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As capitalist greed deepens pain Politicians, bosses blame immigrants

By Teresa Gutierrez

To no one's surprise, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger again joined the immigrant bashing that is growing across the country.

On April 28, Schwarzenegger lavishly praised a vigilante group, the Minutemen, that recently patrolled the U.S./Mexican border in Arizona.

"I think they have done a terrific job," said Schwarzenegger.

That same week, Schwarzenegger stated that the United States needed to "close the borders," serving to shore up restrictionist right-wing views.

And Schwarzenegger called on a Spanish language station, KRCA-TV, to take down its new billboards because they were "extremely divisive." The billboards describe the station's audience as "Los Angeles, Mexico."

After a wave of criticism against his remarks, Schwarzenegger clarified that he was a "champion of immigrants."

But Schwarzenegger would also welcome the Minutemen in California, said an aide.

Rising anti-immigrant tide

California is home to the country's largest population of undocumented workers. The Pew Hispanic Center estimates that is about 2.4 million immigrants.

Inflammatory language from the governor of this state only serves to whip up the anti-immigrant backlash on the rise in the U.S. In addition, California was stolen from Mexico over 150 years ago. For the Mexican community in Los Angeles to manifest this infamous historical event in any way it sees fit is justified.

Schwarzenegger's remarks are in line with a rising tide of anti-immigrant sentiment. While this sentiment is not new in U.S. history, there are striking new developments.

Many media accounts report that there is an unprecedented nationwide network of anti-immigrant policy institutes and think tanks that are linked with well-organized and well-financed statewide anti-immigrant campaigns.

The first anti-immigrant policy institute—Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)—was founded in 1979 by known racist and virulent anti-immigrant spokesperson John Tanton. FAIR supported the recent vigilante campaign in Arizona, which resulted in a further militarization of the U.S./Mexican border.

Since 1998, many of these anti-immigrant groups have been taking a harder line, reports the Southern Poverty Law Center. That year, many of them began to work with openly white supremacist forces.

"Today, many of their leading officials have joined racist organizations," writes the Law Center.

Recent media coverage of the Minutemen in Arizona depicted the anti-immigrant sentiment on the border. However, this sentiment is also entrenched inside the beltway in Washington, D.C., and is far more dangerous.

For example, the Congressional Immigration Reform Caucus has rapidly grown in the recent period. Before Sept. 11, 2001, the caucus had only 10 legislators; now it has 59. The chair of the CIR Caucus is none other than Rep. Tom Tancredo, a Republican from Colorado.

Colorado is the scene of a bold and racist right wing that man-

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REVIVING MAY DAY IN THE U.S. 6-7



International Workers Day becomes a reality on the streets of New York.

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1938:

Harry Hay tried to 'close book' on his gayness

By Leslie Feinberg

In 1938, Harry Hay—only a decade away from launching the first mass political movement for homosexual emancipation in the United States—married a woman comrade in the Communist Party USA (CPUSA).

Since the CPUSA at that time did not allow openly homosexual members, it would be easy to jump to the conclusion that Hay, a member of the CPUSA, felt so isolated as a gay man that he married merely in order to hide his sexuality inside the organization.

But Hay knew he wasn't the only gay party member. He wrote, "I knew a number of Black and white men from the performing arts in the Communist Party who were gay, but the Party didn't seem to suspect. I realized that since they weren't that unnoticeable, certain Party people saw the necessity of tolerating and covering for them." (Stuart Timmons, "The Trouble with Harry Hay")

Simply attributing the pressure towards heterosexual marriage to the CP's internal policy removes the historical context. Outside the party, homosexuality was illegal; state regulation of sexuality was enforced by police entrapment and raids, imprisonment and institutionalization.

As biographer Timmons succinctly summed up, "Marriage was common for both male and female homosexuals of Harry's generation. The most famous modern homosexual, Oscar Wilde, was married with children. Matrimony, in one of Harry's more philosophical letters, seemed 'the casting couch for society.'"

As historian Jim Kepner noted, "In the forties, for many gays who wanted to be socially productive, marriage was a necessity." While there were a few professions in which a gay man might remain unmarried—dance, design, dress-making—those were not political hot spots of organizing.

Harry Hay was an organizer who wanted to be in the thick of the working-class struggle.

'If only she'd been a boy!'

In the late 1930s, Hay had talked to psychologist Dr. Saul Glass, while taking part in Glass's experiment that sought physiological markers for same-sex love. Hay was part of a control group whose blood and urine was compared to that of gay/bi/trans prisoners held in the "Fruit Tank" of the county jail.

Hay lamented to Glass that he felt hopeless "in not being able to find a flower-faced boy who was a Marxist like me, who would stand with me in the class struggle against oppression."

Glass's suggestion was creative, within the confines of accommodation to oppression: "Maybe instead of a girl-

ish boy, you're looking for a boyish girl."

Hay recalled, "He told me that all I needed to do to change my orientation was to deliberately close one book and open another."

Shortly afterward, Hay was drawn to Anita Platky. She was a 6-foot tall, strong-jawed athletic woman described by some as "boyish." And much to the dismay of Hay's well-to-do Catholic family, Platky was Jewish.

Timmons wrote, "Harry told Anita about his homosexual past. She assured him she understood, that she already knew several men who were 'that way.' At least one of Anita's few boyfriends before Harry had also been gay."

The two marched in the same demonstrations, walked the same picket lines, and shared the same hatred of oppression and the same commitment to the socialist future of humanity.

So in 1938, Harry Hay and Anita Platky exchanged wedding vows. At the request of the couple, the ceremony left out any "God stuff."

They remained married for 13 years. Hay said, "Anita and I loved each other dearly and had a wonderful time doing anything together. We rarely quarreled because I usually understood her point of view. Most of her family and friends thought we were a perfect match—I never looked at another woman. (But oh the men!)"

Timmons concluded, "Harry once said, with awkward sincerity, 'If she had been a boy, we would still probably be together.'"

Learning communication skills

In 1939, the couple moved to New York and as communists became immersed in the movement there.

In 1940 they were part of the many thousands who marched through the streets on May Day. Hay described, "Everyone was singing the Leftist anthem, the 'Bandiera Rossa Trionfera.' It echoed through the canyons of the city. People were hanging out of windows singing. You'd really think the whole of Manhattan had signed up with the Party."

Hay was assigned to the Artists and Writers branch of the New York CP.

He became interim head of the New Theater League in 1941. This trade union theater staged actual shop floor battles that workers had fought in order to educate and organize.

Harry explained that as workers successfully organized their shops into unions, "Somebody would eventually say, 'Jeeze, somebody ought to write a play about what we went through. ... If we told our story, other shops could learn from us.'"

Hay organized a fund-raising concert for the theater effort that brought the legendary blues singer Leadbelly, Aunt Molly Jackson, the famous voice of the Harlan County coal workers' struggle, and others to the Auto Workers' Hall in lower Manhattan.

Hay taught acting to workers in unions, including the Longshore, Cooks and Stewards, and Bus Drivers unions. Timmons concluded, "In their classes, people often reenacted actual confrontations with their bosses, living out the idea of shops learning from one another's struggles."

"So Harry joined the clan of theater teachers, from whose distinctive bag of communications tricks he would draw heavily in his future activism."

Next: Turning to struggle and history for answers.

Lesbian • gay • bi
and trans
PRIDE
SERIES
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BOSTON

Sat., May 7

Workers World Forum. Malcolm X's Legacy and the Struggle Against Bush's Endless War at Home and Abroad. Featuring: Monica Moorehead, former Workers World Party Presidential candidate; Margaret Campbell, Politicín' with the Sisters and Women's Fightback Network; New England Human Rights Committee for Haiti rep.; Bromley Heath workers' struggle rep. 6:30 - 9 p.m. At 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain. For info (617) 983-3835.

DENVER

Tue., May 17

Hear Monica Moorehead speak on the legacy of Malcolm X today. Sponsored by Denver FIST. 6:30 to 9 p.m. Dinner available. At Jeff's Cultural Center & Cafe, 2836 Welton St. For info (303) 863-8029.

LOS ANGELES

Friday, May 13

Friday the 13 Forum: Axis of Evil—What is Bush so Afraid of? Report by Ken Roh on his recent trip to North and South Korea. Discussion will include Iraq and Iran. 7:30 p.m. At the Int'l Action Center, 5274 W Pico Blvd, Suite 203, L.A. For info (323)936-7266.

Friday, May 27

Film Showing: Rachel: An American Conscience. A film by Palestinian director Yahya Barakat about Israeli-murdered Rachel Corrie. Corrie, a member of the International Solidarity Movement, was murdered on March 16, 2003, by an Israeli bulldozer as she tried to defend the home of a Palestinian. Sponsored by Int'l Action Center, Al-Awda, Palestine Right to Return Coalition. 7:30 p.m. At the Int'l Action Center, 5274 W Pico Blvd, Suite 203, L.A. For info (323)936-7266.

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May Day, 2005

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Georgians tell Cheney

'Hands off Social Security!'

Chanting "Social Security, yes! War profits, no!" about 30 demonstrators challenged Vice President Dick Cheney at an invitation-only town hall meeting on Social Security held at Campbell High School in Smyrna, Ga., May 2. The protest garnered media coverage on all the local television stations as well as in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The demonstrators, who ranged in age from high school students to retired seniors, made the connections between the

campaign of lies of the Bush administration leading up to the Iraq War, the war profiteering of companies like Halliburton—Cheney's former roost—off the blood of U.S. soldiers and Iraqi citizens, and the attacks on programs that benefit workers and the poor like Social Security.

The demonstration was organized on short notice by the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition and the International Action Center.

On May 3, Bill Lucy, secretary-treasurer

of national AFSCME and leader of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, was the featured speaker at a community forum on Social Security held at First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta. He issued a call for all workers—employed, retired, unemployed, disabled or in school—to fight any attempts to privatize Social Security, which would send billions of dollars of workers' money to Wall street brokers.

—Dianne Mathiowetz

May Day is the people's day

As the Iraq war continues to lurch from disaster to disaster, from scandal to scandal, and from puppet to puppet, people are beginning to see the futility of this mad scheme to remake other nations in our image. As more and more people from more and more social strata see the futility of this imperial grab for lands and oil, it becomes clearer and clearer that people must join together and resist.

May Day 2005 presents a perfect opportunity for us to do so. It is a time chosen by American workers over a century ago to mark the triumph of an eight-hour work day with a full day's pay. The setting aside of May Day as International Workers Day reflected a real social gain of the workers' movement and the realization that the working class exists in all nations, and that the world was our home.

It is precisely that sense of internationalism that is needed now, to reclaim that high-water mark of social activism and to turn away young folks from the mindless struggle for empire. As capital is globalized under the WTO and the IMF, the poor and working people, the majority of the people of this earth, must be globalized in internationalism, and in defense of the many not the few. What is necessary for this to prevail is the realization that this mad war in Iraq is, in reality, a war against the future generation here. A war against education. A war against decent health care. A war against decent housing. And a war against good jobs which pay living wages.

The bombs may burst and the mortars may fire over there, but the human wreckage, the social dislocation, the destruction of communities and the decimation of civil and constitutional rights is happening right here, in the heart of the empire. It is therefore imperative that we join together, across our perceived boundaries, against the empire of eternal war. It is in our own self-interest to do so.

Millions upon millions of people took to the streets in a valiant and historic attempt to stop this madcap dash to war. They were right then, they are right now. It is time to come back together, to fight against the war against life. We can do it and we must do it to change the course of this imperial messianic militarism.

Let us give a new birth to the meaning of May Day as a day of wide and deep solidarity against the empire. Those who will follow us will one day look back to us and ask, "What did they do when the empire went mad?" We must be able to say we did everything in our power. We organized ourselves, we worked together, we stood against the madness of empire. This is what we must say. And that is what we must do to insure a livable future for later generations. When we fight against this mad imperial enterprise, we fight for ourselves, our real selves, as workers, as builders, as fathers, as mothers, as brothers, as sisters, as the human family.

