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1,200,000 Cubans say: Bush, stop your terror!

Extradite bomber Posada to Venezuela, FREE THE CUBAN 5!

By Teresa Gutierrez

There must be some in Washington right now who regret being so public in their menacing demand that Cuba stop harboring a "terrorist" and hand over Assata Shakur—an African American woman and former U.S. political prisoner who escaped and was offered sanctuary in the revolutionary island nation.

President Fidel Castro Ruz has told the U.S. in no uncertain terms that Cuba will continue to provide political asylum to Shakur, a former Black Panther and Black Liberation Army member. The Cuban leader called Shakur "a true political prisoner" and a victim of "the fierce repression against the Black movement in the United States."

The Cuban people rallied to demonstrate they agree. They marched through the streets of Havana on May 17—1.2 million strong—and brought three messages right to the doorstep of the U.S. Interests Section.

They vowed to defend Assata Shakur.

They demanded the release of their five compatriots being held in U.S. prisons: Gerardo Hernández, René González,

Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González. The Cuban Five are serving prison terms from 15 years to double life sentences in U.S. prisons as "terrorists," when in fact they were trying to monitor CIA-orchestrated right-wing-terror plans against Cuba.

And those rallying on May 17 exposed the hypocrisy of Yankee imperialism's "war on terror" by demanding the Bush administration arrest and deport two genuine terrorists—Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch—living free on U.S. soil.

In his speech President Castro also denounced Washington "for harboring and supporting terrorists that have killed or injured thousands of Cubans."

The Bush administration's double standard on "terrorism" has led to a world outcry of denunciation. Cuba's demand in particular was so united, so loud, so amplified by media around the world, that it forced U.S. immigration officials to seize Posada—who has ties to the CIA and FBI—later that same day.

The arrest of Posada can be considered a victory not only for Cuba but for Venezuela, all of Latin America and the Caribbean, and all the world's progressives and revolutionaries.

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May 17 in Havana. Cubans vowed to defend Assata Shakur; called for the liberation of the Cuban 5 political prisoners and demanded that Bush stop harboring criminals that have murdered and injured thousands of Cubans.

PHOTOS: AIN



IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN: U.S. CRIMES CONTINUE 7



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PHILADELPHIA

March recalls 'Day of Infamy'

By Betsey Piette
Philadelphia

Hundreds gathered here at Osage Avenue and 63rd Street on May 14 for a march marking 20 years since the government dropped a bomb on the MOVE organization—a day that shall live in infamy. On May 13, 1985, 11 MOVE members, including six children and five adults, were killed in the resulting fire, which also destroyed 61 homes.

Chanting "Never forget 1985" and carrying signs demanding "Free the MOVE 9," marchers proceeded through West Philadelphia neighborhoods and commercial districts, receiving positive support from people along the way.

Speakers denounced the state terror that led to the dropping of a bomb containing the powerful explosive C-4 on this residential African American neighborhood on Mothers' Day in 1985. Ramona Africa, the sole survivor of the fire, was imprisoned on framed-up charges as a result.

FBI officers provided the explosive to the Philadelphia police—who actually dropped the bomb. And fire department officials with the approval of City Hall allowed the fire to burn unattended for more than 45 minutes, knowing that children were in the building. Yet no government representatives were ever charged.

Speakers at this year's May 14 rally used the occasion to demand freedom for the MOVE 9, members of the MOVE organization who were unjustly imprisoned on murder charges from an earlier confrontation with Philadelphia police in 1978. At that time, police moved against a MOVE compound in the Powelton Village section of Philadelphia after a two-month blockade. While police officer James Ramp died from a gunshot coming from behind police lines, nine members of MOVE were convicted of the killing and given 30- to 100-year prison sentences.

The MOVE 9—Debbie Sims Africa, Janet Holloway Africa, Janine Phillips Africa, Michael Davis Africa, Charles Sims Africa, Eddie Goodman Africa, William



WW PHOTO: BETSEY PIETTE

Philadelphia marchers on 20th anniversary of police bombing of MOVE home.

Phillips Africa, Delbert Orr Africa and the late Merle Africa—have spent decades in prison, despite ample evidence of their innocence.

Michael Africa, Jr., son of MOVE 9 members, asked the younger members of MOVE and their children to come to the front of the rally and lead the march. "The state launched a murderous campaign of terror against our family," Africa said. "But we are still here and we're not going to stop fighting these injustices."

"If the state had not railroaded my parents and the other MOVE members to prison for a crime they did not commit," he noted, "There would have been no May 13th—there would have not been the need for it."

Speakers at the rally also pointed to the connection between this state terror against an African American community in Philadelphia 20 years ago and the ongoing terror of the U.S. military against the people of Iraq today.

"The government has provided constant examples of their willingness to beat, torture, jail, bomb or kill any perceived threat," Pam Africa, of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, told the gathering. "All of us fighting for what's right are a threat and a target. Our only safety is to fight back!" □

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WW CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES

Sat., May 21
 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, with 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.

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

'Fight capitalism on every front'

By Susanne Kelly
Richmond

Workers World Managing Editor Leslie Feinberg spoke to an enthusiastic crowd at Virginia Commonwealth University here on May 13. The program, called "Re-Mapping the War," afforded Feinberg an opportunity to speak about U.S. capitalism's war for empire abroad and its economic and social siege on the domestic front.

Despite the fact that school was out at VCU, many students turned out for the event, as well as members of older generations, making for a good mix.

Feinberg's theme was that unity in the struggle against racism, sexism and anti-lesbian, gay, bi and trans oppression is necessary to also build a powerful movement against imperialist war and for jobs, education, health care and housing.

She made a strong statement of solidarity with the MOVE organization of Philadelphia, which 20 years ago that same day had been murderously firebombed by police. She added that MOVE supporter Mumia Abu-Jamal had written a statement against gay bashing from

his death row cell after a young, white, homeless gay man had been decapitated in Richmond.

Feinberg's remarks were halted temporarily several times by enthusiastic applause as she defended the right of resistance against oppression—from the insurgency in Iraq to the mounting resistance within the ranks of U.S. troops, from the struggle against campus recruiters to the fight to stop the draft.

Feinberg alerted the audience to the existence of SNAFU, which works with men and women currently in the U.S. military. She spoke of FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—which is active and growing on U.S. campuses.

During the discussion that followed her talk, an African American student spoke of being unable to get white students on campus to deal with issues of racism. Feinberg asked the white VCU students in the audience to stand up if they wanted to make a commitment to work with the Black students to fight racism on their campus. About 30 stood, and after the meeting they and Feinberg met with the Black student leaders about how to organize and work together to fight racism on the VCU campus. □

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Rally against hate group defends Mexican immigrants

By Ruth Vela
Baldwin Park, Calif.

Historically in the United States the indigenous, people of color and the poor have had to carry the burden of being perfect scapegoats for the ruling class. Migrant workers are continually portrayed by the capitalist media as being less than human in an effort to create public ambivalence about the less-than-human standards they work and live under. As if this were not enough, a recent wave of anti-immigrant hysteria has swept across the country and is manifesting itself in the form of racist vigilante groups like the Arizona "Minutemen" and equally dangerous anti-immigrant "community" groups.

In California, one such group, calling themselves "Save our State," claims that "Californians are tired of watching their communities turn into third world cesspools as a result of a massive invasion of illegal aliens."

"Save our State" and another anti-immigrant group called "Friends of the Border Patrol" are both connected with the Arizona Minutemen.

In Baldwin Park, just east of Los Angeles, a racist mobilization was called on May 14 by "Save our State" to protest a monument at the Baldwin Park Metro-

Link station. The monument makes reference to the theft of Native and Mexican land by the U.S. The racists were demanding that the city of Baldwin Park "voluntarily remove these offensive passages by Friday July 1st, in advance of the American Independence weekend."

Ominously, they threatened to take "additional steps to ensure the passages are removed."

'Who's the immigrant, pilgrim?'

In response, many community groups and individuals in Baldwin Park—Mecha, the Committee in Defense of Immigrant Workers/IAC-LA, San Diego's FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together)—and other Southern California activist groups gathered at the monument an hour before the scheduled racist rally.

Initially several blocks separated the two groups, and when the largely youthful marchers set out to confront the 30 or so racists, the local police blocked their way. After a long standoff and police threats to make arrests if the anti-racists didn't disperse, the youth—first by ones and twos, and then in ever-growing numbers—were able to use side streets to sidestep the police blockade and move closer to the racists.

As members of FIST and local youth moved through side streets, community



WW PHOTO: MAGGIE VASCASSENNO

people on their porches and in their front yards joined them. Within minutes, the racists were pushed onto one street corner while youth occupied the other three. Shouts of anger mixed with chants of "Who's the immigrant, pilgrim?" and "Whose land? Our land!" could be heard back at the monument several blocks away.

Still protected by the police, the racists taunted the protesters. Meanwhile, helicopter loudspeaker warnings that the protesting youth would all be arrested were drowned out by the growing crowd. Tensions rose as did the number of cops who were fighting to keep the youth on the sidewalks.

Yet rather than back down, the protesters filled the streets, almost completely surrounding the racists.

After a nearly two-hour standoff, the racists and their police escort threw in the towel. Their tails between their legs and their heads bowed in defeat they were led away with the sound of anti-racist victory cheers and the chanted, heartfelt message from the Baldwin Park community, "Don't come back!"

As good as it felt to win this battle, the arrogance of the racists and their police allies also served as a reminder that we have yet to win the war against this system that breeds oppression and division. We must embrace the fight of our immigrant sisters and brothers and further commit ourselves to the struggle against imperialism, so that we may truly "save the state" of our working class from the clutches of the ungrateful, racist, parasitic bourgeoisie. □

Memorial for immigrants



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Alma Diaz speaking. Right, Martha Olvera, Serafin Olvera Justice committee.

By Gloria Rubac
Victoria, Texas

Two years ago, on May 14, 2003, 19 immigrants died from dehydration, hypothermia and suffocation in the back of a tractor-trailer carrying more than 70 people from Harlingen, Texas—near the Mexico border—en route to Houston. This year on May 14, some 75 people caravanned from Houston to Victoria to remember and honor them and to demand immigration reform.

Families of those who died and immigrant rights activists gathered early at the office of the Salvadoran organization CRECEN. They painted slogans in English and Spanish on their cars with white shoe polish that read, "Justice for immigrants," "No more immigrant deaths" and "Stop the border violence!"

The car caravan was seen by many as it left Houston, winding its way through the Latino community onto U.S. Highway 59 for the 120-mile trip.

Television network Univisión, El Día—Houston's daily Spanish-language newspaper—and other media joined in the caravan.

After the caravan arrived in Victoria, family members and activists created a memorial on the ground with tall jars of candles, one for each of those who died, each holding the flag of their homeland: Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

At the rally, organizer Martha Olvera

introduced representatives of several of the families who had lost loved ones in the tragedy. They spoke quietly and humbly, remembering their husbands, fathers and brothers.

"My son Jorge died right here. He was only 15 years old," said Dora Torres, speaking softly in Spanish. She had come to Texas from New York to bring fresh flowers to the spot where the teenager died. Torres, who is originally from El Salvador, also came to last year's memorial.

