U.S. After the Civil War, the Angola plantation became a prison and is still operated on the plantation model. Eighty percent of the 5,000 prisoners there are African American and 80 per-



PHOTO: ANITARODDICK.COM

Political prisoners Herman Wallace (left) and Albert Woodfox

cent are serving sentences that will keep them there until they die. Most of them spend their days in the fields, working for pennies an hour to harvest produce that the state sells at a profit. Louisiana incarcerates a higher percentage of its population than any other state.

Woodfox and Wallace both have criminal post-conviction appeals pending, which the state is dragging through the courts at a painfully slow pace. The ACLU has filed a civil challenge on their behalf citing cruel and unusual punishment and lack of due process. Supporters hope that successful litigation could set a legal precedent for limits on confinement in solitary and super-max conditions. A recent magistrate's ruling on this civil case accurately states, "The present matter, of course, involves confinements of nearly 33 years, durations so far beyond the pale that this Court has not found anything even remotely comparable in the annals of American jurisprudence."

Drummer is the West Coast organizer of the National Coalition to Free the Angola 3. □

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FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL NOW!



March from 125 St. Recruiting Station in Harlem to Central Park.



Youths say no to Pentagon wars

Continued from page 1
sidered suicide.

Even though the military sent out an email asking the recruiters not to speak to the Times reporter, 10 did. Only a "handful" defended the military.

According to a March 24 article in the Washington Post, the Army missed its active-duty recruitment target in February and will do so again in March and April, and the Marine Corps also failed for January and February.

Students doing counter-recruiting are complicating the recruiters' already futile efforts. In early March students at San Francisco State College drove military recruiters off campus. On March 5 at City College in New York, the administration called in security and cops to beat up counter-recruiters who chanted outside the recruiting office.

The economic draft

Military recruiting relies upon the absence of worthwhile civilian jobs. To anti-war organizers the "volunteer army" is based on this economic draft, promising jobs and education to youths who otherwise face a bleak economic future.

Sgt. Carl Webb joined the Army Reserves to escape a desperate situation when he was 16 in 1981. Though he has been an anti-war activist since the 1980s, he rejoined the Texas National Guard in

August of 2001. "Being idealistic didn't pay the rent," Webb said. "I thought at the time it was relatively peaceful so I took a chance and sold my soul to the devil. It turned out to be very bad timing."

In August of 2004, Webb, needing only one weekend drill to complete his service, was called by a sergeant in his Texas National Guard medical unit with the bad news. "She told me I was going to Iraq. I had been called up, reassigned to a different unit and they are going to Iraq."

Webb considered his options. He rejected the choice of exile. With his politics—he would fight a war for liberation, for example in the Union Army against the Confederacy—he knew applying for CO status would be futile.

Instead, he has chosen to resist by going around the country and speaking out against the war. Webb now asks other soldiers to "follow my example and use any means necessary to avoid going to Iraq."

Petty Officer Third Class Pablo Paredes is in a similar situation as Webb, but is in military custody. Paredes refused to ship out to Iraq last Dec. 6 from San Diego. He expected a ruling on his CO application in April. Now he faces a court martial.

The son of immigrants from Latin America, Paredes grew up in the Bronx and admits he "was ignorant about what was going on in the world. I thought of the Navy as a nine-to-five arrangement, to get

money for education and training for an electronics job. I never believed I'd be involved in an occupation," Paredes said on the radio show "Democracy Now!" on March 28.

'I took sides with humanity'

The Navy sent him to Japan, and there he learned more about the world and politics and the role of the U.S. military. "As a Latino, I got interested in the U.S. role in Latin America. Then I began to feel a need to take sides with humanity." Now Paredes is speaking publicly, when he can, against the war and occupation.

Army Pfc. Jeremy Hinzman took another of the options open to military resisters. When his paratrooper unit at Ft. Bragg, N.C., received orders to Iraq, Hinzman left for Canada. On March 24 Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board ruled against him. For Hinzman, the war in Iraq is illegal, and if he participates he will be a war criminal.

The ruling was expected said Hinzman's lawyer, Jeffrey House, but still a disappointment. House said that as many as 100 U.S. troops who have fled to Canada have been waiting for this ruling before coming forward. Hinzman will appeal the ruling.

Another of the military resisters, former Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia, was released from prison in February after

ON TO MAY DAY

From a talk given by Workers World Party leader Larry Holmes at a March 25 meeting in New York.

The origins of May Day are in the struggle in this country in the 1800s for an eight-hour day, and the heroic struggle that led to Chicago's Haymarket Square and the martyrdom of workers there. But it has its origins in the communist movement too. And it's still celebrated around the world.

It was the First International, in one of its congresses in Paris in the 1800s, that declared May Day a day of solidarity with U.S. workers fighting for the eight-hour day. And since then it has become a communist occasion.

Why do we want to bring it back? For nostalgic reasons? That's worthwhile, but that's not it.

It is an effort, just like the Million Worker March, to pull and push the movement—its best elements, in the working-class organizations, in the community, in the anti-imperialist movement—in an internationalist direction.

May Day is International Workers Day. And since [its founding] it has come to mean more than solidarity between workers of the world, but also between workers and the liberation movements of the world. Therefore it incorporates the Vietnamese and the Haitians, the Arab struggle, the Iraqis, Cuba and Venezuela and Colombia, and throughout Africa,

throughout all the oppressed world. It's now workers and the oppressed.

And it's time to talk about internationalism and the utter, dire, urgent necessity to revive it, and also to push the movement in a more militant, pro-worker, working-class-struggle direction as well. It is absolutely essential in order to face the demands of the coming period. And so this is what we're committed to doing.

Onward to May Day—and beyond May Day. The revolution is coming. The revolution is coming because the crisis demands it, it begs it, and if it seems like there are tons of crust and cement that have covered up the notion of a revolution and made it seem ridiculous even to talk in terms of that—well, crust and cement



WW PHOTO

Larry Holmes, left, on march at the 125th Street Recruiting Station in Harlem on March 19.

will fall down. They will fall down in the midst of struggle and events. And we're going to see that happen. But we're not just observers; we're agents in this process. □

No draft, no way organizing builds

By Dustin Langley

As the illegal occupation of Iraq continues and the Bush administration eyes new targets for its "war on terror," it is finding that it doesn't have enough troops to fulfill its imperial ambitions. The Army and Marine Corps are overstretched and have failed to meet their recruiting quotas. The reserve forces have also seen a decline in enlistments, and are quickly becoming a "broken force," according to Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly.

On March 31, the Selective Service System will report to President Bush that

it has met its performance goals for 2004. This performance plan (available at sss.gov) indicates that the Selective Service System is gearing up for a draft. It is staffing local draft boards, training volunteer registrars to work in high schools and colleges, and streamlining the induction process so that it will be ready to implement the draft within 75 days of authorization.

Organizers with No Draft, No Way have called for a nationwide day of actions on March 31 to oppose the draft and military recruiting. From Santa Rosa, Calif., to New York, youth, par-

ents, students and anti-draft activists will take to the streets to say "No draft, no way" Actions include a student walk-out in Ames, Iowa; a rally in Nashville, Tenn.; a protest at a recruiting station in Charlotte, N.C., and other actions across the country including public meetings, civil disobedience and training sessions for conscientious objectors.