Let's unite and fight against empire for May Day and everyday. □

Protest planned to back embattled Black activist

By David Sole

On May 21 people from across Michigan and other parts of the Midwest will converge on Benton Harbor, Mich., in response to a call put out by embattled Black community activist the Rev. Edward Pinkney for a Rally and March for Justice in that small western Michigan city.

On April 18 Pinkney was arrested on outrageous charges of "buying votes" in a recall election for which he had helped petition.

The Berrien County prosecutor, judge and mass media have worked together to overturn the successful recall of a city

commissioner who supports the notoriously racist police force. Pinkney, a leader in exposing racist police violence, political corruption and economic discrimination, was then arrested and charged with four felonies and a misdemeanor.

Unwilling to be intimidated and silenced, Pinkney has responded with legal and political measures. While preparing his own defense, he is also seeking to appeal the court order overturning the recall vote. He has reached out to other activists in the region to help put a spotlight on racism and corruption in Berrien County.

The Detroit-based Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice

quickly responded by issuing a leaflet explaining the case. The group is organizing transportation from southeast Michigan for the May 21 event in Benton Harbor. The Michigan Green Party has taken up the call to action. Ann Arbor and Lansing activists are also beginning to get out the word.

The May 21 rally will be held at the Benton Harbor Public Library, 215 Wall St. (at Pipestone St.), at 1 PM. For information on transportation from southeast Michigan, call (313) 680-5508. For Benton Harbor information, call the Rev. Pinkney at (269) 925-0001.

A leaflet on the case can be downloaded from www.mecawi.org. □

Racist incarcerations on the rise

By Gloria Rubac

Newly-released numbers by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics confirm what those living in poor and oppressed communities already knew: way too many people are going to prison and the war on drugs is nothing but a war on the oppressed.

For the Justice Department's latest statistical period, mid-2003 to mid-2004, the jail population grew by 3.3 percent, the state prison population by 1.3 percent and the federal prison population by 6.3 percent. The number of women in prison increased during this time by 2.9 percent. There are now over 100,000 women incarcerated.

Nearly 1,000 new individuals are locked up each week, bringing the U.S. rate of incarceration to a startling 726 per 100,000 people and maintaining this country's status as the world's leading jailer. Rates in other countries per 100,000 are: England, 142; France, 91; Japan, 58; and Nigeria, 31.

It took the U.S. 200 years to imprison the first million people but only another 10 years to lock up the second million. In 1970, fewer than 200,000 people in the U.S. were behind bars. By contrast, during the 1990s alone, 840,000 were sent to prison. By 2002 the U.S. hit the 2 million mark. Now there are 2.1 million locked up.

Over the past two decades, on average one new jail or prison has been built in the U.S. every week.

The cost of keeping 2 million prisoners behind bars is \$40 billion a year or about \$20,000 for every man, woman and teenager serving time.

The U.S. comprises 5 percent of the world's population, yet has fully 25 percent of the world's prisoners.

The human costs of imprisoning over 2

million people—amounting to wasted lives, wrecked families and troubled children—are incalculable. There are adverse social, economic and political consequences of weakened communities and extensive disenfranchisement.

Just as shocking is the racist disparity of incarceration. Although African Americans are only 12 percent of the U.S. population, 44 percent of all prisoners in the U.S. are Black.

Nearly 5 percent of all Black men are behind bars, compared to 0.6 percent of white men.

According to Human Rights Watch calculations based on the 2000 U.S. Census, the proportion of Black people in prison exceeds the proportion among state residents in every single state in the U.S. In 12 states more than 10 percent of African American men from ages 18 to 64 are incarcerated.

Around 12.6 percent of all African American males in their late twenties are in prisons or jails, compared to 3.6 percent of Latinos and 1.7 percent of whites in the same age group.

African American men of all ages are incarcerated at more than seven times the rate of white men. In 13 states, Black men are locked up at more than 10 times the rate of white men. No state is free of significant disparities.

The Sentencing Project is a national leader in the development of alternative sentencing programs and in research and advocacy on criminal justice policy. They document that despite falling crime rates since 1991, the rate of incarceration has increased 49 percent since then, especially in the area of drug convictions.

The rise in imprisonment is due to policy changes and not crime rates. These include such measures such as "three

strikes," mandatory sentencing and "truth in sentencing."

Crime and violence in the U.S. arises from a capitalist system built on crime and violence, from the theft of Native lands to the kidnapping and enslavement of Africans. This country spends billions on war and less and less on human needs.

The education system is inherently racist and woefully inadequate, particularly in poor communities. The state and the federal governments do not sufficiently fund education, health care and jobs. President Bush's own home state of Texas has the lowest percentage of children covered by health insurance.

When the workers topple the Pentagon and the corporations and establish a socialist society that they control to provide for human needs, then the real criminals, the bosses and their repressive goons, will do the time and the poor and oppressed will finally be free of the violence of prisons. □



Demonstration for Mumia, April 23, Harlem, NY

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Today's minimum wage: not fit for human beings

By Stephen Millies

Every week nearly \$150 is stolen from each minimum wage worker in the United States.

An hourly wage of \$8.89 is needed to match the purchasing power of 1968's minimum wage of \$1.60, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics "Inflation Calculator." (www.bls.gov)

But the current federal minimum wage is only \$5.15 per hour. An additional \$3.74 is stolen from minimum wage workers every hour. That's a 42-percent wage cut as compared to the 1968 minimum wage.

The BLS cost of living figures usually understate the rise in prices of essential commodities purchased by poor people. One out of four families in New York City fork over half their income to their landlord. (Enterprise Foundation)

Over a year of 52 40-hour work weeks, this extortion produces an additional profit of \$7,779.20 for the bosses from every one of these minimum wage workers. Two mil-

lion people were paid at or below \$5.15 per hour in 2004. That means over \$15 billion was ripped-off by the bosses.

But the total amount of loot was much, much larger. Over 28 million workers last year earned less than \$9.04 per hour. One out of three African American workers and 25 percent of all workers get these miserable wages. (Business Week)

Jobs, freedom and a living wage

Harlem Congressperson Adam Clayton Powell Jr. fought for years to raise the minimum wage and make it cover more categories of workers when he chaired the Labor and Education Committee of the House of Representatives in the 1960s. The 1968 rate of \$1.60 per hour was achieved only against a backdrop of the civil rights movement and urban cities burning in rebellion coast-to-coast.

Powell's fight for a higher minimum wage was sufficient cause alone for the wealthy ruling class—assisted by the conservative AFL-CIO President George

Meany—to drive Powell out of congress. This is just one reason why poor and working people cherish the memory of Powell.

A. Philip Randolph—founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (which also had women members)—demanded a \$2 minimum wage back in 1960. Using the BLS "Inflation Calculator," this amounts to a \$13.06 per hour wage in 2005.

Randolph's associate, Bayard Rustin, raised this \$2 minimum wage demand at the 1963 Washington March for Jobs and Freedom.

Considering the fantastic increase of labor productivity during the last 45 years—labor productivity in private business has increased nearly five-fold according to the BLS—a mere 2-percent annual increase in the real minimum wage is a truly modest demand. Add this small yearly hike to Randolph's 1960 request and you get a 2005 minimum wage of \$66,224 per year. (Or \$31.84 per hour over 52 40-hour work weeks.)

Now with wages like these, it's hard to conceive of drug profiteer Eli Lilly paying its chief executive Sidney Taurel \$12.5 million last year—the collective wages of 1,167 minimum wage workers. Or Taurel's fellow drug lord—Merck's CEO Raymond V. Gilmartin—getting \$5.9 million in 2004. His salary equals the collective wages of 551 minimum wage workers. (NY Times, April 3)

Millions of workers and their families would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage. Side by side with organizing Wal-Mart, the labor movement must demand a wage fit for human beings.

Is an \$8.89 per hour—or \$13.06 per hour—or \$31.84 per hour minimum wage an impossible demand? Vince Copeland, a founding member of Workers World Party, said, "If the people need something and are willing to fight for it, nothing is impossible."

The writer is an Amtrak worker and member of District 1402, Transportation Communications International Union.

Wisconsin report proves

Welfare 'reform' equals war on the poor

By Bryan G. Pfeifer

The anti-welfare program known as "Wisconsin Works," or W-2, has been a complete failure.

After consistently gloating about the overturning of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), former Gov. Tommy Thompson and his ruling-class bosses were nowhere to be seen or heard when the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau issued its 272-page evaluation of "Wisconsin Works" on April 7—the most comprehensive study to date. The report calls for a virtually complete overhaul of this failed social policy.

Many politicians—Democrats and Republicans alike—who clamored to dismantle welfare programs like AFDC and usher in W-2 are now doing an about-face. They are either distancing themselves from the report's conclusions or are lying to the public by saying they actually care for W-2 recipients and support the report's conclusions.

After the massive human misery and suffering caused by W-2 that is detailed in the report, Thompson and his accomplices should be tried for crimes against humanity by a people's commission led by current and former W-2 recipients.

Those fighting the attempted privatization of Social Security might want to study this report closely.

The bureau's findings include:

- W-2 recipients who left the program in late 1999 earned an average of just \$8,300 in their first year out of the program and less than \$12,000 by the fourth year. Working for a temporary-help service was the most common job for former recipients, followed closely by nursing homes and health-care service providers, retail services and eating and drinking establishments. Almost all of these are non-union, low-paying, high-turnover jobs with virtually no legal worker protections.
- Only 19.2 percent of W-2 recipients who left the program in late 1999 earned incomes above the federal poverty level a year later.

• W-2 clients got disparate treatment, including evidence that Blacks were "sanctioned" at a higher rate than whites for "rules infractions."

W-2 is "a Frankenstein of a social program" and is "the \$1.5-billion mistake of a welfare program unleashed on thousands of poor people in Milwaukee and Wisconsin that drove single women with children off the rolls to fend for themselves in a declining economy," wrote Eugene Kane, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's only African American columnist, on May 1. (www.jsonline.com) The \$1.5-billion figure is the amount spent on W-2 from its implementation on Sept. 1, 1997, until early 2005.

"Those who chose to remain in the program were subjected to an overly punitive, racially discriminatory system that made their lives more difficult and never delivered on its promise of economic salvation," added Kane.

Bipartisan attack on welfare

Under the national Welfare Reform Bill signed by Democratic President Bill Clinton in August 1996, AFDC—a lifetime guaranteed federal entitlement program won through the battles of the working class and oppressed in the 1930s—was dismantled. AFDC was replaced by a time-limited, work-based act called Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

TANF lifted most federal mandates on all 50 states, thereby allowing them to develop their own workfare programs, as they came to be known. Currently, the maximum lifetime limit for TANF benefits is five years, with some exemptions granted in various states. If recipients use up this time, they are on their own to survive. States are allowed to choose their own time limits below the five-year TANF maximum. Wisconsin's is just two years.

With the implementation of W-2, services to recipients were dispensed from five private contractors in various geographic zones in Milwaukee County instead of from county social service agencies under AFDC.

Since 1997 two of the contractors have had their state contracts rescinded due to

graft, kickbacks, profiting from purposely providing minimal levels of service, or none at all, and other illegal activities.

Numbers dropped from 35,000 families statewide near the end of AFDC to 23,000 at W-2's start on Sept. 1, 1997, and then to 11,000 in April 2000. Eighty percent of W-2 recipients reside in Milwaukee County. Thompson and his Heritage Foundation and Bradley Foundation backers who created W-2 glibly refer to this as "success."

And it was, for them: they succeeded in dismantling one of the greatest and most successful federal entitlement programs largely through a multi-faceted, multi-year racist ideological campaign.

The bureau's report confirms what the Milwaukee-based A Job is a Right Campaign claimed in publications like "The Feeding Trough": that W-2's implementation would result in an ever-wider reserve

pool of super-exploited, low-wage labor, mostly women of color, increasingly at the mercy of an unstable capitalist economy with vastly decreasing safety nets such as subsidized public housing and childcare assistance.

Major corporations, temporary service agencies such as Manpower Inc. and non-profit service agencies are now benefiting the most from W-2.

Furthermore, W-2 has also been used to batter down other long-held publicly controlled institutions like public education.

The evisceration of Social Security could be next, unless an independent class-wide mass movement rises to the occasion and defeats this sure-to-be catastrophic privatization plan.