Activist Cristobal Hinojosa, with Mexicanos en Acción, told the crowd that these deaths should not be blamed on Tyrone Williams, the driver of the truck, but on the U.S. government, which denies most Mexicanos legal entry.

Williams was tried and convicted last month in federal court in Houston. Prosecutors were seeking the death penalty but the jury deadlocked during the sentencing. The U.S. Attorney General has announced plans to re-try Williams and again ask for the death penalty.

Another rally speaker, María Jiménez—a member of the board of directors of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights—urged people to press Congress to pass a comprehensive immigration reform package.

Other speakers included the consul general of Mexico, Carlos González; Alma Díaz, of Latinos Por La Paz; and Angela Mejía, a member of LACLA, the Latin American Council for Labor Advancement, and the Harris County AFL-CIO. □

Immigrants under attack, fighting back

By Richard Duncan

"We've come a long way." That phrase has been used many times in conversations about bigotry and racism in the U.S. If the ruling class and the bureaucracy that serves them have their way, immigrants will be taking giant steps backwards. Attacks against immigrants are coming from every angle.

There is the extra-legal Minutemen group in Arizona terrorizing people coming from a Mexico devastated economically by NAFTA to look for a better life here. If anybody has a right to live and work in the Southwestern states, it is the Mexicans from whom those lands were stolen and the Native peoples from this side of the border.

California governor and Nazi-son Arnold Schwarzenegger lent his vile support to these racists in Arizona. "Look, they've cut down the crossing of illegal immigrants by a huge percentage. The whole system is set up to really invite people to come in here illegally, and that has to stop," he said on the "John & Ken Show" on KFI-AM on April 28.

Schwarzenegger had called earlier for "closing the borders in California and all across Mexico and in the United States" because he thinks "it is just unfair to have all those people coming across, have the borders open the way it is, and have this kind of lax situation."

"It's gratifying to see that elected officials are responding to the will of the people," said Chris Simcox, a racist Minuteman organizer. The governor has no prob-

lem with the Minutemen's plan to expand their patrols to California. This nexus between the state and extra-legal groups conjures up images of night-riders, among them sheriffs and mayors, terrorizing Black people.

Using the law against immigrants

There are also legal attacks. The Patriot Act has been used to attack immigrants of South Asian and Middle Eastern origin. The rulers hide behind "national security" to imprison, torture and deport immigrants for alleged offenses, starting from simple violations of immigration laws to undisclosed offenses.

Two Muslim 16-year-old high school girls in New York City were arrested this March and held in a Pennsylvania lock-up, labeled as potential suicide bombers. One of the girls, from Guinea in Africa, released after six weeks, was wholeheartedly welcomed back by her entire school community. Her father, however, has been put in detention in New Jersey and will be deported.

An agreement was reached to allow the second girl and her family to return to Bangladesh as soon as the arrangements are made. Her family came here as political refugees when the girl was just four years old.

Attached to the latest \$82-billion appropriations bill for additional war spending was the "Real ID Act." The ID act or drivers' license bill, as it is also called, goes into effect in 2008. It is an anti-immigrant bill that requires uniform standards

Continued on page 8

Throwing down gauntlet to airline unions

Can judge wipe out workers' pensions?

By Milt Neidenberg

It ain't over 'til it's over.

Eugene R. Wedoff, an anti-union U.S. bankruptcy court judge, has wiped out the pension funds of four unions at United Air Lines. With a stroke of the pen, the judge killed \$9.8 billion in contractually guaranteed pensions won over decades of sacrifice and struggle.

Can he make it stick?

UAL flight attendants, retirees, active employees and other union members, who packed the court, will yet have the last word. Starting May 10, they took time off from their jobs and poured into Chicago from many parts of the country to vent their fury over the decision.

The overflow crowd spilled into other court areas. They cheered their lawyers as they defended the pensions and booed the super-rich UAL executives who attended the hearing. Following the court's illegal decision, union members chased UAL Chief Financial Officer Frederick F. Brace III down the street into a bar chanting "CHAOS! CHAOS!" an acronym for Create Havoc Around Our System.

CHAOS strike coordinators are in place to mobilize a massive fightback. The Association of Flight Attendants/Communications Workers of America (AFA/CWA), has overwhelmingly authorized the use of CHAOS strikes to protest any unilateral changes in the contract.

An unprecedented swindle

The pensions, called defined benefit contribution plans, were signed and sealed over many years to assure employees a modest but guaranteed nest egg for retirement. They were to be held in trusts, as property belonging to the retirees and current members, who contribute the labor power, skills and experience that keep UAL flying.

Judge Wedoff exceeded his authority by abrogating the four pension plans. He

conspired with UAL and the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC), a quasi-independent government insurance agency, to rob over 120,000 employees of their righteous equity.

With a stroke of the pen, he cleared the way for the largest pension default in U.S. corporate history. By approving UAL's proposal to turn over four underfunded employee pension plans to the PBGC, UAL has walked away from \$3.2 billion owed to the workers and retirees and dumped \$6.6 billion of its fiduciary responsibility on this government-sponsored agency, which is already deep in the red.

Pension funds in crisis

Last year the PBGC's books showed \$62 billion in long-term obligations to pay workers' pensions, but only \$39 billion in assets. The \$23-billion shortfall was double the previous year's gap and continues to grow. The agency has taken over the pension plans of 141 bankrupt steel companies, with underfunding totaling \$10.2 billion, and 12 airlines, including UAL, with underfunding of \$11.6 billion.

In other words, bankruptcy has become a convenient way for corporations, which have paid out billions in profits to managers and owners, to foist their pension obligations onto the taxpayers.

By its own estimate, the defined benefit pension plans guaranteed by the PBGC are underfunded by a total of \$450 billion.

According to the Center on Federal Financial Institutions, a Washington think tank, "The agency will run out of cash and rack up a \$78-billion deficit in 16 years." A domino effect is inevitable. Already, competing airlines and other sections of corporate America are eliminating their pension liabilities. A PBGC crash may come sooner than later.

UAL workers and retirees have been illegally dragged into the cesspool of PBGC debt. Their pension plans have been in place for decades under contracts that are

still enforceable. They were broken when the bankruptcy judge awarded PBGC a bonanza valued at \$1.5 billion—\$1 billion in notes and \$500 million in preferred stock—to take over UAL's huge pension liabilities.

The PBGC is normally an unsecured creditor in bankruptcy court. The agency estimates the average recovery at just seven cents for every dollar of underfunding in a failed pension fund. They are all violating the Employment Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), passed in 1974, which guaranteed an earned defined-benefit pension.

Corporations are required to set aside funds to pay these pensions. When they default, ERISA guarantees a grievance and appeals process to fight violations.

The union lawyers are well aware of this illegal and underhanded deal carried out behind the backs of the hundred of thousands of employees and retirees. Word going around is that the lawyers are going to appeal the court's illegal decision. AFA/CWA members are prepared to support it with CHAOS.

According to CHAOS coordinators, "CHAOS is a strategic and coordinated campaign designed for maximum impact ... We will not announce CHAOS strikes prior to their implementation. ... CHAOS is a strategy of intermittent strikes that could take the form of a nationwide strike for a day or a week, a single city for an afternoon or a single flight at a remote location."

The coordinators also confirmed that "Flight attendants at 26 airlines represented by AFA have pledged to support a CHAOS strike action in the event any Flight Attendants Contract is unilaterally changed."

This past December, the AFA/CWA organized a march on Washington. Large contingents from other airlines attended. Members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and others joined the march. When the rally ended, they marched to the White House chanting "CHAOS! CHAOS!"

UAL mechanics are represented by an independent union. The International Association of Machinists (IAM) represents ramp workers, reservation clerks and other top-side service workers. If these two unions, which are supporting the flight attendants, engage in a strike or job action, they will get widespread sympathy.

AFA/CWA Council 5 flight attendants and supporters have already staged motorcades educating members and passengers at New York's Kennedy airport about CHAOS. They are winning public support as they picket, leaflet and rally on the 1st and 16th of each month to protest the UAL attacks on their jobs, wages and pensions.

They are exposing Glen F. Tilton, UAL chief executive, and his high-priced cronies, who found a way to save their pensions, bloated bonuses, salaries and guaranteed stock options. They want Tilton, a former Texaco CEO, to resign. He has mismanaged the second-largest airline in the country. UAL has lost billions since it filed for bankruptcy in December 2002.

In September 2004, the AFA/CWA joined the IAM in a motion filed earlier in bankruptcy court to appoint a new trustee, a move that would unseat Tilton. After UAL filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in December 2002, the company could no longer claim ownership. It had to surrender the title and legally became a debtor.

However, it was granted possession of the airline's assets by the bankruptcy judge, who appointed a UAL puppet to be trustee and run the airline. One of the first

orders of the court, to be sure, was to guarantee these obscene and lucrative benefits to the entire UAL management.

Two of the UAL unions sit on a powerful creditors' committee. They have the right to overturn the trustee's decision. But the unions are a minority and are outvoted by powerful forces that represent banks like Citigroup and J.P. Morgan Chase, who are bankrolling UAL with debtor-in-possession loans. They and the vendors who lease planes to UAL get top billing.

Clearly the tens of thousands of UAL union members should lay claim to ownership and workers' control. They are the principal creditors. They fought to accumulate the equity that is now being stolen from them. They built the company with their experience, skills and sacrifices. What they gave up in lost wages (\$2.4 billion), pensions (\$9.8 billion), and other benefits should make them the primary creditor to assert their rights to run the company.

CHAOS and the combined power of the labor movement, which has a huge stake in the pension crisis, can make this a reality. It will take a general strike—even if just for a day. This may sound daring and far out. But so was the idea of organizing unions in the 1800s, and occupying plants and organizing general strikes in the 1930s.

The UAL unions are on the firing line. They are preparing their members for a fightback against a conspiracy orchestrated by the government, its agencies and the billionaire tycoons of corporate America.

It will take an independent, class-wide movement—a development that is alien to a labor bureaucracy in disarray—to turn back an unprecedented, relentless economic assault against the workers and the oppressed. Meanwhile the White House, Congress and both capitalist parties can agree to divert hundreds of billions to finance endless wars and occupations.

The airline workers can be the spark to fire up the labor movement. It's long overdue. □



Clarence Thomas (second from left), co-chair Million Worker March Movement with CBTU members, at the MWMM National Reportback and Networking meeting held in Detroit May 14 and 15. Subjects of discussion and strategizing ranged from the war on Iraq to immigrant rights and the cutback budgets facing public sector workers in Detroit and other cities.

Story and photo by Cheryl LaBash



Mass action at Amherst

GEO members and allies boycott classes at UMass-Amherst on April 21 to demand a decent contract and to declare: Hands off student organizations! This mass action, part of a 14-month multi-tactic contract campaign, forced the administration to agree to a tentative contract agreement with the union May 10.

Story and photo by Bryan G. Pfeifer

ON THE

Farmworkers march on Albany, N.Y.

About 100 farmworkers and their supporters held a "March for Justice" across upstate New York from April 29 to May 3. Traveling more than 200 miles through apple-growing country, the workers took their demands for the right to collective bargaining, overtime pay, a day of rest each week and disability rights to the state capital.