The next step in the fight against the draft will be a No Draft, No Way Conference on Youth and Resistance, to be held on Sat., April 16 in New York. This conference will be more than a series of workshops—this is a mobilizing session.

Out of this conference, organizers are expected to set up counter-recruiting teams to target specific high school and college campuses to expose the lies of military recruiters and work to remove them from campus; form local groups to fight the draft and counsel potential draftees about draft resistance; and launch a campaign of protest and action against the draft and military recruiting.

For more information or to register go to: <http://www.NoDraftNoWay.org>.

The writer is a Navy veteran and organizer of the No Draft, No Way campaign.



Andy Stapp, (left) founder of the American Servicemen's Union during the Vietnam war, with Carl Webb, military resister, at March 19 rally in Marcus Garvey Park.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTO

serving nine months for his refusal to return to Iraq while on leave after five months on duty there. Like Webb and Paredes, Mejía is speaking at public meetings and to the media about his decision to refuse duty in Iraq.

Mejía says he disagreed with the war from the beginning. "I was very much in disagreement with the war, but I didn't really want to make a stand, because I was terrified, because I didn't want to go through a court-martial, because I didn't want to go to jail, because I was a squad leader in an infantry unit, and I didn't want my friends to think I was a coward or a traitor."

When you're in Iraq, "you're in so much danger. And I guess the survival instinct kicks in and pretty much all you care about is to get out of there, to get out of there alive with your comrades." ("Democracy Now!," March 28) Now both his war duty and his prison time are over and Mejía has joined Webb and Paredes and Hinzman as active spokespersons against the occupation of Iraq.

'Resisters deserve support'

For some perspective on all these levels

of resistance, Workers World spoke with Andy Stapp, the founder of the anti-war American Servicemen's Union during the war against Vietnam and one of the key organizers in the military at that time.

"I think Carl Webb is terrific for what he is doing. Also Mejía and Paredes and Hinzman. They deserve the support of the entire movement. The same types of resistance happened during the Vietnam War, when guys refused to get on their airplanes.

"Draft resistance, demonstrating, going to Canada, soldiers in Vietnam and state-side refusing duty. Some even attacked their own officers, some held strikes or mass meetings to vote out their commanding officers. Some had been drafted, others were volunteers. Many were Marines. Some first thought the war was just. They went to Vietnam and learned the truth.

"I saw in the newspapers this week," Stapp said, "that the government was bragging that 60 percent of the troops said they support the war. To me, that means 40 percent are willing to say they don't support it. That's not very good news for the Pentagon." □

Invite counter-recruiters to your school!

Speakers from the youth group Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—FIST, No Draft, No Way, and Support Network for an Armed Forces Union—SNAFU—are available to speak to students at your campus.

Presenters include youth activists, veterans and GI resistance counselors. They can speak on topics including:

- Military recruiters' myths
- The possibility of a draft – and how to avoid it
- The war on youth – in the United States and abroad
- Experiences inside the military – and getting out
- Building a counter-recruitment, counter-draft movement
- The No Child Left Behind Act—and how to keep students' info from being released to the military

In schools across the country, youths are taking a stand against military recruiters. Help build the movement to stop the attack on young people's lives! Contact (212) 633-6646. □



Women's history month commemorated

By Brenda Sandburg
San Francisco

Women's central role in the struggle against imperialism was celebrated at an International Women's History Month meeting in San Francisco on March 26, organized by Workers World Party.

Ruth Vela, a youth organizer with Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—FIST—described the battle women on the U.S.-Mexico border are waging against maquiladoras—foreign-owned assembly plants that pay poverty wages to workers, most of them young single women. Workers World Party member Judy Greenspan spoke about the fight women wage behind prison walls and the history of women in the lesbian/gay/bi/transgender movement. Sharon Black, the Baltimore/D.C. coordinator of the Million Worker March, paid tribute to women's leadership in labor struggles.

Vela talked about the horrific conditions women face in border towns. They earn \$25 to \$55 per week working in assembly plants. The maquiladoras prefer to hire women who are single; those who become pregnant are fired or assigned to difficult jobs to force them to quit, she said.

Vela spoke about the terror women in Ciudad Juarez face. Nearly 300 young women have been brutally tortured, raped and murdered, and more than 4,000 women are missing.

"Despite these staggering numbers the maquiladoras refuse to take any action in providing safe transport to and from work for their employees, many of whom are forced to walk dark unpaved streets late at night or in the early morning in order to reach the shantytowns they live in," Vela said.

Vela also discussed the battle being waged by residents in Maclovio Rojas, a community outside Tijuana. They are fighting to access the water that runs underneath the land they live on.

While the Mexican government provides free water to foreign-owned factories, it is demanding that the residents pay for it. So the people tapped into the city's main electrical lines, the main source of water. Officials responded by going after those leading the struggle, including Nicolasa Ramos, a woman in her 50s. She has now served almost two-and-a-half years behind bars for alleged water theft.

Black said women face greater exploitation now compared to the time her mother worked at Woolworth's. Wal-Mart is a prime example, she said. Seventy percent of the company's workers are women who are paid \$7 to \$8 an hour.

"You can't separate women's struggle for liberation from the struggle against capitalism," Black said. "You can't divorce what is happening at Wal-Mart from our Iraqi brothers and sisters resisting U.S.



WW PHOTO: BRENDA SANDBURG

From left to right—Judy Greenspan, Ruth Vela, Sharon Black.

war and occupation."

Black said the Million Worker March movement is now calling for reviving another crucial day: May Day, the historic day honoring workers struggles around the world.

Greenspan spoke about often forgotten fighters in the struggle for justice: women in jails and detention centers, including immigration centers. In 1970 the women in Youth Against War and Fascism, the youth arm of Workers World Party helped to revive International Women's Day in

the U.S. with a march to the Women's House of Detention in New York City.

A reporter from KPFA, a progressive radio station, interviewed Greenspan before the meeting. Greenspan told the reporter: "This meeting is for everyone in the struggle against U.S. imperialism, those struggling for land and water like the people of Uruguay who voted to end the privatization of water. We want to honor and commemorate and prepare ourselves to struggle alongside our sisters in Palestine, Iraq, Iran and in this country." □

German movement inspired U.S. organizing

By Leslie Feinberg

The German Homosexual Emancipation Movement inspired organizing in the U.S., too. As early as 1906 and 1907, spokespeople from the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee traveled to New York to talk about their movement building.

Anarchist Emma Goldman, who said she was influenced by the writings of German gay leader Magnus Hirschfeld as well as women prisoners, made homosexual freedom a theme of her 1915 lectures across the U.S.

Male soldiers shipped overseas to Europe during World War I came into contact with the gay, trans and lesbian movement in Germany. At least one GI became enthused about bringing that organizing back to the U.S.

In December 1924, Henry Gerber founded the first known homosexual rights group in the United States: the Society for Human Rights.