To view the bureau's report, visit www.legis.state.wi.us/lab.

Pfeifer was an organizer with A Job is A Right Campaign from 1997 to 2002.

Politicians, bosses blame immigrants

Continued from page 1

ifests itself on many issues, from immigration to gay rights.

The CIR Caucus is unabashedly allied with a who's who of right-wing die-hards who have no fear of expressing the most racist language.

Tancredo often leads anti-immigrant events in the capital. At a Washington news conference in February 2005, Tancredo warned that other countries, such as China, are pushing immigration in a global plot to destroy the U.S.

A former Republican representative from San Diego, Brian Bilbray, joined him by saying that the U.S. is creating a "slave class that criminal elements breed in." Bilbray blamed the loss of his 2000 election on undocumented "aliens" who voted against him.

At the event, Barbara Coe, head of the California Coalition for Immigration Reform, repeatedly referred to Mexicans as "savages."

Other anti-immigrant organizations

include StopTheInvasion.com, American Border Patrol, the Center for Immigration Studies, NumbersUSA, Save Our State and U.S. Inc.

Some of their web sites display disgusting, racist pictures. One site asks, "If you can shoot home invaders, why can't you shoot homeland invaders?"

Anti-immigrant sentiment has seeped into environmental groups such as the Sierra Club. Some members attempted to push a resolution for closing the borders against the "tide" of immigrants as a way to curb population growth. Fortunately, they were defeated.

These organizations are not just confined to Washington or states in the Southwest. From North Carolina to New York State to Michigan, their influence has grown.

For example, Lou Dobbs of CNN has recently sought to ratchet up anti-immigrant sentiments with inflammatory coverage. When undocumented Latino immigrants tried to board a plane in North Carolina in order to look for work, they

Gov't wages war on young women and children

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Right-wing forces in the United States continue their ferocious assault on women's reproductive rights.

The House of Representatives passed a bill on April 27 that would make it a federal crime for any adult to accompany a young girl across state lines to seek an abortion without her parents' consent. The Senate will consider a similar bill later this year.

This law follows on the heels of passage of the "Born-Alive Infants Protection Act," signed into law by President George W. Bush in August 2004. The law requires "resuscitation" of aborted fetuses showing certain physical signs, no matter how early the abortion. The bill is another effort by the National Right-to-Life Committee to legally rename the fetus as a "person" as a way to limit abortions. (Catholic Herald)

Parental notification laws have also been part of the reactionary campaign. The result has been serious limitation on access to abortion for the many girls who are victims of incest and rape within their families, or who fear rejection and punishment by their parents for acts of sexual autonomy.

Because of the decades-long attack by reactionary forces, some states, like Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Nebraska, Utah and Wyoming, no longer have abortion clinics. Other states, like Louisiana, have only a few clinics to serve a huge geographical area.

This most recent bill that tightens parental notification would make a felon out of an 18-year-old woman from Idaho who accompanied a frightened 17-year-

old under-age friend forced to travel to Colorado, Montana or Washington State to find a clinic. In fact, any adult person over 18 would be a potential felon if they drove, rode on a bus or train, flew or walked with that young woman so she could bypass punitive parents and have a friend with her as she got her abortion.

Supporters of the right-wing legislation characterize it as "pro-family." These forces rejected an amendment of the bill that would allow grandparents or clergy members to accompany young women. (New York Times, April 28)

A state agency in Florida showed the hypocrisy of the parental consent position on April 30 when it rejected the request of a 13-year-old girl for an abortion. This decision directly contradicted a Florida state law that specifically does not require a minor to obtain parental consent for an abortion.

The young woman, who is three months pregnant and a ward of the state, was told by the Department of Children and Families that she was "too young to choose." The American Civil Liberties Union is mounting a campaign against the ruling. (BBC)

The governor of Florida is President Bush's brother, Jeb Bush.

Racist war on children

The rising right-wing campaign against young women showed its racist face in another brutal attack in Florida in late April.

Schoolteachers called police on a 5-year-old African American girl who became upset and agitated in her math class. A video camera that was turned on in the room at the time captured three

cops wrestling the child and handcuffing her while she cried out for her mother. (BBC)

In New York City, racist attacks against young girls and boys have taken the form of testing new drugs on HIV-positive children who are in group homes, many run by the Catholic Church under the aegis of the city's Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Ninety-nine percent of these 23,000 children are African American or Latin@. (BBC)

A 2004 BBC program, "Guinea Pig Kids," exposed the abuse. The ACS enrolled the children, without their relatives' or guardians' consent, into HIV treatments that were experimental and sickeningly toxic. One skilled pediatric nurse, Jacklyn Hoerger, who saw the horrifying effects of the drug trials, took the children in her care off the medication. For this action she was accused in court of being a "child abuser."

A community group that includes Millions for Reparations, the December 12th Movement, the Circulo Bolivariano and the Harlem Tenants Council has organized under the slogan of "No More Tuskegee Experiments" to fight the government's abuse of children. For more

information, contact: parentsinaction1@yahoo.com.

The first strike of this current war on women and children of color was the passage of the infamous Hyde Amendment in 1976, which banned federal funding of abortions through Medicaid. The war's first victim was Rosie Jimenez. A Chicana resident of Texas, a college student, factory worker and mother, Jimenez died in early 1977 of a back-alley abortion.

The current reactionary attack on women is an extension of that racist, sexist war on poor women—and demands a fighting response.

The attacks challenge the women's movement to return to the grassroots organizing done by groups like the "Janes" of Chicago, who for many years before the passage of Roe v. Wade ran an underground abortion provider service for women of all nationalities who needed their care.

These attacks that focus on children of color, especially young women, challenge the larger women's movement to a special effort to incorporate the needs of children, particularly children of oppressed nationalities, into its current fight for reproductive rights. □

QUEENS, N.Y.

Haitians strike blow against racism

Haitian parents fighting the racist treatment of their children at Public School 34 in Queens, N.Y., have won a partial victory. An assistant principal who forced the children to eat rice and beans with their fingers while sitting on the floor will be fired for "conduct unbecoming."

But the parents and supporters in the Haitian community believe the school's principal tried to cover up the abuse by her assistant. They held a news conference at City Hall April 29 demanding that she be fired too.

For background on the story, see the April 28 edition of Workers World or visit www.workers.org/2005/us/haitian-students-0428/.

—G.D.

were rounded up on the excuse that they only provided Mexican identification papers. Dobbs tried to use the incident to push the "terrorists can seize planes" card.

The immigrant-bashing campaign has resulted in an increase in racist attacks. Immigration-rights activists state that one of the most vulnerable immigrant sectors is day laborers. Because they are highly visible, gathering for jobs at muster zones throughout the country, they are easy targets for hateful vigilantes.

The National Day Laborers organization reports: "Immigrant day laborers were increasingly targeted and victimized in organized attacks in 2004. Day laborers across the country experienced a sharp rise in violent attacks, civil rights violations and workplace rights abuse."

Day laborers are sometimes depicted in the media as "invaders," not as workers forced to come here because of U.S. policies such as NAFTA. Immigrants are blamed for the deterioration of living conditions and for loss of jobs.

Behind the scapegoating

While the organized right wing groups may be small, their sentiment has the backing of the entire capitalist ruling class, notwithstanding some tactical differences.

Historically, the capitalist class has manipulated the immigration issue to serve its interests. When workers are needed in abundance, when cheap labor is easy to control and exploit, anti-immigrant sentiment decreases.

But an economic crisis is looming in the U.S. The huge budget deficit and the ongoing spending for war are leading to cutbacks and eventually mass layoffs. Whenever their policies lead to greater

suffering for the workers, they always look for scapegoats.

The immigrant community, on the other hand, is not only growing—it is organizing. More and more, immigrants are coming out of the shadows, with or without documents, demanding their rights. Many are influenced by revolutionary developments in Latin America and the Caribbean. Heightened class- and anti-imperialist consciousness are on the rise.

The right-wing, anti-immigrant sentiment in the U.S. may be well-organized and well-financed, but it can be defeated. It does not represent the sentiment of the working class in this country, which is the majority.

The right wing may influence a sector of the working class to take anti-immigrant positions, but those sentiments can be reversed among many, if not most, workers.

The working-class movement can point out, for example, that it is not immigrants who shut down plants in this country to go abroad where labor is even more exploited. It is the bosses who do that.

In this age of imperialism, capital is free to cross borders in search of tremendous profits. This lays the basis for a worldwide, united, multinational and international response to capitalist profiteers. An example of this unity was May Day 2005 in the U.S. Rallies may have been only in the thousands, but around the world millions joined in.

Right now, it is imperative that U.S.-born workers of all nationalities organize the utmost unconditional solidarity with immigrants—not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it serves their class interests. □

Millions come out for May Day

Continued from page 8

The Consulting Group for Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES) said in a recent report entitled "The Ostrich Policy" that 778 people were displaced every day and 11 killed every 24 hours during the first quarter of this year. The report identifies the Patriot Plan as the principal cause of the displacements.

Sinaltrainal, the union representing Coca-Cola bottling plant workers, lost nine of its members last year at the hands of paramilitaries in the service of the soft-drink giant. These crimes continue with impunity with the complicity of both the Colombian and U.S. governments. Yet the struggle continues and gets stronger, despite the repression, massacres, displacements and selective assassinations.

Sinaltrainal struggles not only for its members, to save their lives, but for a just and democratic Colombia. Unions are joining with other unarmed civilian organizations to bring changes for the benefit of the masses. The people in Colombia are waging the most courageous struggle in the continent.

And this May Day, according to Fabio Arias, vice-president of the United Workers Center (CUT), was the largest ever in Colombia, with the participation of 2 million people—100,000 in Bogotá alone.

In Brazil, where the Landless Move-

ment MST had initiated an 11,000-strong march from Pernambuco to Brasilia demanding land reform on May 1, more than 1 million attended a May Day march in Sao Paulo, Brazil's capital.

In Mexico, where, according to the Electrical, Social Security and Telephone workers' unions, half of the population survive on less than \$7 a day and nine out of 10 peasants do not receive even minimum wage, tens of thousands demonstrated against President Vicente Fox, accusing him of being a "lackey of the United States and the World Bank."

In Ecuador, where the masses last month forced out President Lucio Gutiérrez, leaving his vice president, Alfredo Palacio, in charge, 10,000 workers demonstrated, chanting "Palacio out, Congress out, everybody out." They also carried giant banners against the Free Trade agreement.

Demonstrations were held in almost every country of South and Central America and the Caribbean, including Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Nicaragua—where protests have been held recently against the neoliberal government of Enrique Bolaños—and Puerto Rico. The progressive sector of the unions in this island colony of Washington joined in solidarity with organizations waging a struggle against the privatization of beaches by U.S. corporations. □

REVIVING MAY DAY ACROSS

Cities rally coast to coast

By LeiLani Dowell

The May Day rallies held this year across the United States reflect the growing current that is leading a broad fightback against the cuts in social programs, oppression, racism and war that are endemic to capitalism.

In Chicago, where May Day originated in the struggle for an eight-hour work day, a delegation of Colombian trade unionists installed a plaque at Haymarket Square Memorial to honor Colombian workers who have been killed trying to organize unions.

LOS ANGELES

About 100 people attended a May Day Rally at MacArthur Park in Los Angeles, called by the International Action Center, and co-sponsored by BAYAN-USA, Million Worker March Movement and the South Asian Network. The fightback against both President George W. Bush's and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's attacks on workers and the need to end U.S. occupations were major themes at the rally.

Many saw the day as a fitting occasion to define the war on workers as part of the class struggle against capitalism and the need for socialism. Overall, what came across in every talk was the view that it is workers and their struggles that make real change in society.

The event boasted an impressive rostrum of speakers. Among them were Haskell Wexler, vice president of IATSE Local 600 and Academy Award-winning cinematographer who worked on classic films such as "Matewan" and "Salt of the Earth."

Rally speakers represented various unions, social justice and international solidarity organizations, including United Teachers of Los Angeles, FMLN, CISPES, Pacifica's KPFK radio station, Peace and Freedom Party, Korea Truth Commission, Workers World Party, San Pedro Neighbors for Peace and Justice and the Puerto Rican Alliance.