One of the marchers told the May 3 Finger Lakes Times that the farmworkers, many of whom are immigrants, often labor 70 hours a week for only \$6 an hour. The average farmworker in that region makes less than \$8,000 a year.

One worker, who wouldn't risk losing her job by giving her name, said through a translator, "My goals are to receive better treatment and have more rights."

Vanessa Margan, who works with Farmworker Legal Services in Rochester, noted, "Without the right to collective bargaining, farmworkers can be too easily replaced."

Marching behind a banner that read "Farmworkers deserve equal rights," the workers chanted, "Si se puede"—It can be done!—and "Que queremos? Justicia!"—What do we want? Justice!—as they set off from Albion. A number of groups sponsored the march, including the

Top general admits:

Pentagon can't get enough fresh blood

By Dustin Langley

The U.S. military has warned that the stress of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has raised the risk that the Pentagon will find it difficult to wage conflicts elsewhere in the world.

Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concluded in an annual "risk assessment" required by Congress that the U.S. military is at "significant risk" of being unable to prevail against enemies abroad in the manner that the Bush administration war plans mandate.

In the report, Myers offers the obligatory assertion that the U.S. military can accomplish any mission assigned to it. But he also tells Congress that, so long as U.S. troops are so heavily involved in campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, any additional mission will be longer and more difficult.

The United States has about 130,000 troops in Iraq and about 16,000 in Afghanistan as part of its global "war on terror."

In an additional sign of the stress placed on U.S. forces, for three months the Army and the Marines have missed their recruit-

ing targets. The numbers are alarming for military planners: The Army missed its April target by 42 percent. The targets for the Army Reserve and National Guard are also suffering.

Major Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, who directs the Army Recruiting Command, told the May 13 New York Times that the Army will likely begin next year with the fewest recruits ready for boot camp in at least a decade. He said that fewer than 10 percent of the approximately 80,000 new active-duty soldiers the Army needs next year are expected to be in the pipeline.

In response to the recruiting crises, abuses and misconduct by recruiters are on the rise. The Army has been forced to call an "Army Values Stand Down Day" across the country on May 20 in response to public outcry over revelations of unscrupulous tactics.

For instance, one Houston-based recruiter, Sgt. Thomas Kelt, left a message on a prospect's cell phone telling him that he was obligated "by federal law" to meet with him and that if he missed his appointment, "we'll have a warrant."

Channel 11 News in Houston obtained a copy of the message and it was widely circulated over the Internet. The U.S. Army Recruiting Command in Houston refused to comment when asked about this practice. The audio of the message is available at www.nodraftnoway.org/recruiting.shtml.

This is not an isolated case. The Army has investigated 480 allegations of improper behavior by recruiters since Oct. 1, 2005. Eight recruiters have been relieved of duty and another 98 have been reprimanded.

Recruiting for Washington's imperial wars is becoming a tough sell. Youth know now that enlisting in the military means that a tour of duty in Iraq is very likely. They also know that the Bush administration has lied about the justifications for the war. They see photos of young people their age who were killed in Iraq and they see young soldiers taking the fall for prisoner abuse policies that originated in the White House.

The Iraq War marks the first real test of the all-volunteer military in a lengthy combat environment. Some military analysts have begun arguing the case for the

draft, which was abolished in 1973, if the military cannot meet its recruiting goals.

Lawrence Korb, an assistant defense secretary in the Reagan administration, said that much depends on the success of recruiters. If they don't succeed, it could force Congress to reconsider a draft—something no one, least of all the military, wants, he said.

The breaking point could come next year, Korb said, if troop levels in Iraq stay around 150,000 and there isn't enough new blood in the Army pipeline.

As the Army continues to face this crisis in recruiting, counter-recruiting activists across the country are gearing up to shut down military recruiting and resist the draft.

No Draft, No Way has launched a summer campaign that will gather 100,000 signatures on the "I Refuse" anti-draft petition. They are also planning to produce thousands of Activists Toolkits, which will include a guidebook to counter-recruiting, an original DVD and new educational literature to be ready for the start of the new school year. □

Pablo Paredes case

Navy judge finds war resistance 'reasonable'

By John Catalinotto

Navy military resister Pablo Paredes was found guilty of missing a troop movement at his court-martial in San Diego May 10. He had refused to board the USS Bonhomme Richard on its way from San Diego to Iraq last Dec. 6.

The courtroom was packed with reporters and anti-war activists, including Fernando Suarez del Solar and Cindy Sheehan, both of whom have been anti-war activists since their sons were killed in Iraq.

At Paredes's sentencing the next day, presiding Judge Lt. Cmdr. Bob Klant surprised onlookers by admitting that it was reasonable for the sailor to question the legality of the U.S. wars against Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq. He sentenced Paredes to three months at hard labor and a loss of rank, from petty officer third class to seaman recruit, the lowest position in the Navy.

While Paredes and his supporters had good reason to consider any guilty verdict or sentence unjust, most considered this at least a partial victory. Especially impor-

tant was that the judge recognized both the strength of Paredes's argument about the Iraq War and his belief that his participation in it would be criminal.

Paredes's statement to the court, which was sensitive to his fellow Navy members and their families, nevertheless contained the following strong points condemning the Iraq War and justifying his reasons for resistance:

"I am convinced that the current war in Iraq is illegal. I am also convinced that the

true causality for it lacked any high ground in the topography of morality. ... I read extensively on the arguments and results of Nazi German soldiers, as well as imperial Japanese soldiers, in the Nuremberg and Tokyo Trials, respectively. In all I read I came to an overwhelming conclusion supported by countless examples that any soldier who knowingly participates in an illegal war can find no haven in the fact that they were following orders, in the eyes of international law." □

PICKETLINE

Centro Independiente de Trabajadores Agrícolas and Rural Opportunities.

Workers win at Washington U.

Thanks to a 19-day student sit-in, the workers at Washington University in St. Louis will be getting significant raises. In a ground-breaking agreement finalized April 22, the administration agreed to pay \$1 million over the next two years toward salary and benefits for low-paid contract workers.

A new joint student/university committee will include representatives of the Student Worker Alliance that organized the sit-in. The committee's charge: to change university policies to better meet the needs of lower-paid service workers. These include protecting the right to bargain collectively and working toward providing living wages and benefits for all those directly or indirectly employed by the university.

"I'm so thrilled with what these students have won!" said janitor Chyrstal Wells in an April 26 media release issued by Jobs with Justice, which fights for higher wages and better working conditions for janitors and other low-paid workers. "I've never worked at a place where the people I perform services for take up for you like this."

SWA is part of the Student-Labor Action Project, a national movement to promote workers' rights on college campuses. Members of SLAP have won victories at Harvard, Stanford and most recently at Georgetown. SLAP is a joint project of the United States Student Association and Jobs with Justice.

Howard workers fight for living wage

Custodians and housekeepers at Howard University, members of SEIU Local 82, have been in contract negotiations for more than six months. Some workers make just \$8.65 an hour while President H. Patrick Swygert makes \$203.85 an hour.

Take the case of Ollie Fulmore, who has to work 80 hours a week to provide for his four children. Because Fulmore earns only \$8.65 an hour for his housekeeping job, he has to work a second job in food service just to pay the bills.

Howard refuses to bring the wages of the lowest-paid workers above \$10 an hour, even though housekeepers at other universities in the area already earn more. Workers at Georgetown University will be earning \$14 an hour by 2007, thanks to the recent dramatic hunger strike by Georgetown students.

An athlete with a conscience

By Monica Moorehead

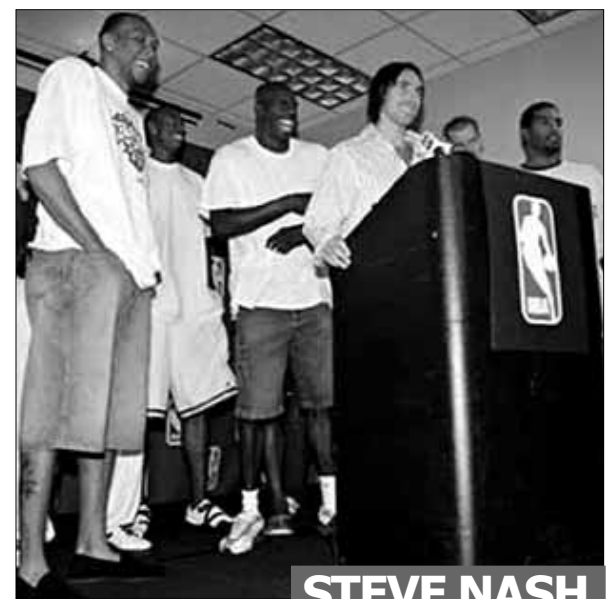
This year's Most Valuable Player award in the National Basketball Association went to Steve Nash, a 6-foot white guard who plays with the Phoenix Suns. He was raised in Canada.

Nash is highly regarded as a selfless player who is not only a great shooter but a great passer. He led the league in assists—meaning passing the ball to an open teammate who went on to score.

When he was presented the MVP award he insisted that all of his teammates, the great majority of them African American, accept the award with him to show that he could not have won the award without their cooperation.

Nash is not only an exceptional player, he is politically progressive. Two years ago, before the U.S. attacked Iraq, Nash spoke out against this war. At the February 2003 All-Star game, he wore a practice t-shirt that read, "Shoot baskets, not people."

In defense of his t-shirt he stated, "I think that war is wrong in 99.9 percent of all cases. I think [the Iraq war] has much more to do with oil or some sort of distraction, because I don't feel as though we should be worrying about Iraq." (www.edgeofsports.com)



STEVE NASH

When more politically conservative NBA players and officials publicly spoke out against Nash's stance, he never backed down. Nash's public denunciation of the Iraq war is reminiscent of the heroic position that Muhammad Ali took against the Vietnam War. Ali, who is African American, later had his heavyweight boxing title stolen from him in 1971 for refusing to fight in that war.

Nash stated that one of the books he read recently was the "Communist Manifesto." Nash may be small in physical stature, compared to other NBA players, but his political consciousness helps him stand head and shoulders above many other athletes. □

Massacres, corruption accompany Plan Colombia

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

During her whirlwind trip through Latin America in late April, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stopped in Bogotá to give Colombian president Álvaro Uribe assurance that her government is firmly behind his policies and will continue funding his counterinsurgency programs. In fact, President George W. Bush is asking Congress for \$741.7 million in aid for Colombia for the 2006 fiscal year. This is in spite of the 2005 time limit for Plan Colombia, and mounting criticism both nationally and internationally.

An article by Associated Press writer Andrew Selsky, carried on May 7 by many U.S. newspapers, was entitled "Backing for Colombia Drug War Criticized."

It began: "Resilient rebels. Rebounding drug crops. Rogue American soldiers, snared in plots to smuggle cocaine and funnel stolen ammunition to paramilitary death squads. The bad news has been piling up fast, almost five years after the United States began spending \$3 billion under its Plan Colombia aid program to wipe out cocaine and heroin production and crush a long-running leftist insurgency."

Selsky refers to criticism of Plan Colombia in the U.S. and quotes from a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette editorial saying that Colombia "has turned into a sinkhole of money and military resources over the past five years." It adds, "The Congress should scrap Plan Colombia now, rather than throw more good money after bad."