This early attempt to organize was solely male. Lesbian historian Lillian Faderman notes that, "By the 1920s there were already a few established communities of women who identified themselves as lesbian, in some astonishing places such as Salt Lake City as well as in more likely areas such as San Francisco." (Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers)

African American lesbians, including cross-dressers, were part of the rising Harlem Renaissance.

And although the widespread baiting from pundits and pulpits about the "mannish women" of the women's rights movement was meant to be a slur, lesbians were drawn to the struggle.

But it wasn't until World War II, when large numbers of U.S. women were mobilized in the ranks of the military and in wartime industry, that lesbian organiz-

ing—in its own name—took hold.

Inspired by German struggle

Gerber was a Bavarian-born GI whose family had emigrated to the U.S. around 1913. He was institutionalized briefly in 1917 for being homosexual. During World War I, Gerber was forced to choose between joining the U.S. Army or being interned as an "enemy alien."

He chose the Army. He was later deployed to the Rhineland as part of the Army occupation force there from 1920 to 1923. He worked as a printer and proofreader in Coblenz.

While there, Gerber was inspired by the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement.

He wrote, "In Coblenz on the Rhine I had subscribed to German homophile magazines and made several trips to Berlin, which was then not occupied by American forces. I had always bitterly felt the injustice with which my own American society accused the homosexual of 'immoral acts.'

"What could be done about it, I thought. Unlike Germany, where the homosexual was partially organized and where sex legislation was uniform for the whole country, the United States was in a condition of chaos and misunderstanding concerning its sex laws, and no one was trying to unravel the tangle and bring relief to the abused."

Gerber came back to Chicago determined to start organizing homosexuals.

"The beginning of all movements is necessarily small," he wrote. "I was able to gather together a half dozen of my friends and the Society for Human Rights became an actuality. Through a lawyer our program was submitted to the Secretary of

State at Springfield, and we were furnished with a State Charter. No one seemed to have bothered to investigate our purpose."

The group's statement of purpose in the incorporation documents reads, in part, "... to promote and to protect the interests of people who by reason of mental and physical abnormalities are abused and hindered in the legal pursuit of happiness which is guaranteed them by the Declaration of Independence, and

to combat the public prejudices against them by dissemination of facts according to modern science among intellectuals of mature age."

The name "Society for Human Rights," he noted, was "the same name used by the homosexuals of Germany for their work."

Gerber was reportedly rebuffed by prominent sex reform advocates he approached. "I needed noted medical authorities to endorse us. But they usually refused to endanger their reputations."

Gerber recalled, "The only support I got was from poor people: John, a preacher who earned his room and board by preaching brotherly love to small groups of [African Americans]; Al, an indigent laundry queen; and Ralph whose job with the railroad was in jeopardy when his nature became known. These were the national officers of the Society for Human Rights, Inc."

The group, which consisted of about half a dozen people, concentrated their efforts on the state of Illinois. There, anal intercourse was the only prohibited sex act—punishable from one to 10 years in prison. This was not unusual. The penalty in Georgia for "sodomy" at that time was life behind bars.

"It is hard to believe that Mother Nature needs our police to protect her from her creatures," Gerber bitterly observed.

Busted!

The Society set out to organize homosexuals, create a series of lecture events and publish a newsletter. Gerber quickly produced two issues of the first-known homophile publication in the United States: "Friendship and Freedom."

The primary goal of the society, Gerber stressed, was to decriminalize same-sex acts in Illinois. That objective proved harder to achieve.

In July 1925, police raided the homes of the group's leaders. They had no warrants for the arrests. Henry Gerber, Al Meininger and the Rev. John T. Graves were jailed.

A reporter from the Chicago Examiner was allowed to accompany the detective who arrested Gerber in his home. The newspaper ran a front-page story declaring "Strange Sex Cult Exposed."

Gerber endured three trials that cost him his life savings of \$800. The charges were finally dismissed. He lost his job; his bosses at the post office fired him for conduct unbecoming to a postal worker. Gerber concluded, "That definitely meant the end of the Society for Human Rights."

Gerber re-enlisted in the Army. While stationed on Governor's Island in New York, he wrote articles in homophile publications under a nom de plume. He briefly wrote for Chanticleer, a mimeographed 1934 gay publication.

And throughout the 1930s Gerber ran Contacts—a homosexual correspondence "pen pals" club that served as a national communication network for gay men.

"When he folded Contacts club in 1939, member Monwell Boyfrank pestered him

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Lesbian • gay • bi
and trans
PRIDE
SERIES
PART
30

VENEZUELA

Peasant leader's murder won't stop land reform

By Rebeca Toledo

The class struggle in Venezuela is raging. The workers and peasants are on one side, while the landlords and capitalists are on the other. The rich are aided and abetted by the imperialist powers, particularly the United States.

Under President Hugo Chávez, everything the people do to advance the Bolivarian process of putting people's needs before corporations' is met with unimaginable pressure, threats, sabotage, torture and murder.

March 19 was one of those days. On that morning, Luis Enrique Perez, a peasant leader of the National Peasant Front Ezequiel Zamora, was murdered by hired thugs in Barinas state, close to the Colombian border. The killers used machete blows to do the job.

According to the National Front and other peasant accounts, the bloody hands

belong to a notorious local landowner, Armando Javier Mogollon, who has threatened to kill peasants in the past. He is known for his connections with the drug cartels and the Colombian paramilitaries.

Luis Enrique Perez was working on the edge of the Caparo River when he was killed. A few minutes after his compañeros found his body, an airplane with paramilitaries was seen leaving Mogollon's Agualinda Ranch.

Under the new Land Act, implemented in 2001, large tracts of idle land have been allocated to those wanting to operate them. Eighteen thousand hectares of Agualinda Ranch fall into this category. The peasants, organized into the Agualinda 6 Cooperative, expect a final decree any day now that would give legality to lands they have been fighting for years to get.

The struggle cannot be decided in legal terms alone, however, as Perez' murder

demonstrates. There have been many cases of peasant murders, threats and persecution. What happens on the ground in the struggle between the classes is decisive.

For example, peasants accuse Gen. Oswaldo Bracho, headquartered near the town of Zamora Levis, where the murder took place, of gross violations against them. The mayor of the town agrees that the general has come down on the side of the landowners by intimidating and arresting the peasants, while ignoring the paramilitary forces amassed by the landowners. Mayor Emilio Mendez is a member of Chávez' party, the Fifth Column, and has been unable to control Bracho.

The oligarchy still owns the land. The struggle for state power, including land redistribution, has not been played out in Venezuela. This is why there can be contradictions like a military leader and a

civilian official ending up on opposite sides of the barricades.

In the past seven years, the workers and peasants in Venezuela have gained strength and confidence through their Bolivarian process. President Chávez has been instrumental in bringing this about. On March 20, Chávez called for a deepening of the agrarian revolution in order to deepen the revolutionary process.

The National Peasant Front Ezequiel Zamora, fighting these contradictions on the ground, calls for arming the peasantry so they can defend themselves. They also call for no more impunity for those such as Bracho.