Organizers of the May 1 event also endorsed, promoted and spoke at a march and rally of thousands on April 30, organized by the immigrant rights group MIWON to demand full legal rights for immigrants.

Melissa Roxas from HabiArts/BAYAN-USA and John Parker from IAC.

WW PHOTO: JULIA LA RIVA
BELOW RIGHT WW PHOTO: BETSEY PIETTE



PHOTO: BEV TANG/ANAKBAYAN/LOS ANGELES
Haskell Wexler

DENVER

In Denver, people came out in 30-degree weather, some having traveled on icy roads through the snow, for a spirited rally at the City and County Building.

Larry Hales, a representative of the Denver Troops Out Now coalition discussed the reclamation of May Day and its importance in helping to broaden the anti-war struggle. He also talked about the Million Worker March Movement, how it is strengthening the anti-war movement and taking the lead in linking the struggle against imperialism to the struggle against the war on the poor and workers in this country.

Embattled activist Shareef Aleem spoke about the struggle against police brutality. Other speakers discussed the REAL ID Act and the dangers it poses for immigrant workers, as well as the fight against a \$600 million city and county jail proposal. Representatives of the Service Employees union and Vietnam Veterans Against the War also addressed the crowd.

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

In Charlotte, N.C., people gathered at Independence Park for a "Jobs Not War—Hands Off Social Security" May Day Rally called by the Action Center For Justice.

David Dixon, coordinator of the center, gave a brief history of May Day and Haymarket Square. The rally then became a people's speak-out as those present introduced themselves and explained why they came.

There was general agreement about the need to struggle against the multitude of attacks Bush has unleashed on working people here, as well as the war and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mohammed Ismail, a Palestinian-American activist, spoke about the injustice of the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Brenda Sandburg and Scott Scheffer contributed to this article.



LOS ANGELES



Maria Cristina Iglesias

Greetings from Venezuela

Following are excerpts from an April 15 interview with Maria Cristina Iglesias, Venezuelan minister of labor, during the April 13-17 Third World Gathering in Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution in Caracas. Steven Gillis, president of Steel Workers Local 8751 (Boston school bus drivers) conducted the interview.

We here in Venezuela are immensely proud of the working people in the U.S. We know that there are more people in the United States who are working people and who have shared many struggles with us. We



WW PHOTOS: BRENDA SANDBURG

SAN FRANCISCO Trent Willis, Keith Shanklin, Shane Hoff

May Day celebration draws labor activists

By Brenda Sandburg
San Francisco

The spirit of labor leader Harry Bridges could be felt in San Francisco May 1, as members of his union celebrated International Workers Day with a call for renewed resistance to exploitation, racism and war.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union Locals 10 and 34 and the Million Worker March Movement held a rally at a plaza named after Bridges, the renowned ILWU leader who led the militant labor strike of 1934. About 150 labor activists and supporters gathered to reclaim May Day.

Trent Willis, ILWU Local 10 president and one of the founders of the Million Worker March Movement, remembered the workers who were killed demonstrating at Chicago's Haymarket Square and the labor leaders who were hung by the government afterwards.

"Working people saw the need for the eight-hour work day so they could come home to their families instead of being worked to death," Willis said. "We pay homage to those who sacrificed their lives, just as those who sacrificed fighting for the

[Local 10] union hall down the street."

"May Day is about organizing," said ILWU Local 34 President Richard Cavalli. "That's the way we put pressure on the government, the way we keep Social Security in place. The only way workers of this world can get the job done is to organize."

Patricia Jackson of Hands Off Social Security and the Grey Panthers said the Bush administration would try to divide workers just as it sought to pit elders and youths against each other. She said California Republican Congressperson Bill Thomas is the point person to attack not only Social Security, but also pensions, long-term health care and all aspects of retirement. "We won't let that happen," she said.

Willis and MWMM organizer Keith Shanklin of ILWU Local 34 chaired the rally. Others who spoke included Harold Brown, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555; Alan Hollie, community liaison of ATU Local 1555; Alan Benjamin, San Francisco Labor Council delegate, AFL-CIO; Ralph Schoenman, UAW 1981; and Dick Becker, ANSWER. The ILWU drill team also marched in formation.

Shane Hoff of the San Francisco Bus Drivers United Transportation Union Local 1741 and the International Action Center praised the Million Worker March Movement, which organized thousands of people to march in Washington, D.C., last October.

"The leaders of the Million Worker March stood up and walked up a steep hill of threats, backstabbing and attacks to do what needed to be done," Hoff said. "They have earned the right to give leadership because nothing important in the liberation of masses has ever been achieved without taking risks and being brave."

Hoff thanked the MWMM for making the reclaiming of May Day one of its top priorities. □

know that many of you work and struggle along with the Venezuelan people. We feel proud to let you know that what we have in Venezuelan is a revolutionary democracy. It is a democratic process and we welcome you to that process.

You are welcome here to visit us at any time and we would like to share our struggles and your struggles together as the brothers and sisters that we are.

We send you huge hugs and kisses on May Day. Long live peace, equality and justice for all. No to neo-liberalism; yes to peace and justice; yes to the brotherhood of the working people. United we are undefeatable and invincible! □

CROSS THE U.S.

Militant labor leaders join with anti-war forces

By Deirdre Griswold
New York

This city is known around the world as the capital of high finance, the home of Wall Street and of thousands of giant banks and corporations whose glass-encased steel towers scrape the sky. Its stock exchanges are linked to investors across the globe through an intricate web of communications. Its mayor, Michael Bloomberg, became a billionaire selling financial reports through Bloomberg News.

But on May 1, another New York reached out to a different world.

For the first time in many years, leaders of working class struggles joined anti-war forces to reclaim May Day, the International Workers' Day that is honored by millions of workers from Asia and Europe to the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. Yet it had been effectively suppressed in the United States—even though it originated here with the struggle for the eight-hour day in 1886.

This year's revived May Day started with a rally in Union Square—where huge worker demonstrations in the 1930s had shaken the capitalist bosses to the soles of their feet. After listening to a wide variety of speakers, 1,000 people of many different nationalities carrying bright banners and placards marched through a working class shopping district to the East Side. They paused at two hospitals threatened with closing while chanting, "The workers united will never be defeated" and "Money for health care, not for war."

This and other U.S. demonstrations to revive May Day in this country were an outgrowth of last October's Million Worker March in Washington, which called for militant working-class action independent of the big business political parties. The largely Black-led MWM Movement has teamed up in New York with the Troops Out Now Coalition, a group of community, labor and anti-war forces that met weekly for several months shaping and building the May Day event.

Almost until the last day, they had to wrestle with police and picket City Hall for the right to march. And when the sound permit for Union Square expired at 5 p.m. during the final wind-up rally, eight cops marched up one second later and rudely pulled the plug in the middle of remarks by Charles Jenkins, a Transit Workers Union activist and member of the MWMM.

MWMM leaders Clarence Thomas, Brenda Stokely and Chris Silvera had revved up the crowd earlier with strong speeches urging a revival of labor militancy in the U.S.

Thomas had flown in from San Francisco, where he is a well-known militant in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. His political roots, he proudly explained to the crowd, go back to the 1960s and the Black Panther Party. Thomas reviewed the glorious history of his union, which has many times walked off the docks in support of workers' movements and liberation struggles in other countries—like the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. It was putting into action labor's great slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all," he explained.

Brenda Stokely represents thousands of New York City day care workers and is president of AFSCME District Council 1707. She urged the union members present to organize to make their leaders fight, and if they won't, "then change your leaders." Going over the struggles of workers today for jobs, health care and other necessities of life that are becoming increasingly hard to get, she was optimistic. "We can win these things," she said. "It's not just in my imagination. Look at Cuba. They have won these rights and we can, too."

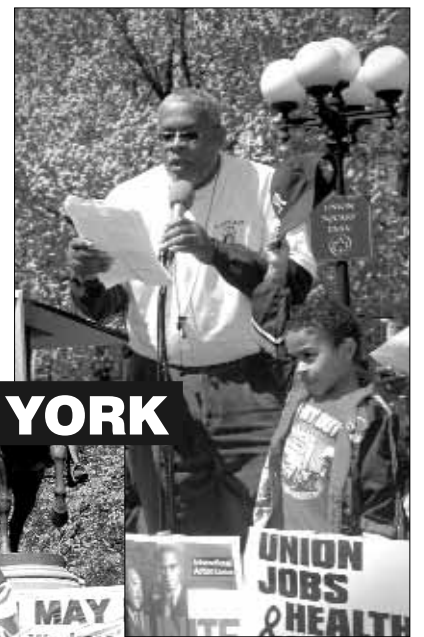
Chris Silvera is chair of the Teamsters National Black Caucus and a leader of Teamsters Local 808 in the borough of Queens. Standing alongside placards reading "Stop attacks on workers' rights" and "Union jobs and health care, not war," he posed a list of challenging questions to the audience. "Why does a \$400-billion war budget pass without debate while health care and education are stalled in Congress?" he asked. "Why won't the AFL-CIO organize a national strike to fight for them?"

The audience listened intently to workers from a wide range of struggles, both here in the U.S. and abroad.

Immigrant workers were represented by Casa Freehold in New Jersey, where day laborers, most of them Mexican, have waged a long battle for the right to muster each morning at a public location seek to jobs. A group of Dominican workers was also in the march.

Two women trying to organize workers at the pricey Starbucks coffee house chain told how one of them had been fired just weeks earlier. But they are determined to continue to fight for a union there.

A group of maintenance workers from the Bromley Heath housing project in



NEW YORK



Clockwise: Speakers Brenda Stokely, Charles Jenkins, Chris Silvera, Larry Holmes and Clarence Thomas (in center).

Boston told about their efforts to win a decent contract and stop cuts in public housing funds.

The rally moved seamlessly back and forth between domestic and international issues, showing that there really are no borders in the workers' struggle.

Gerardo Cajamarca of the embattled Sinaltrainal food industry union in Colombia, whose members include Coca-Cola bottling plant workers, talked of the violence against unionists there that has spurred the union to launch its "Killer Coke" boycott.

The Filipino group Bayan had organized a feeder march to the rally. A member of the Damayan Migrant Workers Association described how Third World women "bear the brunt of exploitation by multinational corporations, the IMF-WTO and World Bank."

A message was read from Ben Dupuy, whose National Popular Party in Haiti is fighting for workers' rights and an end to the U.S.-imposed dictatorship there. Police have fired on peaceful protesters in Port-au-Prince in recent weeks.

A large Palestinian flag waved as Samia Halaby of Al-Awda urged support for the

Palestinian people's struggle to recover their homeland and for the right of those in the diaspora to return home.

Troops out now!

Leaders of the Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC)—Nellie Bailey of the Harlem Tenants Council, Larry Holmes and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center, and Dustin Langley of No Draft No Way—kept everyone aware of the intimate connection between the attacks on workers' rights and services here at home and the costly colonial occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Teresa Gutierrez explained the importance of the struggle to free the Cuban 5, who are held in U.S. jails for trying to protect their homeland from U.S.-sponsored terrorism.

LeiLani Dowell of Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) spoke for young people who are demanding jobs and education instead of an economic draft that has forced so many youth into the military.

Continued on page 10

Clockwise — Gerardo Cajamarca (with Chavez poster), Casa Freehold immigrant workers, FIST contingent

WW PHOTOS: JOHN CATALINOTTO, DEIRDRE GRISWOLD, LIZ GREEN, G. DUNKEL



MAY DAY 2005

Workers raise voices & fists worldwide

By Cheryl LaBash

The struggle is on to reclaim May Day—International Workers Day—in its birthplace, the United States. But throughout the world, workers, peasants, oppressed people and students already embrace the legacy of the 1886 Haymarket martyrs. They celebrate May 1 as a day to further their fight for unity, jobs and social justice, and against the U.S. war machine.

They may be in the mountains of Nepal or the plains of Mozambique, the islands of Asia or the imperialist capitals of Europe. But on May 1, 2005, workers around the world in marches and gatherings in the tens, hundreds and hundreds of thousands voiced their demands against global imperialist devastation.

In Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, tens of thousands of workers marched against HIV/AIDS, but voiced economic issues, too. The workers from a local beverage bottler demanded 16 months back wages since Coca-Cola drove the manufac-

turer out of business.

In Kimberly, South Africa, the president of the National Union of Metalworkers encouraged workers to organize to fight job cuts, hitting DeBeers for massive layoffs.

Thousands of Indonesian workers in Jakarta, Surabaya, Surakarta and Bandung joined with students demanding free education and health care. Workers in Surabaya demanded the government protect migrant workers and the rights of all workers by rejecting free trade deals.

Workers in Malaysia are fighting privatization of water and health care, resulting in higher costs for necessities. Thousands of workers, political and grassroots activists demonstrated under the banner of "Globalization erodes workers rights."

Three different protests in Istanbul, Turkey defied the govern-

ment ban on May Day protests and refused to disperse. Police attacked demonstrators with tear gas and detained at least 47 people.

Workers raised anti-war themes in Japan and the Chinese province of Taiwan.

Over half a million German workers demonstrated against corporate attacks on wages and jobs, just one example of the mobilizations throughout Europe. "Ukraine is not an American state," said workers in Kiev.

In Moscow tens of thousands with red flags demanded higher minimum wages. In an hour-long standoff with the OMON political police, the Red Youth Vanguard demanded and won the release of six young activists detained for burning a photograph of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In Colombia, on May Day a delegation of trade unionists installed a plaque to honor Colombian workers who have been killed trying to organize unions. The Million Worker March leaders addressed a Venezuela May Day rally via live feed. And in Japan the national railway union held a May Day rally in coordination with the MWM Movement. □



In Latin America, Caribbean

Millions come out for May Day

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Throughout Latin America the commemoration of May Day was once again a reminder that the majority of the peoples south of the Rio Grande are not willing to allow the United States to impose so-called "free trade" agreements on them. From Mexico to Argentina, unions and social organizations mobilized, honoring the legacy of the Chicago heroes of 1886 while bringing into focus the local issues particular to each country—all of them voicing specific demands on their own governments.

Many of the demonstrations were products of unified coalitions of labor unions and social and popular movements. However, in Nicaragua and Puerto Rico, different rallies were held by opposing groups, reflecting deep diverging political ideologies and representing positions of adherence to or rejection of the United States and its neoliberal imperialist policies.

This year's May Day came on the heels of the controversial trip of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to several Latin American countries. Her trip has been

viewed in the region as an attempt by the Bush administration to rally forces for a Latin American "coalition of the willing" against democratically elected Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez.

But Rice had to tone down her hostile pronouncements against Chávez because, with the exception of Colombia, where President Álvaro Uribe Vélez is a U.S. puppet and its closest ally in South America, Latin American leaders rejected her demands for the isolation of Venezuela—politely but firmly.

In Brazil, the first country visited, Rice tried to curry favor by calling it "a remarkable and emerging power in the region." However, when she used the occasion to urge Venezuela to "live up to the democratic principles in the charter of the Organization of American States," Celso Amorim, the Brazilian foreign minister, reportedly answered that Brazil will "always, of course, observe the sovereignty of Venezuela," and that "in any society, if problems exist, they should be solved by the people of the country itself."

Rice's visit seems to have fueled more animosity, if this is possible, against

Washington's attempt to totally dominate the continent, which was palpable in the May Day events.

The rallies in Cuba, Venezuela and Colombia had the highest turnout in years, with a combined total of more than 5 million people.

In Cuba, according to Prensa Latina, 1.3 million people gathered in historic Revolution Square. Presided over by Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro, the gathering was also attended by many union representatives from around the world who had been part of the Fourth Hemispheric Conference against the Free Trade Area of the Americas, held recently in Havana. A total of 60 percent of Cuba's population attended simultaneous rallies held throughout the island.

The main topic there was Washington's anti-Cuba policy, particularly the outrageous act of the imperialists in allowing Luis Posada Carriles to recently enter the United States. The case of Posada Carriles exposes the hypocrisy and double talk in Washington's "anti-terrorism" rhetoric.

Posada Carriles was found guilty of participating in the bombing of a Cubana airliner in 1976 that killed 73 people. He was jailed in Venezuela—long before Hugo Chávez became president—but escaped after eight years with the help of a right-wing Cuban American connected to the CIA, Jorge Mas Canosa.

Posada Carriles was also involved in the "Iran-Contra" scandal, importing large quantities of cocaine to the U.S., and has been linked to a recent string of bombings in Cuba.

Bolivarian revolution gaining momentum

Shortly before May Day, Chávez had visited Cuba and signed new agreements within the framework of ALBA—the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas—a thorough economic, cultural and social development program between both countries initiated last December.

This cooperation between Cuba and Venezuela is giving enormous strength to the powerful anti-imperialist forces developing throughout Latin America.

Chávez returned home from Cuba for a May Day rally that highlighted the role of the Venezuelan workers in the Bolivarian

Revolution. Addressing more than a million people, Chávez spoke at length about the advances of the revolution and the tasks ahead in constructing what is called "Bolivarian socialism." But he also cautioned the masses to be vigilant about attempts by the U.S. to destroy the revolution.

Recent developments that challenge capitalist property relations and modes of production in Venezuela were visible in slogans that workers chanted or wrote on banners: "Co-management is revolution," "Venezuelan workers are building Bolivarian socialism," "Co-management and production: All power to the workers."

The most progressive Venezuelan workers are rapidly pushing forward the development of workers' collectives to take control of companies, with the help of the state, in order to benefit the people.

Starting with Venepal, a company that was taken over and run by the workers after its owners filed for bankruptcy, the government has been following the workers' lead. Now this paper industry is being run by the workers and the state through co-management and has been renamed Invepal. It is a model that is spreading like wildfire throughout the country.

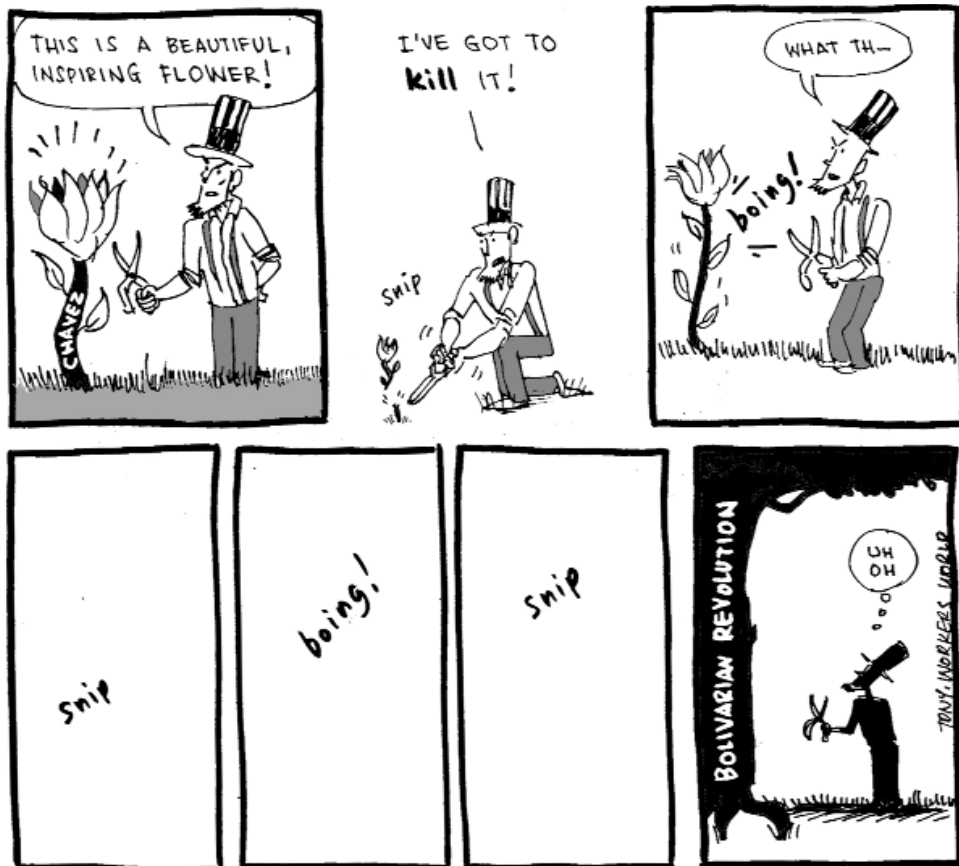
The question being raised now is how to initiate co-management in private firms. Because the workers have raised it through the National Workers Union (UNT), the largest and most progressive workers' confederation that was formed a year ago, it will be debated in the National Assembly.

Repression can't stop Colombia's May Day

In neighboring Colombia, the treatment of the workers by the government is a different story. Nine out of 10 union leaders killed in the world in recent years have been Colombians. Their struggle is not for co-management but for sheer survival.

President Uribe, undoubtedly urged on by the U.S., introduced a so-called Patriot Plan aimed at destroying unions and the vigorous social movements that oppose his policies of selling out the country's resources to transnational corporations. This repression poses a grave danger to Afro-Colombians, the Indigenous, peasants, workers and human rights defenders.

Continued to page 5



Iraq causing big trouble for Pentagon

By John Catalinotto

According to reports from the U.S. military command, 150 people were killed in fighting in Iraq from April 28 to May 2 in dozens of battles. While this overall total fails to explain all that is going on, it indicates once more that the resistance movement which sprung up after the start of the U.S. occupation in April 2003 is still gaining momentum.

Most independent news media have left Iraq by now, making it harder to get an accurate assessment of developments there. A careful reading of the news indicates, however, that the Pentagon is bogged down by a grinding occupation. The new puppet government assembled through manipulated elections held last January is still incapable of fully taking office. The "coalition of the willing" is dwindling to only the most servile of U.S. client states. And the Iraqi people's suffering continues.

The U.S. Defense Department has issued a report to Italy trying to justify the shooting of Italian Secret Service officer Nicola Calipari by U.S. troops as he was transporting journalist Giuliana Sgrena to the Baghdad airport on March 4. This declassified report, leaked to the press in a visually censored PDF file, became whole again with a few clicks of a mouse and was published in *Corriere della Sera*, the major Italian newspaper.

It revealed that between November and March 12, in greater Baghdad alone, there were some 3,306 clashes with the Iraqi resistance forces, some 2,400 of them attacks on the occupation troops. This includes the period just before and after the Jan. 30 "elections" that were supposed to have been quiet. Twenty to 40 attacks a day is far from quiet.

On the road to the Baghdad airport, known as the "Death Strip," there were 135 attacks, or more than one per day. U.S. Joint Chiefs Chair Gen. Richard Myers said on April 26 that the resistance was about "where it was a year ago." This is probably a very optimistic assessment, from Myers' point of view.

Government in Baghdad?

Meanwhile, the new Iraqi parliament was unable to form a government until the

end of April. Despite serious U.S. arm twisting, the "officials" hadn't taken office. Finally, on April 29 they announced a government, but by May 3 five important ministerial posts—including defense, oil and industry—were still without permanent assignments.

Washington is having about as much success with its "coalition of the willing" as it is with the Iraqi puppet government. Even regimes like those in Poland and Ukraine, whose leaders go out of their way to appease U.S. demands, have had to announce that they are pulling out of Iraq. Their populations are so opposed to the war that if the governments continue to risk the lives of the youths in Iraq they may soon lose their elected positions at home.

Britain's Tony Blair, the most useful of Bush's allies—who still has 8,000 troops in Iraq—is himself suffering with the voters in this war, which is very unpopular in Britain. If his opponents weren't so right wing, they might present a serious challenge in the upcoming elections. As it is, his dishonest conduct of the war has

become the major campaign issue.

In Italy, with Premier Silvio Berlusconi already in trouble for his anti-worker economic policy, the war is another thorn in his side. On top of this, the killing of Calipari has humiliated the Italian premier.

So in order for Berlusconi to avoid appearing like a complete tool of Bush, Italy has had to issue its own assessment of the shooting on the Baghdad airport road. This account refutes U.S. assertions that the Italian car was speeding or that it received adequate warning.