In another paragraph Selsky wrote, "John Walsh, a senior associate at the Washington Office on Latin America think tank, said recently that 'the drug war is failing to achieve its most basic objectives.'"

'Rogue soldiers'—what's unique is publicity

The "rogue American soldiers" refers to three incidents reported recently in the media. Shortly after midnight on May 3, an anonymous caller alerted police in Cundinamarca, the municipality where the capital Bogotá is located, to

a "big" event in the region—the delivery of a shipment.

When the police arrived, they found 29 metal boxes with 32,900 rounds of ammunition and three men—one Colombian plus a colonel and a sergeant from the Special Forces of the U.S. Army. The last two were shooting instructors at the nearby National Army Training Center of Tolimaida.

The booty was reportedly going to be sold to right-wing paramilitaries.

This incident comes after two others: one on March 29, when five U.S. soldiers who were part of the "anti-drug" operations in the south of Colombia were arrested for carrying 16 kilograms of cocaine in a U.S. military plane, and a recent case of a U.S. soldier being investigated for the hit-and-run death of two Colombian soldiers last year.

These episodes are not unique nor isolated incidents. In fact, as part of Plan Colombia the Colombian government had to, at Washington's request, sign a treaty that grants immunity to the 800 U.S. military personnel and 600 U.S. contractors operating in that country.

What is unique is that these incidents became news in the Colombian media, which reflects the opinion of part of the oligarchy. It is still early to ascertain their real meaning.

Realignment of Colombian ruling class?

The governing Liberal Party is having its convention in June amidst a polarization of its membership. One sector is fully behind Uribe and the other, to which popular Sen. Piedad Cordoba belongs, seems to want to take a more populist route. Does this reflect a realignment of the Colombian ruling class?

Uribe has also raised the possibility of forming a new party on his own. Some Colombian analysts suggest that this could be insurance in case the Supreme Court invalidates a ruling allowing him to run for reelection. His election campaign promise of ending violence, which should read as "ending the guerrillas," has not been fulfilled and he is seeking a second term to

"finish his goal."

Let it not be forgotten that the paramilitaries control more than 30 percent of the Congress, have regional and local government positions and increasingly administer important services, including health care. And that so-called negotiations between Uribe and the paras in Santa Fe de Ralito, supposedly to demobilize and disarm them, are described by the president's opponents as "monologues" or "conversations of me with me." They are in fact a smokescreen for an attempt to legalize the paramilitaries.

As a result of the "demobilization," these criminals are being hired in Uribe's programs of "Peasant Soldiers" and are used as secret informants to accuse, indict, imprison and murder leaders of the progressive, unarmed popular social movement. These "demobilized paramilitaries" are then set free in the communities, both rural and urban, constituting an ever present danger. Uribe's links with the paramilitaries since before he became president are well documented.

Uribe is clearly putting all the pieces together for a fascist state. Are all the members of the ruling class behind this effort? Is there a part that feels that its economic and financial interests are not being served well under these circumstances? Particularly when the Latin American masses are in uprising and the Bolivarian president from Venezuela is rapidly advancing a proposal for the region's integration and increasing the possibilities of significant trade with other countries besides the United States?

Conservatives are criticizing Plan Colombia for its failure, both in its stated goal of eradicating the drug industry and its intention of destroying the armed insurgency, which can no longer be hidden. But progressive organizations in Colombia and around the world blame it

for causing terrible human rights abuses that have taken the lives and the freedom of thousands of Colombians.

Yet on April 27, during a media conference with Colombian Foreign Minister Carolina Barco in the Casa de Nariño—the presidential palace—Condoleezza Rice had said: "I've just had a very productive meeting with President Uribe. It was a meeting in which we could discuss the impressive progress that the government of Colombia has made in improving security, in strengthening democracy, and indeed its commitment to protecting human rights."

Toll of Plan Colombia, Patriot Plan

That "protection" was absent for Gisella, a 19-month-old girl who was murdered by paramilitaries in the village of Cerro Azul in northeast Colombia on the same day as Rice's speech. Her house came under fire as they fired indiscriminately, supposedly against guerrillas. The residents—peasants who had warned the local government about the paramilitaries' presence in their region—were ignored by the authorities. They say that 15 or more people were killed.

Crimes like this happen daily in Colombia. But under Uribe they have tremendously increased, particularly in the year since he secretly launched a new component of Plan Colombia, the counterinsurgency Patriot Plan. It is his and the U.S.'s effort to destroy the leadership of the revolutionary army, the FARC-EP, in the south of the country, where its "headquarters" are supposedly located.

In spite of the doubling of U.S. military personnel and contractors and an infusion of highly sophisticated equipment, the guerrillas have not been decimated. On the contrary, the armed insurgency since last February has intensified its guerrilla

Continued on page 10



'Latortue, you can't hide!'

A militant and spirited group of Haitians, together with some North American supporters, gathered on May 14 outside the Puck Building in lower Manhattan. They heckled a bourgeois crowd who had come to meet Prime Minister Gerard Latortue, the usurper installed by the U.S. after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forced out of Haiti. However, Latortue didn't show. Instead he sent his defense minister, Herard Abraham, to meet with the \$250-a-plate crowd.

Story and photo by G. Dunkel

Stop Killer Coke

People in Solidarity with Colombia
Stop the Bush/Uribe State Terrorism in Colombia!
Boycott Killer Coke! No to Plan Colombia!

EMERGENCY DEMONSTRATION
Wednesday, May 25
5 7pm
@ the offices of Coca Cola
771 5th Ave. b/t 55th & 56th Streets

On Wednesday, May 25th. The Troops Out Now Coalition along with other organizations will hold an emergency demonstration in front of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in order to show their outrage at the massive torture and murder of children, women, and union leaders sweeping the besieged country of Colombia.

As the U.S. government negotiates with bombs, major U.S. multinational corporations are following suit: The Coca-Cola bottler, Pan American Beverages (Panamco) has been hiring terrorist paramilitary groups such as the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) to murder union leaders that fight for better living standards: Some of the atrocities include:

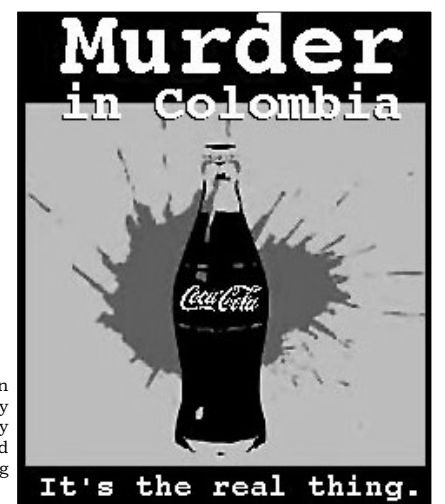
- From 1989 to 2002, Coca-Cola, via the paramilitaries, was behind the assassinations of 13 union leaders
- On September 11, 2003 a 10 year old boy was kidnapped, tortured, decapitated, and his small arms cut-off, later to be used to silence people; as the paramilitaries promised

U.S.'s plan of creating another Israel on the Latin American continent is clear:

- On Tuesday, May 10th. U.S. soldiers tried selling 40,000 rounds of ammunition to a paramilitary group. This is not an isolated incident, but a common practice due to U.S. imperialism's interest in Colombia: natural resources and its' long term plan of destabilizing and terrorizing neighboring Venezuela
- On March 29, five U.S. soldiers were arrested after 35 pounds of cocaine were found aboard a U.S. military plane that flew to El Paso, Texas, from the Apiay air base east of Bogotá. One suspect has been released, and the rest may be released later without any charges.
- The United States has provided more than \$3 billion OF OUR TAX DOLLARS in "aid" during the past four years to supposedly "help" Colombia battle leftist rebels and the drug trafficking that fuels a 40-year-old war. However, there is sufficient proof that 80-90% of the atrocities in Colombia come from the right wing paramilitary and AUC armies. The U.S. is essentially fighting the same armies that they fund. At the same time, more drugs are entering the U.S. than ever. Meanwhile, our children receive less education, our elderly are without Medicaid, and there are more people of color and poor white families homeless, hungry and without any help!

Please come join us say **NO** to Coca Cola's Corporate Terror
STOP U.S. TERRORISM IN COLOMBIA

For more information:
www.TroopsOutNow.org or call 212.633.6646 39 West 14th St. Room 206 New York, NY 10011



The Newsweek incident

Massive protests follow brief moment of truth

By Deirdre Griswold

The Bush administration is deliberately missing the point if it thinks that an article in Newsweek magazine is what caused massive anti-U.S. demonstrations across the Muslim world, from Gaza to Indonesia, that peaked on Friday, May 13. Furthermore, no amount of bowing down to White House pressure by Newsweek's editors will undo the seething anger at Washington for its brutal wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The article in the issue of Newsweek dated May 9 had given details about the abuse of Muslim prisoners at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo. For months and months, information has been leaking out about torture, humiliation, sleep deprivation and routine insulting behavior and language toward the prisoners.

Most of the detained are from Afghanistan, and many were captured, tied, blindfolded and flown half-way across the world three years ago when U.S. forces first invaded their country.

They have existed in a limbo ever since. Interrogators have faced few restraints. There is no outside monitoring, no public list of names of those detained, no respect by the U.S. for international law regarding treatment of

prisoners. In fact, the Bush administration has created a new category—"enemy combatants"—in order to circumvent such laws.

Last November, there was much discussion in the media here about the role of the new U.S. Attorney General, Alberto Gonzales, in writing a memo, approved by Bush, that condoned the use of torture in the "war on terror."

After the gruesome testimony and photos that came out about the vile treatment of prisoners at the Abu-Ghraib prison camp in Iraq, where U.S. soldiers forced detainees to strip naked and simulate masturbation while threatening them with beatings and electric shock if they didn't comply, it was clear to the world that this regime, which sanctimoniously preaches "civility," "human rights," "democracy" and "freedom" to governments it wants to weaken or overthrow, has not the slightest regard for any of that when it comes to its own conduct.

The White House has now forced Newsweek's editors to apologize for their story, which reported that an internal investigation showed that one technique used by the Guantanamo interrogators to "soften up" detainees was to put the holiest book in the Muslim religion, the Koran, on a toilet during interrogation,

and, in at least one case, to actually flush the book down.

The writer of the story, Michael Isikoff, said the Pentagon had been allowed to read his account before it ran and made no objection. Obviously, the commercial media in the U.S., who constantly refer to themselves as the "free press," are used to submitting sensitive material to the military for approval before publication.

Given that it is widely known that U.S. military personnel routinely refer to Muslims with the most insulting of terms, and that part of the psychological warfare of a racist, predatory imperialist army is to degrade those it hopes to conquer, this story struck home and inflamed Muslims everywhere.

In Afghanistan itself, anti-U.S. demonstrations went on for days, even though they were put down with such brutality that at least 16 Afghans were killed and hundreds wounded.

There were passionate protests in Egypt, Pakistan, Malaysia and many other countries.

Once this happened, the Pentagon, White House and State Department jumped on Newsweek. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called the magazine's report "appalling" and said it created "a very major problem" for the U.S. in the

Muslim world.

White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said, "Our image abroad has been damaged."