It's a critical time for Venezuela. The contradictions inherit in class struggle manifest themselves in many forms. The victory of the Bolivarian revolution will be key in solving some of these problems. It will also help advance the world working-class struggle. □

Puerto Rico victimized by colonial plunder

By Arturo J. Pérez Saad

Puerto Rico's external debt has now reached an all-time high of \$1.4 billion. The neocolonial model is supported by the higher echelons of society, ruling the country under the thumb of the United States.

These neoconservatives claim they have solutions for social problems, but none has worked. Just as with any other neocolonial project, with this one the Puerto Rican people bear most of the brunt of the expense—because their representative government long ago stepped back from attending to the people's needs and desires.

Whether pro-statehood or pro-colony, the government promotes the status quo and insists on developing the island's tourist trade. This only increases its dependence on the United States and the World Bank, as Puerto Rico sinks deeper into debt.

To try to solve this problem, the Puerto Rican government sells off public land at low cost to foreign investors and international corporations. These in turn reap millions of dollars in profits. Meanwhile most of the population sinks deeper into poverty.

According to the 2000 census, more than 50 percent of the population is below the official poverty line.

This poverty keeps the Puerto Rican people from buying their own land. Previous administrations have promoted this privatization policy. The people have to notice that their plot of land has now become even more exclusive through this privatization.

To enrich themselves, transnational tourist corporations have been vying to control a small stretch of land just east of the airport in San Juan.

The Courtyard by Marriott chain is making the latest attack on the community in Isla Verde. Workers now use this public beach for lunch breaks or for bathing. The company plans to convert it into a 15-story hotel with an expansive parking lot. (El Nuevo Día, March 25)

As an act of civil disobedience the community group, Neighbors of Carolina, set up a camp on this Isla Verde site on March 13.

On March 23 Puerto Rico Indymedia reported on the environmental damage that can be expected to result from the privatization of this public beach. The March 21 El Vocero newspaper reported that two biologists from the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources said one endangered species of turtle would be greatly threatened. This would accelerate the turtles' rate of extinction.

March 27 was a day of civil disobedience at the site where Marriott plans to

claim land for tourists. A group of activists had set up camp, called "Beaches for the People," and stayed there for the previous two weeks to protest the privatization of this beautiful public beach.

The day's actions brought participants from a broad coalition of endorsers. They included the Association of Fishermen of Río Grande, Mayagüezanos for the Environment, Union of Workers from the Electrical and Irrigation Industry, the Brotherhood of Exempt Non-teaching

Employees from the University of Puerto Rico, Viequense Veterans for Peace, Committee Pro Rescue and Development of Vieques, and Friends of the Sea.

The activists dug up new dirt, which Marriott had brought in to cover the sand, planted trees and marched to nearby hotels filled with tourists. With music and chants, they demanded that the beach continue to belong to the people and not be owned by foreign corporations. □

Fidel Castro speaks:

'We are entering a new stage'

The following are excerpts from "The convertible peso appreciates 8 percent against the U.S. dollar and other hard currencies," published March 25 in the Cuban daily, Granma.

President Fidel Castro announced last night that the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank of Cuba has adopted an agreement to increase the exchange rate of the convertible peso in relation to the U.S. dollar and other hard currencies from next April 9. This revaluation will stand at 8 percent for the moment.

Besides this, an exchange rate for the purchase and sale of U.S. dollars is to be fixed, as well as for other hard currencies. Following the Revolution's policy of providing full guarantees for funds deposited in the banks, the agreement states that bank accounts in U.S. dollars—both existing accounts and those opened between now and April 9—will not be affected by this measure.

Holders of accounts in convertible pesos will benefit from the revaluation of this currency from that date. Likewise, the Cuban peso—which will maintain its rate of exchange with respect to the convertible peso—will similarly increase its value in relation to the U.S. dollar.

"Last week we revalued the peso," said Fidel, "this week we're going to revalue the convertible peso," and he underlined that the value achieved "by our modest little peso" will be conserved in its totality.

He explained that each time the convertible peso is valued or revalued, the Cuban peso is revalued, but that the Cuban peso can be revalued independently of the convertible peso. "There are two mechanisms and both of them lead to Rome: all roads lead to a currency that has value and all those who are receiving an increment in social assistance, their pensions, or wages, will receive an increase in the revalued currency."

"We are entering a new stage," Fidel stated, "and now we will see what they're going to do, what they can do [the U.S. government]. The only thing I'm going to say is that we are not doing that 'for their money,' because we can do without their money." He emphasized that this new measure seeks to strengthen our convertible peso and is not directed at harming anyone.

"Within our economy are the orders of the sovereign people of Cuba," emphasized Fidel. "We can do without the dollar," he reiterated, "they are the ones who cannot do without it."

"We will continue forward with our convertible pesos and our Cuban pesos; we will continue to move forward and both will continue to move closer, that is their destiny: they are brothers, born of the same mother called Revolution. And the day that brings the miracle of complete unity between the two," he added, "we will have then scaled to a place of honor high above the road of the Revolution towards

the most just and humane society in the world, the most socialist and almost communist that has ever existed in the world.

"I clearly see this objective which our people will achieve some day," stressed Fidel, "and for this reason we are battling today and we will not rest."

During his speech at the International Conference Center, he observed that he was not against high wages, but asked what would happen to those who have less today. In his assessment, if the formula is a socialist one, those who contribute most according to their abilities will receive according to their work.

"We have to strongly defend this formula within a spirit of social justice and assistance for those that need it," he emphasized. "Because if anyone has a need and cannot resolve it, they should not be left without food because of their situation; if someone has a problem from birth, some accident or illness, or were not born blessed with special qualities, we have to help them, because it's for this reason we belong to a species with the capacity to think, a sensitive species. We cannot fall into that repugnant system or principle of 'sort yourself out the best you can.'

"The Revolution has to seek this equality," underlined Fidel. That's what communism has always sought to do, he recalled, even in terms of distribution, on the day that the necessary means exist to

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Criminal neglect in Nias

Indonesians on tiny Nias Island are suffering the brunt of another great earthquake, an “aftershock” of the even greater one last Dec. 26 that impelled a tsunami that killed 280,000 people in the Indian Ocean region. This one’s damage was apparently limited to Nias, as there was no major tidal wave.

Does that mean the emergency warning system that the U.S. and Japan, working with India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and other nations of the Indian Ocean had set up in a hurry came through? What? You hadn’t heard that such a warning system was set up? That’s because it wasn’t. It should have been, but these powers had other priorities than the safety of the people.

The imperialist powers made a few additions to their Pacific Ocean warning system. Indian Ocean capitalist powers made a few steps toward increasing awareness. Japan and Hawaii knew who to call this time. But mainly the population, after December’s tragedy, was ready to evacuate to higher ground at any warning of a tsunami, even rumors. Many evacuated. And there was no tsunami.

All it showed was that even with a minimal warning system and popular awareness, many fewer people would have been casualties of last December’s tragedy.

According to the United Nations, there has been little movement toward setting up a general warning system for all the Indian Ocean nations on a similar basis to the one in the Pacific. Even local

systems like the one planned by Thailand with German participation at a cost of \$60 million—many Germans died on the tourist beaches of Phuket in December—is not expected to be fully in place until 2008. Nor has funding been promised either by the big imperialist powers or by regional powers.

