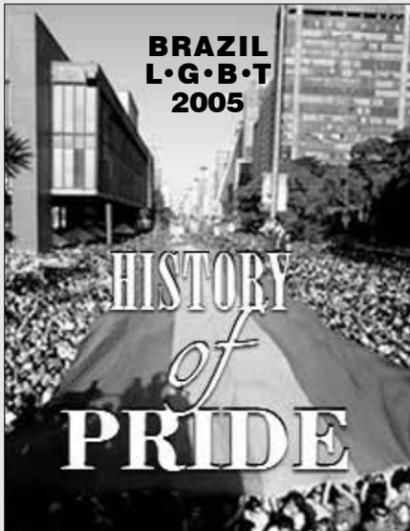


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POSADA CARRILES CASE

Gov't hypocrisy on terrorism exposed

By Deirdre Griswold

After having used terrorism as an excuse to unleash a war of colonial conquest in the Middle East, the U.S. government is finding that its own terrorist activities are now getting closer scrutiny.

Nothing could be more of an embarrassment on this score than the harboring of Luis Posada Carriles. No one fits the profile of a terrorist more than this man. The failure of Washington to extradite him has touched off huge demonstrations in Cuba and Venezuela, where he is wanted for multiple crimes.

Cuban Americans in Miami who want normal relations with their homeland have also held street demonstrations calling for his extradition to Venezuela—even though taking such a stand in this Florida bastion of reaction makes them possible targets of harassment and even violence. For two hours on May 28, over 100 people from groups belonging to the Martí Alliance—Alianza Martiana—marched in front of the Immigration Department chanting “Posada terrorist,” “Posada to jail” and “Freedom for the Five.”

The Cuban Five, currently in prisons in the U.S., came to Miami to monitor right-wing exile groups there precisely because of their history of terrorism against Cuba.

Posada Carriles is wanted in both Cuba and Venezuela for masterminding the mid-air destruction of a Cuban airliner with 73 people on board. He spent nine years in prison in Venezuela, the country where the plot had been hatched, for this crime, but escaped in 1985.

This April 27, retired prison guard Nelson Diaz told the Venezuelan television program En Confianza that he and other guards had been offered bribes of \$20,000 each by the CIA to let Posada Carriles escape. (www.alia2.net)

In 2000 Posada Carriles was arrested and convicted in Panama on charges of plotting to kill Cuban President Fidel Castro, who was attending an Ibero-American summit there. The convicted bomber had been caught entering the country with C-4 plastic explosives and other military paraphernalia. But Panama's president, Mireya Moscoso, herself a former Miami resident close to the right-wing Cuban community there, pardoned Posada Carriles just before her presidency expired.

The notorious terrorist then entered the U.S. illegally this March, a fact that was widely publicized in the Cuban exile community, yet U.S. authorities claimed they couldn't “confirm his whereabouts.” Only after Posada Carriles openly bragged of his activities on a televised media conference in Miami, and then more than a million people in Cuba marched demanding his arrest and extradition, did the U.S. government finally detain him on immigration charges on May 17.

Recently declassified CIA documents confirm that Posada Carriles was no loner. He worked for the CIA, which is responsible for decades of violence against Cuba—from the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion to over a hundred assassination attempts against Cuban leader Fidel Castro. In fact, Posada Carriles's attorney even announced that he was seeking asylum in the U.S. on the basis

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Crowded May 26 community meeting plans protest to denounce prison and police killings in Baltimore.

WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK



This week ...

1950 Gay leftists organize against Korean War

By Leslie Feinberg

Harry Hay met young Rudi Gernreich, a costume designer and dancer, at Lester Horton's Dance Theater on Melrose Avenue on July 8, 1950. "The day he met Gernreich, he often said, they created a 'society of two' that became the Mattachine," biographer Stuart Timmons recalled. ("The Trouble with Harry Hay")

The 28-year-old Gernreich, a left-wing Jewish gay man, had fled fascist Austria when he was 16.

In the days after they met, Hay excitedly revised his call for organizing homosexuals. This third revised draft is the only one that still exists in print.

Hay gave his prospectus to Gernreich, who exclaimed after he'd read the written ideas, "It's the most dangerous thing I've ever seen, and I'm with you one hundred percent."

While Gernreich was enthusiastic, he also reminded Hay of the dangers. Before escaping fascism, Gernreich said, he had known about the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement led by Magnus Hirschfeld. Gernreich explained that when the Nazis destroyed the movement's Institute for Sexual Research, they used its records to send homosexuals to concentration camps.