The deaths of demonstrators were blamed on the magazine. Its editors humbly apologized.

But this was not the first time that such an account had appeared.

In August and October 2004, news reports based on a lawsuit and a written report by British citizens who had been released from Guantanamo claimed abuse by U.S. guards, including throwing their Korans into the toilet. And in January, Kristine Huskey, a lawyer representing Kuwaitis detained at Guantanamo, said they claimed to have been abused and one detainee saw a guard throw a Koran into a toilet.

The abuse and the humiliation are real. No amount of media manipulation and intimidation can change that. Newsweek has not tarnished some super-clean U.S. "image." It has lifted the lid just a little—and then closed it again in great fear—on the cesspool of U.S. imperialism's criminal conduct in what used to be referred to as the Third World, which has been going on for a long time but can no longer be concealed by platitudes about peace and democracy. □

U.S. occupation spreads Iraq turmoil

By John Catalinotto

To 90 percent of Iraqis, the cause of widespread killings, the failure of the new puppet government, the lack of gas and electricity and the general chaos is clear: it's the U.S. occupation.

But on a whirlwind tour of the northern Kurdish area and the fortified "Green Zone" of Baghdad on May 15, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to find a scapegoat: Syria. According to Rice, Syria has failed to stop border crossings of U.S. opponents.

"We're going to go back and look again at what the neighbors can do—particularly the Syrians—to stop support for these foreign terrorists who we believe are gathering on Syrian soil and coming across," Rice told reporters as she left Iraq. She traveled with a full escort of military helicopters, getting in and out of the country as quickly as possible.

While her statement has to be taken seriously as a U.S. threat to the Damascus government, it does nothing to dispel the collapse of U.S. plans to rule a stable and exploitable Iraq. The crisis for imperialism is not foreign fighters but Iraqis who refuse to submit to foreign imperialist rule.

On May 16, Moqtada al-Sadr, a religious and political leader of a large number of poor members of the Shiite community, came out publicly for the first time since last August to demand that the U.S. leave Iraq. Al-Sadr's Mahdi Army had staged an insurrection in Najaf and in parts of Baghdad in April 2004.

He called upon the "Iraqi government, religious movements and political factions to work hard to kick out the occupier. I want the immediate withdrawal of the occupation forces.

"The occupier is trying to make up a sectarian war between the Sunnis and Shiites," al-Sadr said. "It is not acceptable to direct to the Sunnis the allegations of

ugly acts committed by the occupier against the Shiites."

Truck drivers blame the U.S.

Many other Iraqis also blame the occupation forces.

Independent journalist Dahr Jamail, who spent months in Iraq but is reporting now from Amman, Jordan, says he has been told by Iraqi friends that it would be unwise to enter Iraq at this time. He reports the comments of Iraqi truck drivers from many Iraqi cities—central and south, Sunni and Shiite alike—in a May 15 article. (www.DahrJamailIraq.com)

"All of our problems are due to the Americans," says Ahmed, a driver attempting to deliver goods to Ramadi. "The soldiers have surrounded the city for so long, there is one entry way in and all of the people of the city are suffering. The Americans brought all of these problems with them."

Regarding the possibility of battles between the different religious sects, a Shiite driver from the Sadr City neighborhood of Baghdad says, "The occupiers are creating these problems between the Shia and Sunni, but they will not divide us! All occupations only mean destruction and suffering!" Jamail notes that the rest of the drivers nod in agreement.

The drivers' reaction is an important sign. A major argument of the U.S. government in defending their occupation of Iraq is that civil war between Sunni and Shiite communities would be unleashed if the occupation ended.

The drivers were also angry about the U.S. military destruction of al-Qaim and the killing of women and children during the assault on this town near the Syrian border.

Rice and the Pentagon command have tried to present the assault on al-Qaim as a battle of U.S. troops against "foreign terrorists." The Baghdad command claimed the offensive killed "125 insurgents."

An official from the local hospital reported 15 bodies at the hospital and word that the resistance had removed 28 bodies from the battles. That means 43 Iraqi deaths, including non-combatants.

While the U.S. has denied it, resistance reports, some of them verified by civilians, state that two U.S. helicopters were shot down during the assault on al-Qaim.

Falluja and al-Qaim

According to Jamail's May 14 report, the battle was a smaller version of the all-out U.S. assault on Falluja last November. At that time U.S. troops destroyed two-thirds of a city of 350,000 people, killing thousands and driving out most of the population.

The Committee against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq from the Spanish State (CEOSI) reports that it is using \$2,000 left over from a collection for medical materials for Falluja to supply the General Hospital of the city of Hadiza,

near al-Qaim. All the hospital's equipment had been wiped out by the U.S. assault. CEOSI had answered an appeal from the Association of Moslem Scholars.

In April, CEOSI sponsored a nine-day visit to Iraq. Solidarity activists interviewed Iraqis in key positions about the situation for the population and met representatives of parts of the resistance. CEOSI's reports include a detailed description of current conditions in Falluja and an interview with a former officer of the Iraq Army, now a resistance organizer. Like al-Sadr, this officer also blamed the U.S. occupation for fomenting battles between Sunni and Shiite communities.

Spanish-language reports from the CEOSI visit can be found at www.nodo50.org/iraq/, as well as some in English.

The Iraqi puppet government, elected in a Jan. 30 U.S.-organized vote, finally took office April 28. Since then over 450 people have died in actions attributed to those who oppose the U.S. occupation. □

Bush, stop your terror!

Continued from page 1

Bosch is still free in Miami. Posada, infamous for his role in bombings and other acts of terror, had been "hiding in plain sight in Miami." (Miami Herald, May 17)

Now the Chávez government in Caracas, itself a survivor of U.S.-led coup attempts, is demanding that Washington extradite Posada to stand trial in Venezuela, but so far the Bush administration has balked.

The fabric of U.S. imperialism is soaked with the blood of millions of workers and oppressed people. Its entire history is filled with colonial and imperialist interventions and countless wars of conquest and domination.

The arrest of Posada, although a good



PHOTO: AIN

friend of Washington, is a result of this history. Posada became a liability for imperialism. That is why he was arrested.

But what still remains is for Posada to be tried and convicted for his crimes against humanity. The movement must stay strong to assure that justice is served. It is Posada who should be in jail, and the Cuban Five freed. □

Despite crackdown on opposition

Nepal king faces growing revolution

By David Hoskins

King Gyanendra of Nepal has announced the lifting of a state of emergency he imposed on the country at the beginning of February, but many repressive measures remain in force in the impoverished Himalayan kingdom.

Following the emergency declaration, Nepal's government was dismissed and all civil liberties were suspended as the Royal Army occupied cities and towns and enforced strict curfews.

At the time he enacted his royal coup, Gyanendra indicated he would give himself 100 days to contain the revolutionary process led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and destroy the fighting capacity of the New People's Army.

Gyanendra's one-man rule made it hard for the governments of the U.S., India and Britain to continue their open support for

his regime. So he declared that the 100 days had been successful and that the revolutionary forces were significantly diminished. He also wants to give the appearance that civil liberties and freedom for opposition parties have been restored, so the three governments can justify the resumption of military aid the monarch needs to fight the popular insurgency.

It appears that Gyanendra was wrong on both counts. Armed action continues against government dissenters. Military units and armed police continue to be mobilized against protesters and opposition party leaders. The offices of the youth wing of the legally recognized United Marxist-Leninist Party continue to be forcibly occupied and the Royal Army recently fired on crowds of student protesters. Additionally, high-level officials from the parliamentary parties remain under indefinite detention and there is

continued police harassment of the king's political opponents. (BBC News, April 30)

Nevertheless, the U.S. and India are expected to resume military aid to the king's beleaguered regime. There is little doubt that this aid is much needed to prop up the royal government after its expenditure of a great amount of military power failed to destroy the revolution.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca paid King Gyanendra and other government officials a visit in early May. Rocca's visit was viewed by regional analysts as a sign that Washington is interested in expediting the resumption of arms shipments in order to fight the insurgency. (Nepal News, May 09)

Rocca spoke openly about the Maoist revolution, intimating that a people's republic in Nepal would be viewed by the Bush administration as a threat to U.S. hegemony in the region. She also spoke

highly of Gyanendra's decision to rescind the emergency declaration and encouraged the king and the parliamentary parties to unite to defeat the revolutionary movement.

The monarchy's contention that it has contained and diminished the armed strength of the revolutionary forces also appears to be false. According to the revolutionary forces, dozens of police and army troops were killed in fierce fighting both during and after the state of emergency. On May 10 several hundred Maoist revolutionaries launched simultaneous armed attacks on three joint security bases at Bandipur, Chorchawa and Mirchaiya. All three bases are along the east-west highway that links the rest of the country to the capital of Katmandu. (Nepal News, May 10)

This is backed up by BBC accounts of the situation in the country.

Even during the state of emergency, the Maoists demonstrated their strength in defiance of the virtual military lockdown by calling general strikes in certain regions and closing down all private schools outside of Katmandu. In April the All Nepal National Free Student's Union (Revolutionary) successfully closed thousands of private schools for several weeks. It was protesting the lack of quality public education and the high cost of private education that prevented poor workers and peasants from attending school. The ANNFSU-R is the student wing of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

The CPN(M) and its affiliated organizations appear to be operating at full capacity, despite months of state terrorism. This places King Gyanendra in the awkward situation of either admitting that his military has greatly inflated the number of casualties it claims to have inflicted on the revolutionary forces, or admitting that the size of the revolutionary forces and their support among the masses is stronger than even many of the Maoists' sympathizers have suspected. □

Will French workers approve EU constitution?

By G. Dunkel

An important referendum on the new European Union constitution is set for May 29 in France, the one country where the vote is too close to call. Because of this the struggle in France over the referendum has drawn Europe-wide attention.

In general, communist and far-left parties and most trade unions in Europe oppose the new constitution, which must be approved by all 25 members of the EU before it can go into force.

The constitution would strengthen the central authority of the EU in relation to its individual members, would increase the power of the European-based monopolies against the working class in the individual countries, would increase the police and repressive powers of the European states, and would invest more money into the EU's joint military forces.

It would also strengthen Europe in its economic competition with the United States. But it would do this by strengthening European capital against the European working class. And it would weaken small farmers while helping agribusiness.

In order for the constitution to be adopted, it has to be ratified by every one of the 25 member states. Italy, Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Slovakia and Hungary have already said yes, almost all by overwhelming margins in their parliaments. The lower house in Germany passed the constitution and the upper house will most probably pass it May 27. A referendum is scheduled in the Netherlands a few days after the French vote.

French workers hold the key

But all eyes are on France, where poll figures still show an evenly split electorate, with no clear trend emerging. The government and the major bourgeois parties in France are using their control of the media to push for a "yes" vote. Jacques Chirac, the right-wing president, has played an active part in this campaign.

The Socialist Party, which has held office in the capitalist government on and off since 1981, has officially endorsed voting yes. Still, many of the Socialist Party's supporters, along with many Greens, agree with the left that the proposed constitution is a blueprint for wrecking public services and throwing open borders to

globalization and the relocation of jobs.