Apparently none of the parties concerned is willing and ready on some sort of emergency basis to take the effort to save the people there.

Keep in mind that the costs of setting up a general warning system do not go beyond a few hundred million dollars. At the same time, Washington is selling two dozen advanced warplanes to Pakistan at the cost of billions—and with a subsidy of \$1.3 billion in aid—while offering the same to India. Profits to the arms manufacturers and expanding geopolitical interests are a driving force far greater than the need for safety for the population.

The powerful aftershock—itsself a world-class earthquake—underscores the same points Workers World analyst Fred Goldstein made in his articles following the Dec. 26 tsunami: Cuba’s highly developed system for handling natural disasters, which depends on the integrated work of many mass organizations, proves that socialism provides the best and most effective measures for coping with such emergencies, even when its access to high technology is constrained. The capitalists are only in it for the buck, and their role is, at best, criminal neglect. □

Bankruptcy law

Continued from page 5

bottles and key chains and entice young people to sign up for credit cards, all the while warning that the students will need a credit card to pay for textbooks. Many students fall into the trap and splurge, racking up credit card debt, adding to debt from tuition and housing, if there is any, on the campus.

After graduation, the gravity of all this sets in. Good-paying jobs are scarce, with or without a college degree, and many youth take jobs outside of their degree focus. The jobs are usually low-paying with inadequate benefits or none at all. The possibility of paying back a college loan becomes moot, and the interest accrues.

Youth are faced with a bleak future and the new bankruptcy law will make the future even more unbearable for the next generations, not to mention the elderly, already squeezed between the high cost of health care and meager income from pensions and Social Security.

This bill is very different from Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which frees corporations from huge debt. The law entitles them, with the approval of the bankruptcy court, to tear up union contracts, downsize wages and benefits like health care and pensions, and increase work loads. The airlines over the past four years have been rife with filings for Chapter 11. Big businesses will go on receiving breaks at workers’ expense, while the bosses’ pay goes up.

The new changes in the bankruptcy law, so typical of the abuses against workers and the poor, prove beyond doubt that the

government cares nothing about the state of the working class and caves to its capitalist rulers at an accelerated rate. It is becoming more evident that an independent movement is needed in the streets. Youth need to become increasingly involved and at the forefront of the struggle against capitalism to secure a better future for both older generations and the generations to come.

Hales is an organizer for FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together). Contact FIST at fist@workers.org.

‘We are entering a new stage’

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Fidel planted the idea that he increasingly feels attracted by the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Engels, because they teach us a great deal, they have opened up the road to thought. We are not going to say that those ideas are dead, he specified. “We are who we are before the challenge that these ideas are advancing over enormous obstacles; obstacles that perhaps were not imagined by the very creators of the doctrines of Marxism and Leninism.

“This is what has brought us to this point,” he specified, “and from now on we will see how it is going to help us better because we are now enjoying all the benefits and possibilities of having a socialist regime, not measured in terms of automo-

ETHEL BAILEY, PRESENTE!

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

Ethel Bailey, a beloved longtime comrade of the Detroit branch of Workers World Party, died on March 2. She was 93 years old.

Comrade Ethel met Workers World Party when she was already 70 years old. But she had been a revolutionary all her life, growing up in the South, dealing with the racism faced by all African Americans, living in economic poverty, but in reality being one of the richest people any of her comrades had ever known.

From the time the branch first met Ethel in 1982, during the Food is a Right Campaign that followed the launching of the All Peoples Congress, the comrades had the privilege of associating with a remarkable individual.

Comrade Ethel was the most militant person any of us ever saw. She hated the cops. At every demonstration she would go up to the police, particularly the African American cops, and just cuss them out for defending the system. Many a cop would cower and flee under Ethel’s verbal assault. She would chase them and keep going after them. None of us had ever seen anything like it.

Despite living at the bottom rung of the economic ladder, Ethel understood the importance of finances in supporting the party. She gave her weekly pledge of \$1 like clockwork. She participated in fund raising at every demonstration.

She made it to Washington, D.C., for every national march built by the party and like-minded organizations from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s. Even after the grueling 10- to 12-hour bus trip, she would get an apron and sell buttons like nobody else. When the Detroit branch had fish fries to raise funds, Ethel would stand over the stove for hours. She would go out and sell peanuts at fireworks displays.

Comrade Ethel took so much pride in being able to help support the party and was an example to all. She was very active in the Detroit branch during a period when the party launched numerous initiatives to challenge the growing economic crisis in Michigan brought on by the restructuring of the auto industry and its effects on all workers, especially African Americans.

She was a leading activist in the Food is a Right Campaign, which demanded the release and distribution of all surplus food from government warehouses; the Job is a Right Campaign, which demanded a moratorium on plant closings and guaranteed jobs for all; and the Housing is a Right Campaign, which demanded a morato-



Ethel Bailey at a moratorium on plant closing meeting in Detroit in 1987

rium on evictions for all whose benefits had been eliminated by racist Michigan Gov. John Engler.

She helped organize the Tent City of the Unemployed in Lansing, Mich., in 1987, and helped bust up the National Governors Conference the next year, when displaced workers descended on the northern resort town of Traverse City.

Comrade Ethel helped the party achieve ballot status in Michigan, gathering a good number of the 35,000 signatures during the winters of 1984 and 1990 which put Workers World Party on the ballot and led to the party getting the largest socialist vote in Michigan history.

She marched every year in the lesbian/gay/bi/trans pride march, getting recognition from the podium as the oldest participant. She took Workers World newspaper with her everywhere, distributing it wherever she went.

Ethel had a great sense of humor with a wry wit and tremendous laugh. She made a point of always speaking to young people about being a revolutionary and not being afraid to fight and challenge the system.

Ethel would purchase and read African American newspapers from around the country and watch only Canadian news because she had no trust in the mainstream U.S. media. She was very proud of the accomplishments of African Americans.

She was always for more militant struggle and would say how we need to get out there and boycott. She was the living embodiment of a communist fighter and one of the most wonderful people we have had the privilege to know.

“We’ve got to fight,” she would say. The time is coming for that fight and we carry her with us with love. □

biles,” he clarified, “but through real possibilities of doing things for the wellbeing of our people, for wellbeing in all senses of the word, and in part also, for the wellbeing of humanity.

“Our success is something helpful,” he continued. “Our battle against this powerful and seemingly unstoppable empire is showing many peoples that ‘They Can Do It!’ as the slogan for the literacy campaign in Venezuela goes. And we can also say: ‘We can do it, and we’re demonstrating that we can do it!’”

Fidel announced that, in four months time, starting from April, all refrigerators lacking seals will have been repaired. Also, before Dec. 31, some 12.5 million items of cookware will have been distributed amongst Cuban families, including

new pressure cookers, rice cookers, electric pressure cookers and electric hot-plates with a variable power of 1,200, 900 and 600 watts.