Hay poured out his frustrations about the two years since he'd written the first prospectus. He had approached homosexuals about organizing a public forum to objectively discuss the Kinsey Report. And he talked to professionals about being sponsors. Neither group would move until the other did. "I had talked to hundreds of people between Bachelors for Wallace and Mattachine, and people on both sides were afraid to take the first step. It was like being told you had to have a harp to get into heaven and that you had to go to heaven to get a harp."

Gernreich had connections in Hollywood. He had worked as a sketch artist for Edith Head. Marlene Dietrich and Dorothy Dandridge had befriended him. And being a dancer with the Horton dance company put Gernreich in touch with both audiences and cutting-edge artists from a socially-conscious current.

Gernreich asked Hay for 60 copies of the manifesto, took Hay to social events and introduced him around.

Massive Brazil Pride

Brazil's Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans Pride demonstration was massive this year. Organizers estimate that 2 million lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and trans people—including some 400,000 who came from around the world—marched down Avenida Paulista, a main avenue, in the ninth annual event.

Pride organizers stressed that this was not only a celebration but a demonstration. Marchers emphatically demanded a stop to gay bashings and murders. The central demand was passage of a proposed law legalizing same-sex civil unions, which has been stalled by debate in Congress for a decade. The Roman Catholic Church—Brazil has the world's biggest Catholic population—staunchly opposes the legislation.

One banner stated the case simply: "We have the same commitments, we want the same rights."

—Leslie Feinberg

Gay activists against Korean War

Just 10 days before Hay and Gernreich met for the first time, the Pentagon had unleashed war against Korea.

The two young activists actively opposed the war and organized to bring the troops home. For the next two months, they walked up and down the stretches of beaches in Los Angeles and Santa Monica collecting signatures on an anti-war petition demanding the return of the first GIs deployed to Korea.

Hay later wrote: "At that time, all over the country there was a movement, sponsored by progressives, to get as many signatures as possible for the Stockholm Peace Petition against the war."

This anti-war organizing took strength of conviction. W.E.B. DuBois, the 82-year-old founder of the NAACP, was arrested and handcuffed by police for trying to get signatures on the same petition. The case against him? That he had not registered as a "foreign agent" as mandated by the reactionary Smith Act. After widespread struggle that won multi-national support, the charge was later dropped.

Hay and Gernreich canvassed beaches where many gay and bisexual men gathered. They hoped that individuals courageous enough to sign the anti-war petition might also be brave enough to be interested in organizing for homosexual emancipation.

"We set about discovering new adherents on the two slices of beach Gays had quietly made their own," Hay later told historian Jonathan Katz. "The section of beach below the Palisades just west of Marion Davie's huge waterfront estate, and that slice of Malibu between the pier and the spit—which would be taken over by the surfers in the 1960s.

"From August through October 1950, 'X' [Gernreich's nom de guerre] and I undertook to get 500 of these petitions signed on the Gay beach in Los Angeles, in Santa Monica. And we got them, too, by God! We went down to the Gay beach and got them **filled!** And the Korean War was going full blast!

"We also used this petition activity as a way of talking about our prospectus. We'd go up to them on the beach—of course, this is an entirely different period, you understand, so when people went to the Gay beach then they'd talk about everything else except being Gay. We would tell them what we knew about the war, about the story of North Korea attacking South Korea being a fake.

"They we'd get into the Gay purges in U.S. government agencies of the year before and what a fraud that was. Then we'd ask, 'Isn't it high time we all got together to do something about it?' Everybody agreed, but nobody could think of anything to do without committing themselves. But at least they signed the petition, and some of the guys gave us their names and addresses—in case we ever got a Gay organization going. They were some of the people we eventually contacted for our discussion groups." (1974 interview, "Gay American History")

Fellow travelers!

Hay had met two like-minded activists earlier that year—Bob Hull and Chuck Rowland. In the spring of 1950, historian John D'Emilio noted, "The three men met one evening at a concert, and Hay, who suspected that the pair might be gay, decided to broach the subject of a homosex-

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LAVENDER & RED

Lesbian • gay • bi
and trans
PRIDE

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WW CALENDAR

NEW YORK

Fri., June 3

Workers World Party Meeting: Civil rights fighter and defense attorney Lynne Stewart on her case; Andre Powell, All People Congress, on Baltimore's struggle against killer prison guards. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

Fri., June 10

Workers World Party Meeting: Monica Moorehead, WW managing editor, on her June 5 meeting with revolutionary political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal; Teresa Gutierrez, IAC co-director, on the June 2-3 International Conference in Cuba on Luis Posada Carriles and other U.S.-sponsored terrorists. 7 p.m. (Dinner at 6:30) At 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., Manhattan. For info (212) 627-2994.