U.S. shows its weakness

Gen. Myers issued another report on May 2, this one to the U.S. Congress. In it he outlined the shortcomings in U.S. military options caused by the continued need for 138,000 troops in Iraq and another 17,000 in Afghanistan.

Myers would never give the impression of serious weakness or admit publicly that the U.S. military was unable to win a particular war. Still, he told Congress that, because of Iraq, any additional major com-

bat operations "may result in significantly extended campaign timelines and achieving campaign objectives may result in higher casualties and collateral damage."

There's another aspect Myers didn't mention.

This report came out on May 3. In April, for the third straight month, the Army failed to recruit its quota of troops. It has recruited only 85 percent of its target through April 30.

Recruiting is even more of a problem in the National Guard and Reserves. In March, the Army Reserve signed up barely half its target of 1,600. For the period from October 2004 through March, it recruited only 82 percent of its goal.

It took tens of thousands of soldiers being killed in Vietnam before the so-called Vietnam Syndrome took hold among the rank-and-file troops.

After 1,576 official deaths and somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 serious injuries in Iraq, an "Iraq Syndrome" is already spreading through the population. □

War crimes in Iraq? U.S. must pay

By John Catalinotto

Belgian doctors carried out five operations on a young Iraqi woman to repair leg wounds caused by a U.S. cluster bomb. Wanting to add some justice to this humanitarian act, the doctors handed a bill for 51,570 euros (\$66,650) to the U.S. Embassy in Brussels on April 28.

The young woman, Hiba Kassim, was wounded in her leg, hip and abdomen by the bomb during the U.S. invasion two years ago. The same bomb killed her brother. The doctors, from Medical Aid for the Third World (MATW), brought Kassim to Belgium in 2004 in an attempt to save her ankle. At this time she is able to walk, but with a limp.

In the letter to the U.S. Embassy demanding payment, Dr. Bert de Belder of MATW wrote April 25:

"Hiba is aware of the fact that war and occupation continue to make life very hard for her family, neighbors and friends. But this young girl, who turned 15 just last

week, is determined to return to her country. She intends to study hard and hopes to become a doctor and serve her people.

"Hiba is also convinced of the fact that the U.S. government is the prime responsible for her people's suffering, and the sole responsible for her own, personal suffering.

"We hold the U.S. government accountable ... First, U.S. troops hit Hiba with a cluster bomb, while, according to International Humanitarian Law, targeting civilians in an international armed conflict is prohibited, as is the use of cluster bombs or ammunition in civilian areas.

"Second, Hiba was not able to get proper medical care, while according to the Fourth Geneva Convention (Articles 50, 55 and 56), the occupying power has the duty of ensuring the medical supplies of the population and of ensuring

and maintaining the medical and hospital establishments and services in the occupied territory.

"As a humanitarian agency, we decided to step in and try, to the best of our ability, to provide Hiba Kassim with the care and the opportunities that the U.S. occupation of her country denied her. But we promised to Hiba and to the broad group of supporters and sympathizers—including Olympic medalist and multiple world and European judo champion Gella Vandecaveye — that we would send the bill to the U.S. government."

Dr. Geert van Moorter, who spoke in the U.S. last year of his experiences in Iraq, accompanied Kassim to Amman, Jordan, where her father met her. □



Hiba Kassim

Cité Soleil, pro-Aristide forces under siege

By G. Dunkel

Despite growing misery and hunger made worse by the deliberate actions of the current, illegal government in Haiti; despite summary executions by the Haitian National Police (PNH) and United Nations occupation forces; despite the weapons the U.S. is shipping to the coup regime; despite the roundups aimed at removing the most militant supporters of deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from political activity—the people of Haiti have not wavered.

With each fresh outrage, Haitians grow more determined to end the occupation of their country. They want to be rid of the officials illegally installed after the U.S.-organized kidnapping of Aristide on Feb. 29, 2004, including de facto President Boniface Alexandre and Prime Minister Gerard Latortue. They want their constitution and their democratically-elected president restored.

Cité Soleil, a working-class area of Port-au-Prince and hotbed of Aristide support, has been isolated from the rest of Haiti since mid-April. Anyone entering

or leaving is subjected to a body search by UN troops, backed up by the PNH.

The UN claims its aim is to thwart "bandits" in Cité Soleil. "Bandits" is the term the UN, the PNH and the U.S. now use to describe Aristide supporters.

Cité Soleil is often described as a poor neighborhood. But "neighborhood" hides the fact that 900,000 people live there—most in tiny, dilapidated houses in alleys so narrow that two people can't walk side-by-side.

About 100 residents of Cité Soleil have been killed so far in this UN/PNH operation. The Associated Press reported that UN forces also killed five protesters outside their headquarters in Port-au-Prince April 27.

René Monplaisir, spokesperson for the Fanmi Lavalas party militants of Cité Soleil, said on April 15, "The UN soldiers, locked up in their armored tanks, shoot on all those who naively venture too close to their vehicles, regarding them as bandits."

UN spokesperson Elouafi Boulbars warned residents to clear out of their homes. "I advise the inhabitants of Port-au-Prince and Cité Soleil in particular to

move out of the hot zones during the exchanges of fire and to keep children from approaching these places. This will greatly facilitate our task."

Bel Air is the other pro-Aristide stronghold in Port-au-Prince. On April 20, Bel Air residents decided to show their solidarity by breaking the blockade of Cité Soleil. About 10,000 gathered and marched through the capital, "escorted" by UN soldiers. When they got to Cité Soleil, the soldiers tried to break up the demonstration by firing into the air.

Many marchers didn't flee. They kept bringing bags of food into Cité Soleil. One demonstrator said, "We are making this gesture of solidarity for our brothers and sisters in Cité Soleil who are undergoing such travails."

U.S. lifts arms embargo

While the U.S. currently wants to operate in the background in Haiti, it has decided to lift the arms embargo it unilaterally imposed 13 years ago when Aristide won his first election, the Associated Press confirmed April 28.

Washington's hand-picked puppet,

Gerard Latortue, feels he doesn't have enough firepower to handle the opposition from Aristide's Fanmi Lavalas, along with the challenges from the far-right Tonton Macoute death squads. The Macoutes want to reestablish the army and bring back the Duvalierist dictatorship that preceded Aristide's first presidency.

Ginette Apollon, president of the National Commission of Women Workers (CNFT), was arrested upon her return from the World Meeting in Solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, along with her husband, Paul "Loulou" Chery, and brother-in-law Lamour Chery. Loulou is general coordinator of the Confederation of Haitian Workers (CTH), the largest trade union in Haiti.

Apollon was charged with bringing back money from Venezuela to finance violence in Haiti. When they searched Apollon and her luggage, police found just 350 Haitian gourds (about \$13) and \$23 U.S. dollars.

The three were released but their case remains open. □



U.S. hands off Assata Shakur!

Across the world, progressive people stand in solidarity with Assata Shakur. This revolutionary, a former member of the Black Liberation Army, was shot twice by New Jersey police officers in 1973, and then sent to prison for the death of one of the officers.

When she escaped prison six years later, the revolutionary government of Cuba opened its arms and offered her asylum.

Now the U.S. Department of Justice has raised the bounty on Shakur to \$1 million. Just as it has done to socialist Cuba, where imperialism suffered a defeat that it hasn't been able to reverse, the United States wants to punish Shakur—whose first name means “she who struggles”—for daring to struggle and daring to win.

A number of Black organizations and other progressives are understandably outraged with this announcement and see it as an attack on the struggle of Black and other oppressed peoples to the right of self-determination.

Just like Cuba's embodiment of a

socialist future, Shakur embodies the heroic struggle for Black liberation from racist repression that the United States has tried to silence for so long. Both Cuba and Shakur have survived, and workers and oppressed everywhere are emboldened by their example. To the United States, and imperialism as a whole, there is no greater crime.

As the imperialists watch resistance movements grow worldwide, coupled with growing resistance to repression and oppression at home, it becomes all the more important to them that workers not hear voices of hope. This is why Washington has recently increased travel restrictions to Cuba. And this is why it has raised the bounty on Shakur by \$850,000.

Meanwhile, the United States ruling class brings death, destruction and misery to working and oppressed peoples around the world. If anyone should have a bounty on their head, it's the top echelons of the U.S. government, for their crimes against humanity around the world. □

An injury to all

Social Security and Medicaid are under attack. These are two government programs vital for the working class. They have one important difference. But the defense of both programs should be at the top of the list for the entire working class.

Social Security is known as an “entitlement.” That means it has already been promised to the workers, all the workers, who have made contributions to the program throughout their working life. Almost everyone is included, and everyone believes they deserve the payments.

High-paid workers, even managers, get Social Security pensions. Low-paid workers get enough to survive on, if barely. Dependents, including spouses, get pensions even if the work they did throughout their lives went unpaid—as in raising children. Disabled and injured workers also receive payments. It is an extremely popular program, as Bush is finding out to his dismay as he campaigns to tear it down.

Medicaid pays for health care, but only for the very poor. It has shortcomings, but it is much, much better than what would be available to poor workers if Medicaid were cut. Like welfare—which the Democratic Clinton administration began dismantling in 1996—Medicaid is more vulnerable than Social Security because it aids a smaller and more oppressed population. It has a smaller base of support among the working class.

When a program like Medicaid or welfare is undercut, this smashes down the very poor, including a disproportionate number of people of color. And that eventually drags the entire working class down.

The ruling class has aimed at destroying Social Security ever since the workers won the plan in the 1930s. Bush's latest scam has the same goal. While pretending he wants to “save Social Security,” he says he needs to lower the payments to all but the very poorest workers.

Can anyone believe that Bush is acting in the interest of the very poor? No way. Just like his scheme to privatize Medicaid, this one aims to wreck it. His plan cuts pensions for the bulk of ordinary workers up to the most affluent.

His goal is to undercut the current, almost universal working-class support for Social Security by dividing the workers, so that the program, like welfare and Medicaid, is more vulnerable. A sign that people are beginning to see through this scam could be seen in the April issue of the American Association of Retired People's newsletter. The AARP published two major articles, one defending Social Security and one defending Medicaid.

The old union slogan, “An injury to one is an injury to all,” should be on everyone's mind as they mobilize to defend Social Security and Medicaid for the benefit of the entire working class. □

WW interviews Al-Awda leader: 'U.S. is where things have to change'

The following interview was conducted April 27 by Adrian Garcia of the Los Angeles chapter of Workers World Party with Zahi Damuni, member of Al-Awda's executive and coordinating committees and director of its San Diego Chapter. Damuni has been at the forefront of the struggle to have the Palestinian resistance recognized in the anti-war movement in San Diego.

Workers World: When and why was Al-Awda established?

Zahi Damuni: Al-Awda was established in April 2000 in response to the Camp David Accords which had ignored the right of return for Palestinian refugees. Palestinians were nervous about the implications of the Camp David Accords and we mobilized. The day after the anniversary of the Deir Yassin Massacre, April 13, 2000, the Trans Arab Research Institute held a conference in Boston. This concerted, coordinated conference was the first major event to focus on the Palestinian refugees' right of return.

WW: Could you describe the significance of the Deir Yassin massacre?

ZD: The Deir Yassin Massacre occurred April 12, 1948, creating the first wave of Palestinian refugees. The massacre was orchestrated by the Irgun, which was headed by Menachim Begin, later Israel's prime minister. It was also the establishment of the occupation of Palestinian lands.

WW: Some Palestinian critics claimed that Arafat and the Palestinians who negotiated the Camp David Accords were promised everything and walked away from it. What is your response to this claim?

ZD: Well, its nonsense. Why would anyone walk away from everything? Israeli Prime Minister Barak laid claim to portions of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israel would also maintain control of Palestinian borders, airspace, ports, post offices and roads. How can a state be considered sovereign when it does not control such important aspects? Worst of all, the right of return for refugees was dismissed altogether.

WW: What is the approximate number of refugees around the world?

ZD: There are between 5 million and 8 million refugees, 3.5 million of which are registered with the United Nations.

WW: What are the legal aspects for the right of return of Palestinian refugees?