He commented that only a war, a great international conflict, could prevent those objectives from being fulfilled. And it is possible that before the year ends, four out of every five families that have electricity but cook with kerosene will cease using this costly, inefficient and harmful fuel; and that no less than 50 percent of those who today consume liquefied gas will also be cooking using electricity.

The president described as “a black hole of electricity” the range of breakdowns, irregularities and inefficiencies in the functioning of electrical equipment (such as refrigerators), electricity plants, con-

As dirty war drags on

Figleaf on occupation of Iraq is in 'chaos'

By Deirdre Griswold

When will it finally sink into the heads of those in Washington dazzled with dreams of ever wider empire that they will have to scale down their global ambitions? Only, it seems, when the revolt against them tears apart the social fabric of their profit-driven system.

Look at the news from Iraq. The farce of building an "Iraqi government" under conditions of atrocious U.S. military occupation stumbles on, part tragedy, part comedy. Of course, it is not an Iraqi government. It is a colonial imposition ushered in through a weird election process in which most of the candidates were anonymous. Even then, those "elected" know the Iraqi people expect them to somehow get the U.S. troops out, but Washington sees them as a figleaf for its continued occupation. A big contradiction.

It is ludicrous to think that, after having destroyed every semblance of normalcy in Iraq, the U.S. can just pull a new government out of a hat. But the media here are going along with this fiction and talking about the political process in Iraq as though it actually was indigenous and democratic and not manufactured to suit the interests of the occupiers.

As of this writing, the Iraqi "parliament" after two months has been unable to set up a government or agree on a constitution. It is bogged down in wrangling over posts—especially the key post of oil minister. Press reports describe its latest meeting, on March 29, as ending in "chaos."

As a reminder that this fruitless debate is being carried out against the backdrop of a determined popular resistance to U.S. occupation, the area of the Green Zone where the National Assembly was meeting was hit by several mortar rounds shortly before the session ended.

The political struggle is merely over which groupings will get to siphon off a little of the country's riches into their own pockets. As long as the Pentagon is there and wielding the real power, it is a foregone conclusion that the lion's share of Iraq's oil revenues will go to enrich Halliburton and other U.S. energy corporations, with their related financial institutions, that are behind the aggressive global strategy of the Bush administration.

Meanwhile, the resistance continues and is sinking the morale of the U.S.

nections and transformers, amongst others. The cost of this lost electricity is equivalent to \$100 million, "but we are going to convert this "hole" into a great reserve at minimum cost," he stated.

"We are short of dollars to pay for soap, sanitary towels and toothpaste and we are going to make up the shortfall using government savings, that's what we're doing in this context," he added.

He noted that the country is making a great effort to carry out what he called "an economic and social counter-coup of the Cuban Revolution," in the face of attempts to strangle and liquidate us. He likewise emphasized that it is necessary to give information to the population to help to clarify problems, reflect and understand, and "fight, fight and fight!" □

troops. They don't want to be there but there are fewer and fewer new recruits to replace them. Young workers are beginning to realize they have no stake in this war and that getting killed or maimed while suppressing the people of another country is not worth the inflated promises of job training and benefits that even military recruiters are beginning to doubt.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld may want Congress to allocate vast new sums of money for an even higher-tech army of the future to fight the next war—something the legislators are groaning about given the already huge budget deficits and social cutbacks—but that won't help the Pentagon get enough soldiers right now to stabilize the occupations in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

So, as has happened with every "dirty" colonial war in the past, the U.S. government is using the most vicious and diabolical—and illegal—methods to try to intimidate the civilian population and sap their support for the resistance.

Just like the French in Algeria, the British in Malaya and Kenya, the Dutch in

Indonesia, the Japanese in China and their own predecessors at the time of the Vietnam and Korean wars, the empire builders in Washington have given a thumbs up to indiscriminate bombing of civilians, the use of torture, the beating and killing of families in their own homes, and a terror campaign against journalists who would tell the true story of the war.

Reports continue to get out—very rarely in the corporate media—of the horrible situation in Falluja when U.S. troops bombarded and finally captured that city. People all over the Arab world have seen the photos of fathers shot in their own beds, bloated corpses in the streets, patients at the main hospital lined up on the ground under the guns of U.S. soldiers.

The Pentagon itself now admits that the deaths of 31 people it had detained in Afghanistan and Iraq are confirmed or suspected homicides. The International Red Cross has said that the interrogation techniques used by the U.S. are "tantamount to torture." One Iraqi lieutenant colonel died in January 2004 of "blunt force injuries and asphyxia" after being

lifted to his feet by a baton held against his throat, according to a U.S. Army official.

No one knows how many people have been seized and disappeared into detention and interrogation centers, but it is undoubtedly thousands. There are almost 600 at Guantanamo alone, and the government admits having many more secret facilities.

Many in the U.S. may have been brainwashed to see them as "terrorists," but to the people of the Middle East and much of the rest of the world, they are heroes in the struggle against foreign aggression, people who were tortured to death because they refused to capitulate to those trying to take over their countries.

With the deliberate attempt of U.S. soldiers to kill Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena in Iraq, the spotlight is now on how dangerous it has become to report the truth.

But returning soldiers are beginning to bring that truth home with them. And as the true face of capitalist globalization is seen more clearly, here in the U.S. as well as abroad, the resistance to it can only rise. □

Protests continue as Haitians fight coup regime

By G. Dunkel

On March 24 thousands of Haitians living in Cite Soleil, a poor seaside community in Port-au-Prince, demonstrated, shouting, "Aristide forever," and waving pictures of the popularly elected president who was kidnapped by U.S. troops on Feb. 29, 2004.

In demonstrations earlier in March, United Nations forces occupying the country provided the escort for the demonstrations and up to 10,000 people came out and marched peacefully.

Still, everyone at the March 24 demonstration knew that Haitian National Police have killed scores of people protesting since the coup forced Aristide out of the country.

According to Haiti Progrès newspaper, the UN seems to want to re-establish an equilibrium between the Macoutes—death-squad supporters—and urban-based business owners.

Now it seems the cops and the UN have settled their differences after the UN physically disarmed some ex-soldiers. Four UN soldiers and about a dozen ex-soldiers died in those confrontations.

The ex-soldiers—who were organized, trained and financed by the United States—defend the interests of the large landowners, the pro-death-squad wing of Haiti's ruling class.

Of course, the UN ultimately operates in Haiti to ensure the political interests of the United States, too.

In the face of the current political machinations and despite real physical danger, the people still came out in massive numbers on March 24. The demonstration didn't break up until two protesters were killed by gunfire as it reached a local police station.

Later that night, heavy gunfire broke out in the Delmas neighborhood. Someone shot up a car belonging to a director

of the Judicial Police, seriously wounding the driver. Two nights earlier, someone killed a bodyguard in front of the justice minister's house.

Whatever their origin, these attacks—combined with the stubborn resistance of the Haitian people to the coup—have made the political situation very tense.

When Samba Boukman, spokesperson for the Resistance Cells of the Fanmi Lavalas Base, was asked by Haiti Progrès why his organization no longer notified the police about its marches, he

responded, "We had fulfilled this constitutional obligation every time, but when the cops showed up, it wasn't to escort us but rather kill us."