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Is Baltimore's Central Booking our Abu Ghraib?

By Sharon Black
Baltimore

Is Baltimore's Central Booking our Abu Ghraib?

That was the question on the minds of many at a recent community meeting. They were there to plan protests against both the brutal beating death of Raymond Smoot at the hands of guards at Central Booking and the police policy of "zero tolerance that targets the poor."

Over the past two years approximately 1.2 prisoners have died every month at Baltimore's Central Booking, the city's intake jail.

Prisoners have been denied medical care.

Cells designed for seven to eight prisoners are holding 17 to 18.

Conditions are so overcrowded that those jailed have been forced to lie in vomit.

The Baltimore City Police Department's policy of "zero tolerance" has compounded the problems with neighborhood sweeps and indiscriminate arrests. There is now a police quota of arrests per officer and per district, which encourages harassment and arrest.

Some 100,000 people have been arrested out of a population of approximately 650,000. Thirty-three percent of those arrested have never been charged with a crime.

Police have recently erected video cameras in business areas throughout the city, increasing the police-state atmosphere. They're also stopping cars indiscriminately for searches.

Close to 80 people crowded into the All Peoples Congress hall May 26 to discuss mobilizing protests on June 14—a month after Smoot's death—and to formulate demands.

Family members of victims of both jail and police killings described their anguish

and anger, and offered each other support.

Donnetta Kidd, a niece of Raymond Smoot, spoke from the podium while another family member held her infant daughter.

She said: "I'm one of the youngest in the family but I'm also the most vocal. I'm not going to pretend I come from a white picket fence neighborhood. I have been clean for 10 years now. But one thing is our family sticks together and we want answers." Those who had gathered in the hall stood and applauded.

She and her family have gone on a crusade to win justice. Kidd held up documents that she found and printed while searching the internet about conditions at Central Booking, where her uncle was beaten to death.

The Smoot family was offered support by Renee Washington and Mary Jackson, family members of Joey Wilbon. Baltimore police beat and killed Wilbon five years ago. He was taken to the same Central Booking but turned away because of his condition.

Washington, who was engaged to Wilbon and is an organizer with the All Peoples Congress, said: "We want answers from the mayor and the governor. Zero tolerance means death. Even if you are sitting on your step you can be hauled down to Central Booking. We need to go into the neighborhoods and keep the heat on."

Jackson spoke quietly but emphatically about the killing of her son, Wilbon, and urged the Smoot family to write every conversation down. "If it wasn't for the support of the people here in the All Peoples Congress, I couldn't have made it. You have our support."

David Schwartz broke down in tears while holding up a picture of his sister, Debra Epifanio, and her infant daughter. Epifanio died six months ago at Central Booking. Schwartz explained that his sis-



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

Raymond Smoot's niece, Donnetta Kidd, publicly condemns uncle's beating death and asks for answers.

ter had been denied medication and that the left side of her body appeared beaten. The official cause of death was meningitis.

He said: "Debby was only 34 years old but had the mind of a 12-year-old. She had no insurance. They cut off her disability. She had a small baby. She tried to make \$15 to eat and she got arrested."

Levern Blackmon, a legal assistant with the Public Justice Center, which has been advocating for prisoners' rights, presented 17 pages listing those who had died recently at Central Booking. The Public Justice Center has been fighting for adequate medical care for all inmates.

Darren Mohammad, a local leader of the Nation of Islam and a radio commentator with WOLB-1010 talk radio, was applauded when he invited Amnesty International to Baltimore.

He exclaimed: "This is not Johannesburg, South Africa! This is not Abu Ghraib!"

Mohammad also said he had met with Vanguard Justice, which gave him copies of documents proving that Baltimore police are forced to make quota arrests. "We need to stop them from getting to Central Booking," he said of "zero toler-

Continued on page 5

Somerville 5 defense:

'Drop racist frame-up charges!'

By Phebe Eckfeldt
Somerville, Mass.