ZD: International law guarantees the inalienable, fundamental and legal right of return for refugees. Article 13 of the United Nations Charter of Human Rights specifically addresses the right of refugees to return to their homeland. Resolution 194 of 1948 set a precondition for respect-

ing the right of return for Israel's acceptance into the UN. It is reaffirmed every year with Israel and the U.S. voting against it.

WW: One of Israel's reasons for ignoring the right of return issue has been the supposed impossibility of settling the large numbers of refugees without disturbing Israeli Jews. How do you respond to this claim?

ZD: There are demographic studies that refute Israel's claims and report that the vast majority of the Israeli population lives on 15 percent of the land. The rest is sparsely distributed on land that belongs to refugees. Let's also consider the countless numbers of immigrants that Israel encourages from around the world to settle on occupied land.

WW: Can you describe the role the United States plays in the occupation and oppression of the Palestinians?

ZD: Well, the U.S. is the prime source of funds and weapons to keep the Palestinians subdued. The U.S. is where things have to change. It is important to note that the U.S. has provided \$1.5 million a day to Israel since 1967. That money could build a hospital a day, 100 homes a day. Instead the money is used to oppress and rule the Palestinians and to commit ethnic cleansing.

WW: Describe the April 15-17 Al-Awda Conference in Los Angeles.

ZD: There were about 30 community and solidarity organizations present at the conference with hundreds of participants.

WW: Why was Los Angeles chosen as the venue for this year's conference?

ZD: Our goal is to empower communities and Los Angeles has especially large Palestinian and Arab communities. We intend on building strong solidarity in the struggle to recognize the right of return.

WW: What decisions were made or programs proposed at the conference that you believe will strengthen the Palestinian cause?

ZD: The campaign for the right of return of Palestinian refugees continues to be at the forefront. Al-Awda has achieved recognition of the right of return in the major media with at least 3,000 letters and countless articles being published in major publications. We also discussed national and local rallies as a continued effective tool for getting our message out.

Al-Awda also has a charitable aspect. We have raised funds for refugees in Lebanon, Iraq and Haifa. One project specifically addressed was the linking of Palestinian political prisoners with Palestinian refugees. Addameer, a political prisoner organization, has been working to incorporate both issues. We believe the two struggles are one and the same. □

Militant labor leaders join with anti-war forces

Continued from page 7

An exuberant FIST contingent in the march was proof that the fighting spirit of the sixties generation is alive among young anti-imperialists today.

Every generation, however, has its own unique artistic expression. The Foundation from Boston and Movement in Motion rapped out a political message with words that penetrated the crowd like a volley of bullets. Usavior of Artists and Activists for Peace called for support of those who dare criticize the monolithic corporate control

of culture. Singer and activist Nana Soul moved the crowd to want to forge ahead with the struggles yet to come.

A taped message from political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal had opened the rally. His words on the significance of May Day still reverberated as MWMM and TONC leaders called on everyone to begin organizing now to make May Day 2006—the 120th anniversary of Haymarket in Chicago—a major event in the rebirth of independent working-class struggle in the United States. □

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Thousands protest nuclear arsenals, occupation of Iraq

By John Catalinotto
New York

Thousands of anti-nuclear and anti-war protesters marched past the United Nations May 1, the eve of a conference of the world body on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The main message on their banners was to eliminate nuclear weapons. A second message on banners and placards was to end the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

Representatives of 189 countries began the conference at the UN on May 2. Millions of people all over the world want the U.S. to eliminate its nuclear arsenal. Washington is attempting to use the conference to prevent Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from developing nuclear arms that could stop a U.S. attack like the Pentagon's invasion of Iraq.

Among the demonstrators was a delegation of at least 1,000 Japanese people, including dozens of survivors of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. They had come especially for the UN conference and the protest, where they were joined by other

Japanese visitors, Japanese-Americans, and people from 34 other countries, including people from all over the United States.

The many colorful banners in Japanese and the enthusiasm of that delegation gave the protest the flavor of a Japanese demonstration, with support by the rest of the world. This was fitting since the two Japanese cities were the only targets hit in an act of war on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945.

Over 100,000 people were killed instantly in the two cities, almost all civilians, including many Koreans who were forced laborers. By 1950, some 340,000 people had died in total, most from radiation poisoning.

Hiroshima Mayor Tadatashi Akiba addressed a rally of the demonstrators in Central Park. "There is nothing normal, natural or necessary about nuclear weapons, Akiba said. "They're a deadly cancer on the planet that needs to be removed."

The protest was called by United for Peace and Justice and Abolition Now, whose organizers estimated that 40,000 people participated. □



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

NEW YORK

Meeting hosts Japanese delegation

International Action Center co-director, Sara Flounders (left) and members of 'HIBAKUSHA', survivors of the atomic bomb dropped on Japan 60 years ago, were part of a panel discussion at the New School University in NYC May 3 that also included former U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark. More than 200,000 people were incinerated in the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. The standing-room-only meeting focused on the nuclear threat that the Pentagon poses worldwide. The U.S. is the only country that has used nuclear weapons. The meeting, which included a photo exhibit and a segment of the film, *Poison Dust* showing the effects of depleted uranium, was sponsored by IAC, Campaign for the Abolition of Depleted Uranium, Iraqi Hope Network and New School Human Rights Group.

MUNDO OBRERO

Ya es hora de revivir el 1 Mayo

Continúa de página 12
tracción de Bush.

Ahora mismo l@s trabajador@s en este país, jóvenes que pensaban que uniéndose a las fuerzas militares conseguirían educación gratis o una oportunidad de trabajo, están siendo mandad@s a matar y a morir en Irak y Afganistán. Esta experiencia es tan traumática que al Pentágono ya le están faltando tropas. Sus reclutadores están buscando en las escuelas y en los barrios a jóvenes pobres de la clase trabajadora a quienes se les ha negado o porvenir en la vida civil a causa de la voracidad capitalista, los sueldos de baja paga o la falta absoluta de cualquier trabajo.

A causa de la falta de tropas, crece aún más fuerte la tentación de desarrollar y usar armas tácticas nucleares para superar la falta de soldados.

Las armas tácticas nucleares, combinadas con los 10,000 proyectiles nucleares ya existentes, constituyen un grave peligro para el mundo. Tal terror nuclear controlado por Washington obliga a cada país del mundo entrampado en la red del imperialismo estadounidense, a intentar desarrollar un impedimento nuclear sólo para defenderse y sobrevivir. Cada día continúa la amenaza de un Pentágono con armas nucleares junto a su alterno Israel, también con armas nucleares—con un estimado de 200 armas nucleares. Todas las naciones independientes, como Irán y Corea de Norte, están bajo presión para desarrollar armas nucleares.

Por décadas fue sólo la posesión de armas nucleares por la Unión Soviética que impidió al Pentágono usarlas. La única vez que las armas nucleares fueron utilizadas fue por los Estados Unidos en 1945 en Japón—y eso fue antes de que la Unión Soviética tuviera la bomba.

Henry Kissinger, como representante de la administración de Nixon, amenazó a los vietnamitas varias veces con un ataque nuclear durante las charlas de paz en París para terminar la guerra.

Durante la Guerra de Corea de 1950-1953, el general Douglas MacArthur quería usar la bomba atómica contra las fuerzas chinas que estaban ayudando a los coreanos a repeler la invasión de su país encabezada por los Estados Unidos.

Después de la retirada del régimen de Gorbachev y la caída de la URSS, la Unión Soviética ya no era un impedimento mili-

tar ni nuclear a las ambiciones estadounidenses. Este hecho le abrió el paso a Washington para impulsar guerras contra Yugoslavia, Afganistán e Irak.

Por décadas la URSS había abogado por la destrucción total e incondicional de todas las armas nucleares. Este pedido fue ignorado por completo por los Estados Unidos, quien año tras año construía su arsenal nuclear y forzaba una carrera armamentista implacable y costosa.

El único camino para detener la guerra nuclear es desarmar al Pentágono.

Y el ejemplo que dieron los trabajadores alemanes durante la Primera Guerra Mundial, al igual que el de los trabajadores rusos que terminaron el proceso revolucionario al derrocar el capitalismo, es sin duda el único camino históricamente posible para el desarme genuino del imperialismo que es intrínsecamente belicoso a causa de su voracidad insaciable por las ganancias.

Las preparaciones para futuras guerras están llevando a la quiebra el tesoro estadounidense. Y son l@s trabajador@s y el pueblo oprimido quienes tienen que pagar por este déficit.

Los industrialistas capitalistas están compitiendo entre sí construyendo más y más fábricas, oficinas y viviendas, todo con el prospecto de grandes ganancias. Pero estas ganancias dependen más de bajar los sueldos, recortar los beneficios, y establecer talleres donde cruelmente se explotan a l@s trabajador@s. Todas las formas de opresión están aumentando. Los ataques aquí contra l@s trabajador@s por la clase dominante están creando las mismas condiciones que fomentaron la rebelión de la clase trabajadora alemana.

La clase trabajadora en los Estados Unidos está muy lejos de dónde estaba la clase trabajadora en Alemania en 1916-1918. Pero el viaje más largo se comienza con un primer paso.

Nadie sabe cuán largo será el camino de l@s trabajador@s y el pueblo oprimido en este país. La creciente opresión, la explotación, y la guerra imperialista inevitablemente van a acelerar este proceso y van a acortar el camino.

Pero la lucha para resurgir el Primero de Mayo como un día de solidaridad internacional de la clase trabajadora es definitivamente un esfuerzo para tomar ese primer paso. □

18 CITY TOUR OF KOREAN SPEAKERS TO COMMEMORATE



On May 18, 1980, the people of Gwangju, a city in the southwest of the Korean peninsula, organized spontaneous resistance to liberate their city from the military dictatorship of General Chun Doo Hwan. The people, organized by citizens' councils, held the city for five days before elite south Korean troops under U.S. military command were deployed from the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ) to brutally crush the uprising. More than 2,000 men, women and children were killed, thousands of others injured, tortured and imprisoned. Their martyrdom and the struggle for democracy, self-determination and re-unification that followed sparked a fundamental transformation of south Korean society that continues to reverberate to this day. Now a national holiday, this uprising is revered as a source of inspiration for activists around the world and as a point of unity for the Korean people.

Activists from Gwangju will be on a speaking tour in the U.S. and Canada this May to discuss the legacy of the Gwangju People's Uprising and the prospect for peace on the Korean peninsula, as well as their current involvement in the anti-war movement against the U.S. military occupation of Iraq and Korea. The aims of the tour are to raise awareness on this historic event, make connections between the past and present and strengthen solidarity among the Korean people with the peoples of the U.S. and Canada.

TOUR DATES & CITIES

- MAY 12** Lincroft, NJ Thurs • 6:30 pm
Unitarian Comty Cntr, 1475 W. Front St.
- MAY 13** Boston, MA • Fri • 6:30 pm
IAC 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA
- MAY 14** Flushing, NY • Sat • 7 pm
Korean YWCA, 42-07 Parsons Blvd
- MAY 15** New York, NY Sun • 1 pm
UN Church Center, Boss Room
777 UN Plaza (44th St. between 1st & 2nd Ave).
- MAY 16** Philadelphia, PA • Mon • 7:30 pm
Calvary Church Corner of 48th & Baltimore
- MAY 17** Washington, DC • Tues • 6:30 pm
DC1525, Newton Street, NW
- MAY 18** : Raleigh, NC • Wednesday
- MAY 19** Charlotte, NC • Thurs • 7 pm
The Int'l House, 322 Hawthorne Lane
- MAY 21-22** Atlanta, GA • Fri-Sat
- MAY 22** Chicago, IL • Sunday
- MAY 23** Evanston, IL • Monday
- MAY 25** Detroit, MI Wed • 7 pm
Bernath Auditorium, Adamany Undergraduate Library, Wayne State Univ.
- MAY 29** Buffalo, NY • Sunday
- MAY 31** San Francisco, CA • Tuesday
- JUNE 1** Los Angeles • Wed
- JUNE 2** Los Angeles • Thurs • 3-5 pm
UCLA, Center for Korean Studies
- JUNE 3** Los Angeles • Fri • 7 pm
Korean Buddhist Cultural Center,
4279 W. 3rd St., (at 3rd & Oxford)
- CANADA Korea Truth Commission**
(416) 703-7970 or peoplesfront@bellnet.ca.
- MAY 26** Windsor • Thursday
- MAY 27** Toronto • Friday
- MAY 28** Hamilton • Saturday

Sponsor: 25th Anniversary Gwangju Peoples Uprising US/Canada Tour
For more information about the tour go to www.koreatruth.org • 917-225-9615

¡Sí! Ya es hora de revivir el 1 Mayo

Por Fred Goldstein

Lo más significativo del intento de revivir este año el Primero de Mayo como día internacional de solidaridad de la clase trabajadora es que es convocado por un segmento de la misma clase obrera—particularmente por el liderazgo de raza negra del Movimiento de la Marcha del Millón de Obrer@s, junto a otros sectores progresistas.