Trade unions in France are so unanimous in their opposition to the new constitution that when one of them does not call for a no vote, it is big news. L'Humanité, the newspaper of the French Communist Party, on May 15 reported that at least a thousand meetings or street rallies had taken place organized by partisans of the "no" vote.

Arlette Laguiller is spokesperson for Workers Struggle (LO), a far-left electoral party in France, which generally gets around 5 percent of the vote in the first-round presidential elections. She explained this constitution "will add a political dictatorship of the big Western European powers over the poorest coun-

tries to their existing economic control."

Laguiller continued: "This constitution brings nothing to the people and the workers, not even the notion of a minimum salary ... no guarantee limiting work hours, no mention of special rights for women, like the right to a divorce, contraception and abortion." (Libération, May 14)

In Central Europe, where the EU constitution has been approved by parliaments, workers are very upset that the promises politicians made to them about jobs and economic growth have been discarded in favor of EU requirements—especially budget cuts and doing away with the vestiges of the social support provided under the previous socialist regimes. □

Immigrants under attack, fighting back

Continued from page 3

for state drivers' licenses.

In effect this will be a national ID card that lists everyone who tries to drive legally in a national data base. States will also be required to save copies of identification documents for 7 to 10 years, along with facial image scans of each license holder. Three years from now a federally approved ID card will be required to open a bank account, travel on an airplane, or take advantage of any government service.

This law will make life miserable for anyone without legal status. Deportations will break up families and create untold hardships. Even before the passing of this bill, a routine traffic stop can and has led to detentions or deportation. People who can't legally get a driver's license will drive illegally. Under these conditions a traffic stop

for many will mean jail for indefinite periods most likely followed by deportation.

Immigrants' role in class struggle

These and all other attacks on immigrants are serious threats to millions of people who just want to work and take care of their families.

Many immigrants come here from countries where they were involved in class struggle and understand which side of the class camp they belong to. They are just following the resources that predatory multinational monopolies have extracted from their countries.

The ruling class fears these immigrant workers even as they super-exploit them. The hysteria created about protecting borders and fighting terrorism is scare tactics meant really to slow down the browning

of the population and to scapegoat immigrants for the worsening economic conditions here.

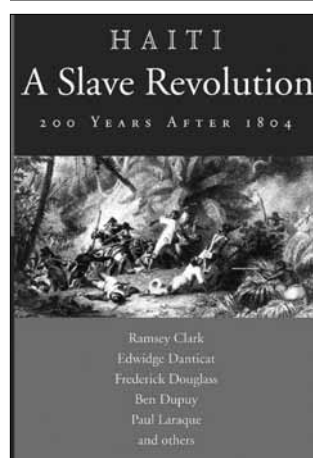
That same class consciousness that scares the ruling class encourages labor organizers and communists, who welcome these class-conscious immigrants. All workers here are exploited by the same ruling class, who would pit one against the other with their classic divide-and-conquer tactics.

Responses to these attacks on immigrants are also coming from many directions. Even state governments are exploring how to resist the ID changes to avoid their high costs. Some are threatening lawsuits or even to disobey the license rules.

Many immigrant and civil liberties groups are also looking for ways to challenge the new law. They point out that road safety will be reduced by many unlicensed and uninsured motorists. The new ID will be another fertile ground for identity theft, especially since it will have so much of people's vital statistics included.

People in Texas and California held demonstrations the weekend of May 15 to protest against the Minutemen. The International Action Center has a new campaign, the Committee in Defense of Immigrant and Low-Wage Workers, which will work closely with immigrant workers' groups. The fightback has begun.

The writer is an immigrant from the Caribbean.



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Danger of new adventures as

U.S. losing grip on world events

By Fred Goldstein

The New York Times Magazine section carried an interview with a “senior adviser to Bush” last October conducted by journalist Ron Suskind. The unnamed aide said to Suskind, “You’re part of the reality-based community, one who believes that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.” But, the top White House official continued, “That’s not the way the world works anymore. We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality.

“And while you’re studying that reality—judiciously as you will—we’ll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that’s how things will sort out. We’re history’s actors ... and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.” (New York Times, Oct. 17, 2004)

The arrogant “senior adviser” to Bush—a term usually reserved for someone with cabinet or National Security Council status—was clearly stating his conviction that Washington could dictate the way the world works because it was an “empire now.” Of course, U.S. imperialism has been an empire at least since it took over Hawaii and Samoa at the end of the 19th century—even before the war of 1898 when it conquered Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

But this aide was saying that the U.S. was now the all-dominant empire whose will could not be resisted and whose power can shape events in accordance with the demands of the White House, big business and the Pentagon.

Wrong.

In fact, a “judicious study of reality” reveals that U.S. imperialism is gradually losing control of events and developments around the globe. And this trend has significantly accelerated since the limitations and vulnerabilities of the “empire” have been starkly revealed in Iraq and Afghanistan and in the decline of the dollar.

Venezuela and Cuba: revolutionary alliance

A case in point: With all their super-power might, Washington and the Pentagon have not succeeded in stopping the people of Venezuela, led by President Hugo Chávez, from trying to revolutionize their conditions by challenging the pro-U.S. oligarchy and the U.S. oil companies. After the failure of both a U.S.-backed coup in April 2002 and a counterrevolutionary lock-out of the oil industry in December of that year, the Bolivarian Revolution has become stronger and is moving sharply to the left.

Despite threats from Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the Chávez government has established close ties with revolutionary Cuba.

Cuba and Venezuela have given each other mutual aid. Not only have both revolutions been strengthened, but the defiant rise of this revolutionary alliance has encouraged progressive and revolutionary forces throughout Latin America, to the exasperation and chagrin of U.S. imperialism.

Despite \$3 billion in aid, largely military, to a succession of reactionary regimes in Colombia, Washington has also been unable to defeat the guerrilla forces in that country who have been fighting militarily and politically to oust imperialism and set up a revolutionary government. In fact, when Venezuela broke relations with Colombia and suspended oil and trade relations with the pro-U.S. gov-

ernment of Álvaro Uribe, he had to appeal to Fidel Castro to mediate the dispute. This was an enormous humiliation for Washington and a measure of its decline in influence.

Despite the assertion by the anonymous Bush official, the masses of Cuba, Colombia and Venezuela are making their own history, in direct conflict with the “empire.”

U.S. geopolitical position weakening globally

But aside from revolutionary challenges, Washington’s overall economic and geopolitical position in the world is weakening.

Globalization—the spread of imperialist investment throughout the globe—has built up the working class world-wide, revolutionized communications, promoted organization of the rural masses who flood into urban sweatshops, and brought about the numerical and technological advancement of workers, students and the middle classes across the globe. It has even strengthened propertied classes with interests that are antagonistic to imperialism.

The capitalist development of the forces of production is rapidly making the world a place that is more and more difficult for any imperialist power, even a so-called superpower such as the U.S., to dominate.

The world can see how U.S. military forces are overstretched. It also saw the huge U.S. anti-war movement, which flared up during the preparations for and the early stages of the Iraq War—a movement which could easily rise again and on an even stronger, working-class basis.

The world watches as an article in Newsweek magazine about outrages against Muslim prisoners in Guantanamo flies around the globe on the Internet at the speed of light and becomes fuel for a virtual uprising among the oppressed people of Afghanistan suffering under U.S.-NATO occupation.

All these developments undermine the chill of intimidation associated with threats from Washington and change the psychology of leaders and governments—encouraging them in the direction of independence and even defiance.

Latin America is a prime example. “Jan. 1, 2005, was a significant date,” wrote the Green Left Weekly of Australia on April 28, “not for what happened, but for what didn’t. On that day the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas was supposed to be signed. The FTAA was one of Washington’s pet projects—it was a major step in removing barriers against U.S. corporate plunder in Latin America. But by late 2004, the FTAA negotiation had been suspended, with governments in Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Uruguay refusing to negotiate their people’s future away.”

Counterpoised is the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), proposed by Hugo Chávez, to develop regional economic integration in order to lessen Wall Street’s dominance. Two strategic proposals by Venezuela—Petrosur, a Latin America-wide oil company, and Telesur, a continental television channel—are designed to break the stranglehold of CNN and the U.S. oil companies on the continent. Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela have recently announced the launching of Petrosur. And Telesur is scheduled to begin broadcasting on May 24.

Washington was looking forward to the UN sessions on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) to bulldoze Iran and North Korea into capitulating to U.S. government threats and intimidation, to force

them to abandon the development of nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

Instead, both governments have rebuffed Washington’s threats. Furthermore, the United Nations session was dominated by demands that the great powers reduce their nuclear weapons.

Iran demands its rights

At the UN sessions Iran asserted its legal right under the NPT to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, including uranium enrichment. All the threats against Iran by Washington have united the country. The Iranian Parliament voted May 14 for a non-binding resolution insisting that the government resume developing nuclear fuel, defying demands by the U.S. and European governments that they halt all nuclear activity. The debate, in which 188 out of 205 members voted for the resolution, was broadcast live over national radio.

Dr. Mostafa Moin, a close ally of President Mohammad Khatami and considered by the U.S. to be a more conciliatory figure, was quoted as saying: “There is no reason not to create nuclear energy and to use it in a peaceful way.” According to the New York Times of May 16, “he noted that Iran’s population has doubled, to more than 70 million, since the nation started talking about developing nuclear energy with American support before the 1979 revolution.”

Others in the parliament denounced having “to beg for the world to provide us with nuclear fuel.” This is in spite of threats by Washington, and now Europe, to take the issue to the UN Security Council for sanctions.

Washington has been even more strenuously stymied in its attempt to isolate and disarm the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)—North Korea. Trying to use the UN NPT session as background to scare tactics, Washington announced that it had “detected” plans by the DPRK to test a nuclear weapon. The North Koreans ridiculed these charges as “U.S. strategic opinions.”

Korea, China say ‘no’ to U.S. bullying

The Bush administration, which walked away from bilateral talks with the DPRK begun during the Clinton administration, has sought to use the six-party talks with China, Russia, Japan, South Korea and the U.S. to pressure North Korea into abandoning its nuclear program.

North Korea has asserted that it won’t talk until Washington changes its hostile attitude. It has also asserted its sovereign right to self-defense and demanded that Washington talk with it directly, since the U.S. is the power stoking the crisis on the Korean peninsula.

The Bush administration’s big hope was that it could get China to pressure the DPRK. Washington has urged China to use trade as a weapon against the DPRK to force it to the six-party talks. China’s answer, according to the New York Times of May 11, was: “We oppose trying to address the problem through strong-arm tactics.” It was a blunt rebuff to U.S. imperialist aggressive diplomacy.

In fact, according to a World Food Program report citing Chinese government statistics, China’s food aid has “soared in the beginning of this year. By the organization’s estimate, China has sent 146,000 tons of food to North Korea in the first three months of this year, compared to 165,000 tons for all of 2004.”

In addition, while the imperialists have

stopped oil shipments to the DPRK, China’s oil shipments have continued and overall trade between China and North Korea increased 20 percent in the first quarter of 2005, compared with the same period a year ago.

India-China rapprochement

In the general area of trade and influence, the People’s Republic of China has used its great advances in manufacturing and technology to give Third World countries a trade and development alternative to the extortionate and onerous terms of the giant imperialist monopolies, the IMF and the World Bank.