The Committee to Defend the Somerville High School 5 Against Police Brutality is calling on everyone to put pressure on Middlesex District Attorney Martha Coakley to drop the racist frame-up charges immediately.

The SHS 5 are Calvin Belfon Jr., Cassius Belfon, Earl Guerra, Isaiah Anderson and Marquis Anderson.

On April 20, these five young Black men were the victims of racial profiling and a brutal, unprovoked attack by Medford, Mass., police. Police beat, clubbed, maced and arrested them.

A massive police cover-up ensued, with the police spreading outrageous lies about what happened that night. They charged the five with assault with a deadly weapon, assault and battery, and disorderly conduct.

The police, with the backing of Coakley, are now trying to force the cases of Calvin Belfon and Isaiah Anderson to Superior Court. Belfon and Anderson are both 17 and are being tried as adults. They face the most severe charges of the five youths.

On May 24, in a strong show of support, family, friends and representatives of the Nation of Islam, Women's Fightback Network and International Action Center packed the courtroom in Somerville District Court.

"These young men are good students and fine athletes. They have no prior records. This is nothing but an orchestrated cover-up by the police and the D.A. and the media to take the focus off of who the real criminals are here," said Robert Trayhnam of the Committee to Defend the SHS 5.

"It is the Medford police who should be put on trial for racial profiling and police brutality! We must keep the pressure on and make our voices heard," Trayhnam concluded.

Readers are urged to contact Middlesex District Attorney Martha Coakley, 40 Thorndike St., Cambridge, MA 02141, phone (617) 679-6500, fax (617) 225-0871, and make the following demands: no indictment; drop the racist-frame-up charges against all five youths immediately; independent community investigation into Medford Police; stop racial profiling and police brutality. □

Community enraged by another police killing

By Workers World Denver bureau

The family and friends of Harrison Owens gathered for a vigil May 28 in the parking lot on Colfax and Logan. This is where, on May 26, Denver police officer Michael Wyatt shot Owens in the back, killing him.

Family and friends listened to some of Owens' favorite songs. The mood was not somber but angry. The family vowed that justice will be done—and that they will unite with others whose family members were also killed by cops.

The vigil was organized by Shareef Aleem, the embattled African-American activist who has been targeted by the Denver Police Department. He, along with Owens' friends and family, told reporters of their anger and frustration with the cops in Denver and the surrounding areas.

Larry Hales of Denver FIST—Fight Imperialism-Stand Together—told of the problems he had with the police in the neighborhood when he lived there, and also with the racist gentrifying groups and the cop-like Guardian Angels.

A cop car passed by the May 28 vigil three times, its driver going slowly to look at the gatherers along with seven members of the Angels. The Angels left when Hales along with Harrison's family members demanded that they leave.

These reactionary groups were rallied by a city council member to put pressure on cops to be even more aggressive toward Black people and the many homeless people who sleep around the area known as the Molly Brown Neighborhood.

The police department has come out with two conflicting stories of Owens' death.

According to the police, a man flagged

down the cop, Wyatt, saying that Owens had just robbed him. Wyatt chased Owens to the parking lot. The alleged robbery victim yelled, "He's got a gun." Owens pointed a gun at Wyatt, and Wyatt fired one shot, hitting Owens in the back. The other story is that Owens was running and pointing the gun at Wyatt and that he turned around.

The family has found holes in the police department's story. They say Owens, a father of two and a landscaper, was unjustly killed and that the media and cops are smearing his name. The media have sought to bring up the 31-year-old's past and label him a criminal to justify the shooting.

Two homeless men witnessed the shooting. One was sleeping in bushes a few feet away and heard the incident. The other watched from across the street.

All the witnesses say that Owens got into a fight with a man outside of a bar, began running when the cops started chasing him and that Owens yelled that he had a gun and Owens looked like he wanted to surrender. He then moved his right hand and was shot once in the back.

Many believe that this was another unjustified shooting committed by the DPD in a neighborhood that has become an occupied battleground; cops often carry out sweeps and arrest whole groups of Black men, planting evidence on the young men as an excuse for police brutality.

The fascistic tactics of the police and police-supporting groups like the Guardian Angels that roam this neighborhood are coming under more scrutiny. Activists and the families have stated that the murder of Owens is the last straw. They are pledging to work together to stop police killings. □

RALEIGH, N.C.

Public sector workers blast poor working conditions

By Yolanda Carrington
Raleigh, N.C.