El Primero de Mayo históricamente ha sido un día para la clase obrera declararse como una clase contra los empresarios y de plantear sus demandas particulares en cada país y demostrar su solidaridad internacional con las luchas que transcurren en todo el mundo. El Primero de Mayo comenzó como una lucha por un día laboral de 8 horas en los Estados Unidos en 1886. Se convirtió en internacional en 1890. Desde ese momento todo el mundo, incluyendo los Estados Unidos, marchó bajo las consignas de aquellos días—contra la guerra imperialista, la opresión colonial, el racismo y el linchamiento, libertad para los prisioneros políticos, sufragio universal y otras demandas más.

El Primero de Mayo del 2005, que se celebrará en la plaza Union Square en la ciudad de Nueva York, en San Francisco, Los Angeles y otras ciudades, sigue esa tradición.

Esta convocatoria para la marcha del Primero de Mayo, suscrita por líderes de la clase obrera, comunales, y del movimiento progresista concluye con demandas como: fin a la ocupación—que regresen las tropas ya; empleos con salarios razonables; viviendas; cuidado de salud; educación para tod@s; lucha contra el racismo y represión política; por la Seguridad Social; no al reclutamiento militar; derecho de l@s trabajador@s a organizarse; solidaridad con l@s trabajador@s inmigrantes; solidaridad con las personas lesbianas, gays, bisexuales y transgéneras; y solidaridad con los pueblos del Medio Oriente, Asia, África, América Latina y el Caribe quienes están resistiendo y luchando contra la campaña del imperialismo estadounidense que quiere controlarlos y explotarlos.

Las demandas terminan con un llamado al resurgimiento de la solidaridad mundial.

La clase dirigente trató de borrar el Primero de Mayo

En la era después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, cuando el imperialismo estadounidense lanzó su Guerra Fría anticomunista desde su posición de hegemonía, una de las tareas importantes de la clase gobernante además de la persecución de comunistas, socialistas, progresistas y sindicalistas militantes de cualquier tipo, fue la de suprimir el Día de los Trabajadores como día festivo de la clase obrera. Elementos reaccionarios eran incitados a atacar físicamente los desfiles del Día de los Trabajadores cuando se arremedaba la Guerra Fría en la década de los años cuarenta.

En 1949, el Departamento del Americanismo de los Veteranos de Guerras Extranjeras comenzó una campaña para declarar el Primero de Mayo como el Día de la Lealtad.

Una década después, luego de que el Primero de Mayo se suprimiera por la caza

de brujas, el Congreso aprobó la Ley Pública 529 que designaba el Primero de Mayo como el Día de la Lealtad en un intento de asegurarse que no resurgiera.

En 1961, una resolución conjunta del Congreso revisó esto y declaró el Primero de Mayo como el Día de la Ley EEUU.

Marchas oficiales del Día del Trabajo, moderadas, de carácter social patriótico a comienzos de septiembre organizadas por la directiva del AFL-CIO, tomaron el lugar del Primero de Mayo.

Los patrones capitalistas estaban muy conscientes del Primero de Mayo como día para la manifestación política de la conciencia de clase obrera y del internacionalismo entre l@s obrer@s y fueron muy meticulosos en su intento de borrarlo del calendario de la clase trabajadora.

No es solo un Primero de Mayo ceremonial

Desde el cese de las persecuciones ha habido muchas actividades del Primero de Mayo organizadas por varios grupos políticos, aunque ya menos desde el colapso de la URSS. Aquellos intentos, irrespectivamente de sus variantes políticas y de sus buenas intenciones, eran estrictamente simbólicos y protocolarios en carácter. Esto era porque no estaban conectadas a ningún desarrollo genuino de una corriente militante con conciencia de clase con liderazgo de cualquier sección de la clase obrera organizada. Un liderazgo obrero del calibre del Movimiento para la Marcha de un Millón de Obrer@s no se había aún desarrollado.

Lo que distingue el intento de revivir el Primero de Mayo como un día de lucha política militante de la clase obrera en el 2005, es que emana de líderes de vanguardia del movimiento obrero quienes han luchado batallas obreras y quienes han presenciado la erosión de los derechos de l@s trabajador@s.

Est@s son l@s líderes del Movimiento para la Marcha del Millón de Obrer@s (MMMO). Y ell@s quieren seguir un camino político independiente.

Los líderes del MMO han visto con ira y frustración cómo el liderazgo de la AFL-CIO ha continuado en el camino del apoyo a la guerra; ignorando el racismo y el mar de cuestiones sociales y económicas de l@s obrer@s; ha fallado en organizar a la clase obrera y ha puesto mucha de su confianza a través de cantidades millonarias de dólares provenientes de las cuotas de l@s obrer@s, en los políticos del Partido Demócrata.

El nacimiento del Primero de Mayo del 2005 no ha surgido de la nada.

L@s líderes de MMO anunciaron su determinación de abrir un camino independiente el 17 de octubre del 2004 en las gradas del Monumento de Lincoln, en medio de las campañas electorales para la presidencia, declarando que l@s obrer@s deben organizarse en “nuestro propio nombre.”

Ell@s vincularon la oposición a la guerra con la lucha por los derechos de l@s trabajador@s aquí. Haciéndolo, tuvieron que luchar en contra de las capas más altas y privilegiadas del liderato de la AFL-CIO, la cual estaba totalmente comprometida a elegir al candidato imperialista y proguerra del Partido Demócrata, John Kerry como presidente y además estaba profundamente opuesta a la política de clase

independiente promovida por la MMO.

Además, la MMO tuvo que bregar con varias corrientes del movimiento antiguerra y el movimiento radical que se asustaban de cualquier intento por desviar recursos o atención de la campaña de Kerry y así dieron su espalda al intento de marcar un nuevo rumbo independiente.

L@s líderes del MMO rehusaron doblegarse y proclamaron públicamente en las escalinatas del Monumento a Lincoln, su apoyo al resurgimiento de la celebración del Primero de Mayo.

Entonces tomaron otro paso histórico, uniéndose a activistas comunitari@s, estudiantiles y jóvenes y a la Coalición ‘Que Vuelvan las Tropas a Casa’ el 19 de marzo de este año, para una marcha y mitin en el segundo aniversario de la Guerra de Irak. Esta manifestación, que unió intrépidamente la lucha de l@s trabajador@s con la lucha militante contra la guerra, fue además significativa porque comenzó en Harlem, el barrio que es el corazón de la comunidad africana americana.

La manifestación del Primero de Mayo de 2005 no es simplemente ceremonial. Es un intento de estimular el resurgimiento de la lucha de clases y un preparativo para llevar la lucha en una dirección independiente, militante y con conciencia de clase. Fue convocada por líderes de la clase trabajadora conjuntamente con otras fuerzas progresistas y revolucionarias en los EEUU.

Esto no es simplemente un ejercicio de honrar el pasado, sino una preparación concreta para el futuro —para las luchas que son inminentes mientras la administración de Bush y la clase capitalista siguen castigando a todos los sectores de la clase trabajadora, l@s oprimid@s, y hasta a sectores de la clase media, rompiendo sindicatos, recortando el presupuesto, atacando el sistema de Seguro Social, y continuando la guerra y los gastos de guerra a nivel de cientos de miles de millones de dólares.

El Primero de Mayo debe echar raíces de nuevo en la clase trabajadora. Cuando esto ocurra, la conexión entre el Primero de Mayo, la guerra imperialista y la lucha de clases se volverá un factor material profundo y poderoso en la lucha.

Un particular evento del Primero de Mayo, celebrado durante los momentos más intensos de la Primera Guerra Mundial, tiene una relevancia particular hoy porque señala la vital conexión entre la clase trabajadora, la guerra y el militarismo.

Liebknecht, el 10 de Mayo y la Primera Guerra Mundial

Una de las manifestaciones del Primero de Mayo más importantes de la historia, después de la manifestación original en Chicago en 1886, fue la manifestación llamada por el líder socialista, Karl Liebknecht el Primero de Mayo de 1916, en medio de la primera guerra mundial imperialista. Liebknecht era un representante del Partido Socialdemócrata en el Reichstag, el parlamento alemán. El fue el único de los 116 diputados de su partido que votó en contra de los créditos para financiar la guerra.

La clase capitalista alemán estaba promoviendo una ola de patriotismo social, de chauvinismo e histeria en pro de la guerra. Millones de trabajadores alemanes estaban en ambos frentes de

guerra, del este y del oeste. Las manifestaciones contra la guerra eran ilegales. La lucha antiguerra había sido suprimida.

Liebknecht se atrevió a convocar una manifestación contra la guerra para el Primero de Mayo en Berlín. Cientos de miles de trabajadores participaron. Él comenzó su charla con las palabras: “Abajo la guerra, abajo el gobierno”.

Él había publicado y distribuido un Manifiesto del Primero de Mayo que declaraba: “La pobreza y la miseria, la carencia y el hambre rigen a Alemania, Bélgica, Polonia y Serbia, cuya sangre está siendo chupada por el vampiro del imperialismo y que han sido convertidas en cementerios...”.

“Dejen que miles de voces griten ‘¡Abajo con el descarado exterminio de naciones! ¡Abajo con los responsables de tales crímenes! ¡Nuestro enemigo no es el pueblo de Inglaterra, de Francia, o de Rusia, sino los grandes latifundistas alemanes, los capitalistas alemanes y su comité ejecutivo’.”

Liebknecht fue arrastrado de la plataforma por la policía, quienes estaban por miles, y fue enjuiciado. Utilizó el juicio para denunciar a la guerra y a la clase dominante. Fue encarcelado. Pero esa manifestación del Primero de Mayo fue el comienzo del fin del esfuerzo guerrillero del imperialismo alemán. Dio confianza a los trabajadores mostrando que era posible romper con la represión en tiempos de guerra.

Más y más la resistencia se extendió a los soldados. Para 1918 estaban deponiendo sus armas y rehusaban ir a combate. Había motines en la fuerza naval. Soldados y trabajadores llegaron masivamente a Berlín y a otras ciudades y acabaron con la guerra forzando a los gobernantes Hohenzollern fuera del trono.

Rebeliones semejantes de soldados obreros sacudieron al ejército francés. Para el Primero de Mayo de 1917, había manifestaciones masivas en Italia, Escocia, y por supuesto en Rusia revolucionaria.

De hecho, la rebelión de los soldados alemanes estuvo estimulada más aún por la política de V.I. Lenin en el frente ruso al informarles a los soldados rusos y alemanes que sus enemigos estaban en su propia casa. Esta consigna estratégica de Lenin fue hecha realidad cuando la clase trabajadora rusa y los campesinos derrocaron el gobierno e hicieron su revolución socialista. Y así fue como terminó la Primera Guerra Mundial.

La clase trabajadora en Alemania tenía un partido político de masas y la experiencia de organización política y de clase. Fue traicionada por el liderazgo del Partido Social Demócrata que apoyó al gobierno alemán en la guerra. Pero elementos revolucionarios como Liebknecht y Rosa Luxemburg emergieron para reestablecer la resistencia genuina y el liderazgo de la clase trabajadora.

Desarmemos a los guerreros nucleares del Pentágono

Hoy en día, todo es diferente. La administración de Bush y la clase dominante tienen planes de expansión para conquistar nuevos territorios. Mientras más desesperados se vuelven, más peligrosos y aventureros se convierten. De interés particular es la perspectiva de las ambiciones nucleares de la administración

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