Boukman said the UN force occupying Haiti is working shoulder-to-shoulder with the Haitian National Police. Their differences are over which lies to tell about which massacres, he said.

Boukman promised that the popular struggle to return President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to Haiti would continue until victory. □

German movement

Continued from page 8

to get something started; and he, Frank McCourt, Boyfrank and others wrote one another for years, arguing how to organize homosexuals," Jim Kepner recalled in his 1985 pamphlet, "Gay Movement History & Goals."

"They never realized that their radically different views on the nature of homosexuals and of society left little chance for them to agree on how to improve the homosexual condition. Without common goals, they couldn't evolve clear or practical tactics."

Kepner concluded, "A Gerber friend who'd lacked the nerve to join SHR brought out young Harry Hay in Los Angeles' Pershing Square in 1930, and told him about the group, inspiring Harry to imitation. But to start a group, you need at least one other person, and it took Harry 20 years to find that other—the late famed fashion designer Rudi Gernreich."

The seeds of the early homosexual rights movement took root.

By the end of World War II, recalls Barry D. Adam, "The first stirrings of movement activity in the United States appeared among recently demobilized

men in the Veterans Benevolent Association in New York and among working women in Los Angeles. Both groups developed out of existing friendship networks and made no attempt to go public." ("The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement")

In 1947 and 1948, "Lisa Ben"—an anagram for lesbian—published nine issues of a publication she titled "Vice Versa: America's Gayest Magazine."

"Lisa Ben" had come out as a lesbian in the World War II era. She moved from the small agricultural community in California where she'd been born and raised to Los Angeles in search of a job. There she also found a women's boardinghouse where "she met for the first time lesbians who took her to gay bars and introduced her to other gay women."

And in 1950 Harry Hay did start an organization—Mattachine. Hay's vision of organizing was much more like that of some of the radical leaders of the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement. Because Harry Hay was a communist.

Next: Communist impact on homosexual and women's rights organizing.

La búsqueda de la dominación mundial por Washington Detrás de las posiciones de Wolfowitz y Bolton

Por Fred Goldstein

Con el nombramiento de John Bolton para Embajador de los Estados Unidos a la ONU y el de Paul Wolfowitz para presidente del Banco Mundial, el Presidente George W. Bush está tratando de conseguir en las esferas políticas y financieras lo que no a podido hacer por medios militares, o sea, expandir drásticamente el dominio de Washington sobre el mundo.

Bolton, (“No hay tal cosa como las Naciones Unidas”) y Wolfowitz (“Ellos [los iraquíes] nos recibirán como sus libertadores”), son dos aves de rapiña que más empujan el unilateralismo en la administración de Bush. Estas medidas unilaterales, han sido desastrosas en Irak; la política exterior de amenazas militares ha servido solamente para solidificar la resistencia a Washington y revelar su vulnerabilidad.

Por eso la administración de Bush ha cambiado los puestos de Bolton y Wolfowitz, poniéndolos en áreas donde pueden continuar con su política beligerante y unilateral, pero que a la vez la resistencia antiimperialista no es tan firme como lo es en las calles de Bagdad o Mosul, Gaza, el sur del Líbano, Terán, Pyongyang, Caracas o la Habana.

Bolton era diputado del Secretario de Estado para el control de las armas y asuntos internacionales. Era el representante del vicepresidente Dick Cheney y del Secretario de la Defensa, Donald Rumsfeld en el Departamento de Estado. Bolton era el favorito del senador ultra derechista, militarista y racista Jesse Helms, representante de Carolina del Norte, quien dijo sobre Bolton durante su confirmación en el año 2001: “John Bolton es el tipo de hombre con quien yo querría estar a la hora de la lucha final, si ese ha de ser mi destino de estar allí durante lo que se predice ser la batalla final entre el bien y el mal en este mundo.” (www.fpis.org/republicanrule)

Bolton, el diplomático mercenario

Las Naciones Unidas es el escenario en el cual Washington tratará de presionar más a Irán. Bolton fue el causante del intento de sacar a Mohamed ElBaradei de su posición como jefe de la Agencia Internacional de Energía Atómica porque no tomó una posición más dura contra Irán. Bolton fue citado por el periódico israelita, Haaretz a comienzos del 2003, diciendo que “las Naciones Unidas, después de vencer a Irak, ‘bregará’ con Irán, Siria, y Corea del Norte. (International Herald Tribune, March 8)

El nombramiento de Bolton es una movida particularmente agresiva contra China, ya que él es un cabildero pagado por el gobierno Taiwanés y estaba ayudando al régimen de Taipei a desarrollar una estrategia para lograr el reconocimiento por la ONU.

Bolton tuvo que ser excluido como negociador en las conversaciones sobre Corea del Norte después de que calificara al líder Kim Jong Ill como un “dictador tiránico” de un país donde “la vida es un infierno.” En una concesión sin precedentes, el Departamento de Estado lo removió de su puesto en la delegación después de que el gobierno norcoreano dijera que “ese parásito y sucio ser humano no tiene derecho a ser participe en las negociaciones.”

Según el artículo del Tribune: “En una entrevista con el New York Times en el 2002, a Bolton se le preguntó sobre las señales contradictorias de la administración Bush acerca de Corea del Norte. El tomó un libro de la repisa y lo puso sobre la mesa. Su título: ‘El Fin de Corea del Norte.’”

“Eso, ‘dijo al periodista, ‘es nuestra política.’”

Estas acciones públicas de Bolton son crudas repeticiones del pronunciamiento de Bush sobre “el eje diabólico” en su beligerante discurso sobre el Estado de la Unión.

Sin embargo todo esto pasó antes de la resistencia iraquí. Esto representa la agresividad de los neo conservadores y otros militaristas de derecha quienes dominan la administración de Bush. Pero mientras la atmósfera y las ambiciones persisten, la resistencia mundial ha forzado a la administración de Bush a depender más de métodos diplomáticos, intimidación, estrangulación financiera y subversión mientras trata de bregar con su retroceso político en Irak.

Las nominaciones de Bolton y Wolfowitz están calculadas para comunicar un impulso agresivo poniendo a dos de las instituciones mundiales más importantes del imperialismo, la ONU y el Banco Mundial, más cerca del dominio imperialista estadounidense, especialmente del grupo derechista representado por la administración de Bush.

Wolfowitz: integrando el militarismo y las funciones banqueras

Hay varios aspectos importantes sobre la nominación de Wolfowitz como presidente del Banco Mundial. Es de gran significado que la segunda persona más poderosa en el Pentágono pueda hacer la transición de ser director de la más grande institución financiera en el mundo imperialista.

Mucho se dice sobre la falta de experiencia de Wolfowitz en el campo de desarrollo económico. Pero el desarrollo económico es secundario para el Banco Mundial. Su principal función es la de canalizar fondos para inversiones y explotaciones hacia los grandes monopolios, en particular a los gigantes petroleros. Esto les hace más fácil el robo a los países oprimidos en todo el mundo.