The fifth public hearing for the International Worker Justice Campaign in Raleigh, N.C., occurred on May 19. Held at Truth in Jesus Christ Holiness Church, the event drew workers and activists from all over North Carolina who are concerned about the conditions facing public sector workers in this right-to-work state.

Organized by North Carolina Public Workers Union United Electrical Local 150 in conjunction with Black Workers For Justice, the purpose of these hearings is to press the need for collective bargaining for public sector workers in North Carolina.

The main state agencies with workers represented at this hearing were the Department of Administration, the Mail Service Center (a division of the DOA), the Department of Health and Human Services, Dorothea Dix Hospital and North Carolina State University. Workers from these agencies told the panel of state legislators and community leaders jaw-dropping tales of blatant harassment, wage and benefit discrimination, horrific and dangerous working conditions, and constant favoritism in hiring, compensation and promotion.

The state of North Carolina has a contradictory track record regarding the

treatment of its workers. On one hand, the state has benefit and retirement packages for its employees that rival anything in private industry, with workers receiving full medical insurance, dental care, and sick days after less than one year on the job. At the same time, the state has one of the worst track records with regard to equal treatment and fairness toward its workers.

Race, age and gender discrimination are a constant presence at most state agencies regardless of job position and salary. And African American workers are routinely paid thousands of dollars less in annual salary compared to whites performing the same work.

In addition, North Carolina is the only state that legally forbids collective bargaining for all of its public-sector workers—state, county and municipal. Although this does not legally prohibit workers' right to unionize, it effectively weakens the power of unions.

Less than 3 percent of all the state's workers are unionized. Many bosses in North Carolina have no problem telling their workers that joining a union is against the law, and many private-sector businesses proudly declare themselves "union-free" work places.

A worker from the Mail Service Center told of being routinely denied the federally mandated benefit of Family and Medical

Leave to take care of her ailing mother. Another MSC employee told of dangerous working conditions, such as poorly secured biohazard materials sent through the state's post office.

The worst story, however, has to be the gross racist and misogynistic verbal harassment from a white male co-worker who has yet to be disciplined for his actions.

This racist employee regularly refers to African American employees as "b----s" and "n----s," and once called a Black female worker a "Black s---t" to her face in the presence of their direct supervisor. The bosses at the MSC have declared the offensive actions of this employee "harmless" and he is still on the job.

A former case worker from Health and Human Services told of being pushed out of her job of nearly 18 years by her supervisors so they could hire younger workers. She produced documentation showing that she was grossly underpaid by thousands of dollars every year even though she had the most education, training and experience of anyone in her division. As a Black female, she was paid around \$46,000 annually while white and male co-workers were paid between \$55,000 and \$65,000 annually.

These stories had a huge impact on most of the audience, but whether they made any impression on the elected officials on the panel remains to be seen. All of them promised to "look into the situation," and that the public would hear from them "as soon as possible."

State Rep. Bernard Allen told the audience that he would convene a study on the issue, and then exhorted the workers in the audience to "be patient" because changing the conditions in state government is going to take time. This drew an angry rebuke from a worker at Dix Hospital, who declared that state workers "have been patient for 25 years, and nothing has been done."

The people of North Carolina are the only ones who can change conditions for state workers. They must demand that the people who perform vital services are treated fairly and equitably. Public-sector employees need solidarity against the abuse, harassment and discriminatory treatment that the bosses use to keep people in line.

For more information about the IWJC, call 919-593-7558 or email abinta@nc.rr.com

ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

Boycott Coca-Cola!

[Editor's note: The Teamsters strike against Coke was settled at the end of May; details in a forthcoming WW.]

Now there's another reason to boycott Coke products: to show solidarity with more than 2,000 Teamsters at bottling plants and distribution centers in Los Angeles and East Hartford, Conn., on strike since May 23. After negotiating with the bosses over health benefits since last fall, the production workers and delivery drivers went out the week before Memorial Day to pressure the company to

negotiate or jeopardize summer sales. The workers don't want to pay more for health benefits, especially given that they make \$15 to \$20 an hour. "We will not have our members pay high costs for health care while Coca-Cola still gives out fat consulting agreements to executives who no longer work for the company," said Jack Cipriani, director of Teamsters Brewery & Soft Drink Workers Conference, in a May 26 news release. The boycott of Coke products will still be needed after this strike is won in order to stop Coke's deadly anti-labor policy in Colombia.