The ALBA in Latin America and the ability of Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina and other countries to buck Washington on economic issues is greatly assisted by trade pacts and development projects provided by China on equitable and favorable terms.

China has opened up trade with 49 African countries and has provided development projects including power stations, railways, highways, telephone networks, bridges, cheap loans, and the reduction and even removal of trade tariffs on African products. Its investment in mining and oil gives these countries alternatives to the super-exploiting control of the imperialist corporations.

Washington’s long-term strategy of using India against China suffered a severe setback when, during a four-day state visit to India, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh signed an 11-point road map to settle their 40-year border dispute. According to The Australian of April 13, the two governments spoke of “the Asian century” in their agreement. While the border settlement is in its early stages, the mere fact that two Asian countries, representing a third of the world’s population, have moved closer together—i.e., in the opposite geostrategic direction from that promoted by Washington for over four decades—is a sign that the U.S. ruling class is losing its grip.

Another potential setback for Washington in southwest Asia is the prospect, being discussed by Iran, Pakistan and India, of running an oil pipeline from Iran through Pakistan to India. The negotiations follow the signing of a 30-year, \$60-billion oil pact between India and Iran. (Michael Klare, www.tomdispatch.com)

Such an agreement also would militate against U.S. government strategy in the region on several levels. It breaks up Washington’s attempts to isolate Iran and defies the sanctions on oil trade with Iran called for by Washington. Furthermore, it eases the tensions between India and Pakistan, which has been part of Anglo-imperialist strategy since Indian independence in 1948.

Condoleezza Rice, after meeting with Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh on March 16, said, “We have communicated to the Indian government our concerns about the gas pipeline cooperation between Iran and India.”

Beware of U.S. adventurism

The Bush administration has called Kim Il Sung of North Korea a “tyrant.” Bush has denounced Iran and North Korea as part of an “axis of evil.” Two weeks ago, on his trip to Moscow to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the defeat of the Nazis in Europe, a feat accomplished largely by the Soviet Red

Continued on page 11

workers world editorial

The truth? In the Senate?

The Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations—a collection of warmongers from both parties—is not looking into crime and graft involving the U.S. government and its favorite monopolies. Instead it has been poking around in the so-called Oil-for-Food Program, begun in 1996.

From 1990 to 1996, sanctions against Iraq caused the death of over a million Iraqis—half of them children under the age of five. The subcommittee is not investigating the U.S. presidents and officials—first Republicans, then Democrats—who enforced this program and were responsible for these deaths. The subcommittee is not investigating Madeleine Albright, who as secretary of state defended the death of the children as “worth it.”

The subcommittee is not investigating the U.S. officials who kept drinkable water from Iraqis.

No. What the committee is doing is sniffing around the program and trying to blame the UN, French and Russian politicians, and anyone else who objected in one way or another to the U.S. invasion of Iraq or to the sanctions.

On May 17 the committee called in British Member of Parliament George Galloway, a veteran opponent of U.S.-

British policy toward Iraq. Galloway just won election against a Tony Blair crony. Galloway ran on the newly formed Respect Party ticket after Labor expelled him for his anti-war activism.

The “evidence” the committee has produced against Galloway is based on forged documents claiming he profited off Iraqi oil. Two years ago Galloway won libel suits against two major newspapers that based stories on these documents.

The British MP is characterizing the current Senate investigation as an attempt to divert attention from U.S. crimes in Iraq with “the mother of all smokescreens.”

Then he told the committee: “Have a look at the real oil for food scandal. Have a look at the 14 months you were in charge of Baghdad when \$8.8 billion of Iraq's wealth went missing on your watch.

“Senator, in everything I said about Iraq, I turned out to be right and you turned out to be wrong, and 100,000 people have paid with their lives—1,600 of them American soldiers sent to their deaths on a pack of lies.”

Galloway's indictment of the war and all who condoned it was a breath of fresh air in the Senate. □

Plan Colombia

Continued from page 6

warfare on all fronts, reminiscent of the courageous North Vietnamese army. And despite the extradition to the U.S. of two alleged FARC leaders, Simon Trinidad and Sonia, and the kidnapping in Venezuela of Rodrigo Granda, none of the top leadership of the FARC has been caught.

The repression has turned ferocious against the unarmed social movement, which is regarded by Uribe and the paramilitaries as the guerrillas' base of support and as such stands accused as “guerrilla sympathizers.” This assumption, based only on the desire for social justice of both the armed and unarmed population, is enough for the regime to carry out mass detentions, selective assassinations, massacres and many other violent acts against labor, Afro-Colombian, Indigenous, peasant, student and human rights advocate leaders and anybody who opposes the state's violence.

The listing of crimes committed by the state and the paramilitaries, particularly while the “demobilization” process is taking place, is extensive.

As illustration, here are just a few cases that took place in April and May.

In the beginning of April the Colombian Army indiscriminately machine-gunned a peasant community from helicopters. In another community, the Army closed a small gold mine where 20 families worked, with the excuse that the mine belonged to the guerrillas. In a neighborhood in southern Putumayo, five people were assassinated by paras.

In Bogotá, Italian reporter and teacher Cristiano Morsolin has been threatened and persecuted by paramilitaries after writing articles, particularly for European media, denouncing the massacre in February of residents of the Peace Community San José de Apartado. Morsolin works closely with Gloria Cuartas, former

mayor of San José de Apartado and current general secretary of the progressive Social and Political Front. He also works with Jesuit priest Father Javier Giraldo, a respected human rights advocate who works with CINEP, the Center for Investigation and Popular Education, which has been documenting the abuses in a data bank accessible at www.nocheyniebla.org. Both Cuartas and Giraldo are under death threats.

On April 21 in the Cauca Valley, 12 Afro-Colombian children were found massacred and 12 others are still missing and feared dead.

On May 1, a 15-year-old boy was shot by police in Bogotá during a May Day event.

That same day, this writer received an email from a friend in Barranquilla, on the northern coast, saying that “while 15,000 of us workers demonstrated on the streets under a searing sun against Uribe's reelection, the closing of hospitals, the privatization of the university and the violations of human rights, another crime was committed. While waiting to join the demonstration, two friends were killed at point blank. One was killed, and the other, a member of the Colombian Communist Party, was seriously injured in the head.”

Communists, members of the Patriotic Union and leftists are particularly singled out in this witch hunt. The following day, on May 2, the Colombian office of prosecution was inspecting mass graves in the north of Bogotá where the mutilated and tortured bodies of 40 people were found. These were union members from the left assassinated by paramilitaries since the year 2000.

While the brutal repression increases in Colombia, so does the perseverance and will of the people to defeat it. However, international solidarity is of enormous importance. It will make a difference in shortening the time until the victory of the masses. □

'A better world's in birth'



Pat Chin in Haiti.

WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD

Pat Chin, a beloved member of the New York branch of Workers World Party, died on May 16 after a long struggle with breast cancer. An article on her many contributions to the revolutionary movement will appear in next week's Workers World. Below is a transcript of her last message to the New York branch of the Party, called in to a meeting on March 25. An mp3 audio file of this message can be heard at www.workers.org.

Revolutionary greetings to my dear comrades and friends.

First of all, congratulations on the tremendous success of the March 19th anti-war mobilization. You deserve to give yourselves a big round of applause for that.

As always, your determination, heroic courage and years of accumulated skills paid off in the most gratifying of ways. A better world's in birth, even though it takes the vision of a socialist revolutionary to understand that the fight for socialism is a long-term struggle, not for those addicted to the instant gratification of capitalist consumer culture.

My illness is a serious one, but my years in Workers World, the place where I found the most valuable reception of my revolutionary self, where I was encouraged to be me, has given me such profound satisfaction and sense of fulfillment that it makes it much easier to bear. It gives me strength, comrades and friends.

This is a most profound truth in large part because I came from a British colonized country where you are taught to hate yourself, where racism and class discrimination are combined to infuse the poison of self-hatred, giving the colonizers less work to do as capitalism destroys the sense of self.

I've heard some good news about new people joining the Party. Congratulations again. I would lastly like to thank the comrades in the Party, my wonderful, wonderful Workers World, for all the practical assistance, the love, warmth and care that you have been giving me over the course of this ordeal. Without this my recovery would be much more rocky.

I have a mountain to climb, a steep mountain, but with your love and assistance I will continue to struggle forward.

Thank you from the bottom of my socialist heart and revolutionary mind. And for all the good food that you have been bringing me!

See you later, comrades and friends. Forward ever, backward never! All power to the people! □

Why workers need welfare

By Deirdre Griswold

The number of women in federal and state prisons has been growing at an alarming rate, with the rate of increase twice that of men, according to the U.S. government. Last November, the number of women behind bars reached 101,179, an all-time high. That was nearly 50 percent greater than a decade earlier. Another 80,000 were held in local jails at some point during the year. (www.realcostofprisons.org)

The big increase is directly connected to the so-called “war on drugs.” In today's economy, it means many women can't find legal work that pays enough to sustain themselves and their children and have to resort to “petty crime” to survive.

It is also connected to the destruction of welfare, which started during the Reagan administration and was completed by Bill Clinton. Welfare was a cushion that kept

the very poor from having to risk jail or starvation when they couldn't get work. Most of the people on welfare were women and their children.

Back in 1973, Elizabeth Ross, one of the founding members of Workers World Party, wrote about the importance of welfare to the entire working class in her pamphlet “Why Workers Need Welfare—and How Billionaires Get It.” She showed how capitalist laws favored all kinds of benefits for the super-rich while trying to deny workers even a modest income to get through hard times. The pamphlet was reprinted in 1982.

This May 15th was the 100th anniversary of her birth. She had lived through the Great Depression and became a committed revolutionary socialist. Her pamphlet is more relevant today than ever, and will be available soon on the Workers World website at www.workers.org. □

S. Korean survivors tell of 1980 Gwangju massacre

By Deirdre Griswold

Two young men from South Korea are touring the United States and Canada with information that few here have heard before. They are survivors of the 1980 massacre in Gwangju, in which over 2,000 people, most of them young students, were killed by the South Korean military after an uprising against the Chun Doo Hwan dictatorship then ruling South Korea. Thousands more were injured, tortured and imprisoned.

Kim Hyo-Seok and Lee Shin were just teenagers when the massacre happened. They lost close friends, and have dedicated themselves to making sure that such a terrible thing never happens again.

They came to the U.S. on the 25th anniversary of the massacre because this is the country that has had the ultimate authority over the South Korean military since the end of World War II. It is the country that allowed a succession of military dictatorships to abuse the people even while nearly 40,000 U.S. troops were occupying the country. And it is the country that explicitly—and this has now been proven—gave the orders that allowed the Gwangju massacre to happen.

And they came here, said Kim Hyo-Seok, to demand of the U.S. government that it “speak the truth, then apologize and pay reparations to the victims.” Kim spent time after the uprising and massacre as a political prisoner. Today he is president of May Light, an organization established in 1998 to promote human rights and peace.

The U.S. government and the establishment media never talk about the Gwangju massacre. But in South Korea, that terrible event marked a turning point in the people's acceptance of U.S. military occupation. Today, the majority of South Koreans say in polls that the biggest threat to peace in their country comes from the U.S.