V.I. Lenin, el organizador de la Revolución Bolchevique, escribió un libro en 1916 titulado “Imperialismo, la Fase Final del Capitalismo.” Lenin condensó lo que en ese entonces era una nueva fase del capitalismo, después de su estado competitivo. El describió el desarrollo de grandes monopolios y carteles al igual que la unión de la industria bancaria y el capital industrial en un capital financiero. Esta integración de los bancos con las transnacionales preparó el terreno para la división de todo el mundo en diferentes esferas de interés imperialista.

Lenin estaba escribiendo en la primera fase del desarrollo del militarismo imperialista, durante la Primera Guerra Mundial. Particularmente desde la Segunda Guerra Mundial, uno de los procesos más pronunciados en la evolución del imperialismo ha sido la profunda integración del sector militar con el capital financiero. Y el Pentágono se ha convertido en ese eje en los Estados Unidos.

Wolfowitz es el protegido de Cheney.

Ambos sirvieron en la primera administración de Bush en el Pentágono, Cheney como Secretario del Estado y Wolfowitz como diputado para los planes y política de la defensa.

Después del colapso de la URSS, ellos escribieron un documento hecho público en marzo de 1992 afirmando que de entonces en adelante los Estados Unidos serían la potencia dominante absoluta en el mundo y ningún poder o grupo de poderes debería ni siquiera pensar en desafiar su supremacía. Ese documento fue colado al New York Times y luego negado por George Bush, padre, presidente de los EEUU entonces.

Esta tesis volvió a emerger en una forma más agresiva en el documento de Bush, la Estrategia de la Seguridad Nacional, publicado en el 2002. Eran las voces de Cheney, Wolfowitz y sus partidarios en el Pentágono y Wall Street; era sólo una actualización del 1992.

La conexión entre Cheney y Wolfowitz es importante porque Cheney, como el antiguo director ejecutivo de Halliburton, una compañía de servicios petroleros, está en el centro de la industria petrolera y negocia con todas las grandes compañías. Estas compañías, a su vez, tienen una perspectiva global idéntica a la del Pentágono. Los monopolios petroleros están en el centro del capitalismo estadounidense, integrados con la industria, las finanzas y el sector militar. El puesto de Wolfowitz es un paso en la profundización de esta integración.

Mientras el imperialismo alemán y estadounidense competía para desmembrar a Yugoslavia, culminando con la guerra de la administración de Clinton en 1999 que envió soldados estadounidenses para ocupar Kosovo, el Banco Mundial ya estaba en escena, listo para dar préstamos a las grandes corporaciones para la “reconstrucción”.

En marzo del 2002, después de que el Pentágono pulverizara a Afganistán con bombas y misiles, el Banco Mundial apareció en escena para financiar a beneficio de los monopolios, un oleoducto que corre desde Turkestán a través de Afganistán hasta el Océano Índico. El banco también estaba en el escenario después de la invasión de Irak, para ayudar con la “reconstrucción” diseñada a reforzar la ocupación de ese país rico en petróleo por los Estados Unidos.

El Banco Mundial y Halliburton

No es posible estar más cerca de la corporación Halliburton que el Banco Mundial. La antigua firma de Cheney controla los contratos de energía en Irak y está en condiciones de ayudar a las gigantes compañías de petróleo estadounidenses a apoderarse del petróleo iraquí. Wolfowitz fue arquitecto de la guerra que fue iniciada por ese petróleo. Cuando Wolfowitz tome el control del Banco Mundial todavía estará metido en la guerra por el petróleo; todavía estará trabajando con Cheney, Rumsfeld y el Pentágono al servicio del capital financiero y su imperio, sólo que en una capacidad diferente. Durante el período de 1992 a 2004, el Banco Mundial financió proyectos de combustible — petróleo, carbón, gas, centrales eléctricas, privatización de centrales y recursos naturales — a un costo de \$28 billones. (“Wrong Turn from Río”, www.seen.org) De esos \$28 billones, Halliburton recibió \$2.575 miles de mil-

lones por proyectos en Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brasil, Chad, Camerún, Georgia, India, Kazakhstán, Mozambique, Rusia, y Tailandia. Halliburton fue el contratista de petróleo más grande del Banco Mundial (“The Energy Tug of War”, www.seen.org).

Para no quedarse fuera, Exxon Mobil recibió \$1.367 miles de millones por proyectos en Argentina, Chad, Camerún, Guinea Ecuatorial, Georgia, Kazakhstán y Rusia; Chevron Texaco recibió \$1.589 miles de millones para entrar en Camerún, Chad, Colombia, Congo-Brazzaville, Indonesia, Kazakhstán, Rusia, y Tailandia; Unocal recibió \$938 millones; y Enron \$744 millones. Todos los gigantes del petróleo del mundo imperialista participaron de la distribución.

Una mirada a la lista de países productores de petróleo revela que son también países de interés para el Pentágono, los bancos y otros explotadores transnacionales.

Así el traslado de Wolfowitz al Banco Mundial es como trasladar un halcón militar de un sector del aparato imperial a otro. El vínculo centralizador es el conjunto militar-industrial, el Pentágono y las grandes compañías de petróleo. Ellos son inseparables del propio imperialismo.

No es accidental que el arquitecto de la Guerra de Vietnam bajo el Presidente Lyndon Johnson, el Secretario de Defensa Robert McNamara, también fuera trasladado a la presidencia del Banco Mundial. Él había sido el director ejecutivo de la Ford Motors y sabía cómo dirigir un imperio corporativo. Su traslado al Pentágono y luego al Banco Mundial fue una transición natural dentro del imperio.

Se especula que Wolfowitz está siendo promovido por estar identificado con el fracaso de una guerra de agresión — de la misma manera que McNamara fue trasladado por el fracaso de conquistar a Vietnam. Lo seguro es que Wolfowitz ha sido removido del puesto de formular la política militar en el cual ha pasado su vida. Pero sólo el tiempo revelará cuál es el significado de este traslado, si se logra.

La nominación de Wolfowitz tiene muchas implicaciones económicas y políticas graves para el destino del Tercer Mundo. Sin duda Wolfowitz va a profundizar la política reaccionaria y neoliberal que ya sigue el Banco Mundial.

El Banco Mundial es en realidad una institución que colabora con el Fondo Monetario Internacional. El Banco Mundial retiene préstamos hasta que el gobierno dependiente se someta a todas las medidas de austeridad demandadas por el FMI: vender las industrias y las empresas de servicios públicos nacionales a las compañías transnacionales; cobrar por servicios básicos como la salud, la educación, y el agua; cortar subsidios gubernamentales a los trabajadores; exportar los recursos naturales necesitados nacionalmente a los países imperialistas, y muchas otras medidas onerosas. El Banco Mundial está ahora bajo ataque en muchos países.

Wolfowitz está tan abiertamente identificado con la guerra en Irak, la ocupación, la tortura, los asesinatos de civiles, la destrucción de Faluya, y con toda la política abiertamente guerrillera y agresiva del imperialismo estadounidense, que su nominación al Banco Mundial, si pasa, podría fácilmente iniciar una nueva ola de luchas para echar a esta institución imperialista fuera de los países oprimidos. □