May 18, the day that the uprising began in 1980, is now a national holiday in South Korea and Gwangju reverberates to demonstrations and rallies calling for U.S. troops out. Since the Iraq War began, a focus of those rallies has also been the demand that no Korean troops be sent to the Middle East.



John Kim, Yoomi Jeong, Kim Hyo-Seok and Lee Shin sing popular song about Gwangju Uprising.

Kim Hyo-Seok has a book of carefully preserved photographs of some of the young people who were killed in Gwangju. They were women and men, most in their teens. Some of the photos show terrible mutilations by the soldiers.

In mid-May, the tour, which is sponsored by both Korean-American and U.S. groups, went to Lincroft, N.J., Boston and New York City. David Schraeger wrote of the New Jersey meeting:

“The presenters gave a painful description of what happened at Gwangju. They were warmly received by everyone in attendance at the Central NJ Coalition for Peace and Justice, who were deeply moved by what they heard. The CNJCPJ unanimously voted to contribute \$200 to help the Korea Truth Commission cover the cost of spreading the word about what happened at Gwangju. As a sign of international solidarity with the Korean people, the CNJCPJ voted by acclamation to make the presenters honorary members.

“Gen. Chun Doo Hwan was a puppet of the U.S. and in May 1980, when the Gwangju People's Uprising occurred protesting the dictatorship of Chun, who had got into power through a military coup, the hostage crisis was going on in Iran. It appears that the Carter administration was fearful of the same type of popular uprising occurring in Korea and the U.S. sent military reinforcements to support dictator Chun Doo Hwan.”

The New York meeting, held at the UN



Kim Hyo Seok displays photo of student murdered by army in 1980. She was eight months pregnant.

Church Center, was chaired by John Choe of Nodutdol for Korean Community Development. The Koreans were welcomed to the U.S. by Sara Flounders, a co-founder of the International Action Center.

In the discussion, Lee Shin explained how strongly the Korean people want peace and reunification, and that Washington's threats against the nuclear program of North Korea are aimed at keeping the country divided through nuclear intimidation.



Boston

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U.S. loses ability to control world

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Army, he took the occasion to align himself with Nazi sympathizers in the Latvian government and to antagonize the Russian government by visiting the anti-Russian U.S.-puppet government in Georgia.

After Sept. 11, 2001, the Bush administration thought it had a mandate to take an historic counter-revolutionary initiative and seize control of the world. Bush threatened “endless war,” talked about “you are either with them or us,” and adopted a “my way or the highway” attitude to the governments and the masses of the world. At the time, some bourgeois critics quietly mentioned that this is what in warfare is called a “self-isolating” strategy.

The entire posture was predicated on the omnipotence of U.S. imperialism. But the ruling class should soon start coming awake to the fact that four years after Sept.

11, the reactionary program of world domination is in a complete stall—in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Latin America and all over the world.

Bush's reactionary rhetoric and diplomacy are a futile attempt to give the appearance of forward momentum to a policy that has run up against the world's population and cannot go on in the present way.

Such moments are fraught with danger for the peoples of the world because of the adventurist tendencies of U.S. imperialism. But they are also pregnant with possibilities for struggle.

Washington has a historic tendency to deepen its militarism during such crises. And doing so inevitably brings more suffering and more resistance, both at home and abroad. □

Recompensa moderna por una fugitiva esclava

Estados Unidos amenaza a Assata Shakur en Cuba

Por David Hoskins

Un día después de que millones de obrer@s en todo el mundo reclamaron las calles en celebración del Primero de Mayo, Día de l@s Trabajador@s, la clase gobernante de los Estados Unidos lanzó un ataque contra un poderoso símbolo de liberación para l@s trabajador@s y l@s oprimid@s en los Estados Unidos.

El 2 de mayo, el Departamento de Justicia anunció que ofrece una recompensa de \$1 millón por la captura de Assata Shakur, ex líder del Ejército de Liberación Negro (ELN) quien escapó de una prisión estatal en 1979.

El caso de Shakur se dio a conocer internacionalmente en 1973 cuando viajaba con otros miembros del ELN en la carretera New Jersey turnpike. La policía dice haber detenido al vehículo de Shakur por tener una de las luces traseras rota. Sin embargo, a los pocos minutos, Shakur y sus compañeros se vieron envueltos en una lluvia de balas que seguramente comenzó por los patrulleros de carreteras de Nueva Jersey muy conocidos por su racismo. Shakur sufrió heridas serias y uno de los acompañantes fue ultimado por la policía. Un oficial también pereció en el incidente.

Shakur fue arrestada y acusada de haber ultimado a un oficial de la policía. Se le encontró culpable de los cargos, a pesar de que los hechos muestran que ella estaba demasiado herida para haber llevado a cabo tal acto. Pasó seis años y medio en prisión.

En 1979, cinco años después de haber sido forzada a separarse de su bebé que parió en prisión, Shakur escapó del área de máxima seguridad de la Correccional para Mujeres Clinton en Nueva Jersey. Vivió clandestinamente por cinco años antes de resurgir en Cuba en 1984.

'Soy una esclava fugitiva del siglo veinte'

En una carta abierta en 1998 para l@s oprimid@s por su nacionalidad dentro de los Estados Unidos, ella dijo: "Mi nombre es Assata Shakur y soy una esclava fugitiva del siglo veinte. Debido a la persecución del gobierno, no tuve otra opción que la de escapar de la represión política, del racismo y de la violencia que domina a las políticas del gobierno estadounidense contra la gente de color. Soy una ex prisionera política y he estado viviendo exiliada en Cuba desde 1984."

Agregó diciendo, "Libertad para todos los prisioneros políticos, les doy mi amor y saludos revolucionarios desde Cuba, uno de los más grandes, resistente y valientes palenques que jamás ha existido en la faz de este planeta."

La alusión de Shakur a la esclavitud y a los palenques de los estados sureños contiene más que una indirecta. Antes de la guerra civil, la clase terrateniente de los estados del sur del país, se benefició de la súper-explotación del trabajo negro esclavizado. El país estaba dividido entre

los estados esclavistas y los estados supuestamente libres donde la esclavitud era ilegal.

L@s esclav@s que se oponían a la crueldad y a la inhumanidad de la vida en la plantación tenían dos vías primarias de escape. Algun@s elegían ir a los campos marrones de esclavos fugitivos donde se ocultaban en lugares remotos como los bosques y pantanos de Luisiana. Otr@s intentaban escapar hacia los estados libres donde la esclavitud estaba prohibida y donde esperaban poder vivir libremente en una comunidad abierta.

En 1850 el congreso promulgó la Ley de Esclavos Fugitivos, que requería que los ciudadanos ayudasen en la recuperación de l@s esclav@s fugitiv@s, negando el derecho a juicio para l@s acusad@s de ser esclav@ fugitiv@. El acta tuvo la intención de permitir que los esclavistas del Sur reclamasen eficazmente a individu@s que retenían como propiedad y fue una parte de polémica del Gran Compromiso de 1850 entre los estados esclavistas y los "libres".

La reciente oferta de recompensa de \$1 millón es una versión contemporánea de la Ley de Esclavos Fugitivos. Es una tentativa para permitir a la clase dirigente de los EEUU reclamar una fugitiva que ha luchado tan heroicamente para liberar no solamente a sí misma, sino a tod@s l@s cautiv@s del racismo y la esclavitud salarial moderna. Es también un ataque contra ese gran refugio —el palenque— la Cuba socialista.

Acto de intimidación de EEUU

Quizás no es coincidental que la oferta de recompensa del Departamento de Estado venga directamente después de dos avisos importantes del gobierno



Assata Shakur

cubano. Cuba anunció en abril que planeaba duplicar el salario mínimo y aumentar significativamente los pagos de bienestar para las madres solteras, las viudas y l@s deshabilitad@s en el Primero de Mayo de 2005. (BBC, Abril 22)

La economía de Cuba, fortalecida recientemente por los acuerdos comerciales con China y Venezuela, es lo más fuerte que ha estado desde el colapso de la Unión Soviética, cuando la isla tuvo que hacer frente, casi sola, a un cruel bloqueo económico.

Cuba también ha dado un apoyo abierto al pedido de extradición de Venezuela al terrorista derechista, Luis Posada Carriles, para hacer frente a las acusaciones por la tortura de los activistas de derechos humanos en los años 70. Posada Carriles fue encontrado culpable de haber dirigido el ataque de 1976 contra el avión de la Aerolínea Cubana que resultó en la pérdida de 73 vidas. Él también desempeñó un papel en los ataques terroristas contra hoteles cubanos en los últimos años de la década de los 90. (Prensa Latina, 2 de mayo).

Posada Carriles tiene una larga historia de trabajar con la CIA. El cumplió con estas actividades terroristas y abusos de derechos humanos con el pleno conocimiento y la bendición del gobierno estadounidense. Recientemente él regresó a los Estados Unidos y ahora reside abiertamente en Miami, Florida, donde está libre para maquinarse y asociarse con otros terroristas anti-cubanos.

Al ofrecer una recompensa por la captura de Assata Shakur, el Departamento de Estado espera cumplir con tres metas simultáneas. Primera, apartar la atención de su propia historia de amparar a terroristas al resucitar las acusaciones falsas contra Shakur en un esfuerzo para destruir insidiosamente la credibilidad de Cuba sobre esta cuestión. Washington espera que esta cortina de humo provea un resguardo del escrutinio internacional que le

podría forzar tomar acción contra Posada Carriles. También es una manera de desviar la crítica que ha resultado debido a las duras sentencias que recibieron los cinco cubanos, que estaban en los EU para tratar de proteger a Cuba de terroristas como Posada Carriles.

Segundo, la recompensa podría convertirse en otra pieza de la estrategia para aislar a Cuba y sabotear su economía. La clase dominante estadounidense no puede estar complacida por la noticia que la revolución cubana de nuevo goza de estabilidad financiera sólida. La recompensa puede dar una apertura a la maquinaria estadounidense de propaganda para distorsionar el caso de Assata Shakur y ejercer presión sobre otros gobiernos para romper relaciones diplomáticas y alianzas económicas con Cuba.

Una tercera meta promovida por esta recompensa es intimidar al movimiento revolucionario dentro de los Estados Unidos, especialmente a l@s jóvenes y estudiantes. Shakur es un símbolo de lucha para millones de jóvenes de la clase trabajadora y de jóvenes de color. Ella, como madrina de Tupac Shakur, tiene un lugar especial dentro del movimiento hip hop por la cultura y la justicia.

Su mensaje es llevado a través de los artistas de hip hop progresistas y revolucionarios como Chuck D, Common y Paris. La historia de Assata Shakur muestra que es posible decir alto a la injusticia, realizar acciones revolucionarias contra el estado, y a fin de todo vivir fuera de los confines de la prisión.

Su historia hace posible que las nuevas generaciones de revolucionari@s construya un puente para sus sueños de liberación y transformarlos en realidad. Cuando todo es dicho y hecho, esta es la razón por la cual la clase dominante estadounidense ve a Assata Shakur como una verdadera amenaza. Y esa es la razón por la cual ninguna cantidad de dinero es demasiada para tratar de quitar a esta esclava fugitiva su libertad. □



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