Teachers fight layoffs

On May 23, teachers, other school workers, parents and students surrounded the Fisher Building and picketed the Detroit School Board offices. The Detroit Federation of Teachers and other school unions called the action to protest the layoffs of thousands of teachers.

Last November Detroit voters demanded the right to elect the Detroit School Board, defeating a five-year-long state takeover that turned a budget surplus and a \$1.5 billion construction bond issue into a deficit.

Profiteering at taxpayers' expense through privatizing school maintenance and charter schools has not improved education for Detroit children. Detroit's official graduation rate is only 44.5 percent.

—Story and photo by Cheryl LaBash



Unionists demand 'contract, now!'

Special to
Workers World

Members of the Professional Staff Congress, UFT Local 2334 representing workers at City University of New York, protested in front of CUNY Chancellor Matt Goldstein's apartment on ritzy Sutton Place May 26. They have worked without a contract for over two years. Picketing was followed by a stirring rendition of union songs. □

WW PHOTO



N.J. nurses win contract

It took the threat of a strike a year after winning union representation for nearly 400 nurses in Lakewood and Toms River, N.J., to ratify their first contract in early May. Now they're the New Jersey Nurses Union/Communications Workers Local 1091. Only after the nurses began wearing scrubs with the CWA logo and stickers with slogans promoting bargaining did negotiations pick up. The nurses also signed a pledge not to work overtime after a certain date and registered with temporary agencies to show management they were prepared to strike. They won community support with a campaign for safe staffing levels and conducted lively informational picketing in late April. In their new contract the nurses won wage hikes and improved working conditions, a grievance and arbitration procedure, and a policy spelling out just cause for terminations.

CSU teaching associates win contract

It took seven months of intense bargaining, after a hard-fought organizing drive, for 6,000 teaching associates, graduate assistants and instructional student assistants to win their first contract at California State University on May 12. This win by the California Alliance of Academic Student Employees, a unit of the Auto Workers, is part of the struggle across the country to win union recognition, higher pay and respect for those who labor in the halls of academe. □

Thousands protest Schwarzenegger cuts

Organizers at the huge May 25 union rally of public employees entitled, "Action Day For a Better California," in downtown Los Angeles at Pershing Square reported an attendance of 15,000 teachers, nurses, firefighters and community activists who mobilized against Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's attacks against education, health care and unions. This rally was held in conjunction with another anti-Schwarzenegger protest in Sacramento.

Schwarzenegger vowed to repay \$2 billion in education funding that he shifted last year to allegedly balance the state budget. According to Mary Bergan, president of the California Federation of Teachers, who was quoted in an article about the rally on the United Teachers of Los Angeles website, Schwarzenegger promised to return the \$2 billion when the money was available. "The money became available this year," Bergan said. "Then he broke his promise. Meanwhile, California has sunk to 44th in the nation in per-pupil funding. Forty-fourth and falling."

—John Parker



PHOTO: INDYMEDIA

DURHAM, N.C.

600 protest racist cross burnings

By David Dixon

On May 25, three seven-foot crosses were found burning in different locations in Durham, N.C. The first was outside St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Residents believe this church was targeted because of its open acceptance of the lesbian, gay, bi and trans community.

Another was found on South Roxboro Street. A third was across the street from the United House Of Prayer at Holloway and Dillard. Both sites are in downtown Durham.

Yellow fliers left at the last location read: "Gangbangers, local police have let your activities go too far. Take notice. You will answer to us. Sincerely, KKK."

The next evening, people turned out by the hundreds at each location for vigils to protest what many called "domestic terrorism."

Two hundred people came together outside the United House of Prayer. A tree was planted at the spot where the cross was burned to symbolize peace, love and solidarity among people of all races, sexual orientations, religions and so on.

Another 225 people gathered on South Roxboro Street near Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway. Some 200 came out at St. Luke's Church.

At the candlelight vigils, people spoke

out against the previous night's acts of racism and hatred. In addition to the note and obvious bigotry against the lesbian/gay/bi/trans community, some Black residents said they believe there is also another reason for the assault: a reactionary proposal to change the current rules for electing school board members, backed by the Concerned Citizens for Accountable Government and the Durham Regional Association Of Realtors.

The proposal would allow all voters to vote for every school board seat. This would diminish representation of African Americans and other oppressed people. Currently there are three designated geographical areas with Black majorities, which guarantees representation on the seven-member school board.

Durham residents made it clear that they won't stand for more racist attacks. They want those responsible for the cross burnings punished. So strong is the community response that the city's Human Relations Department has called for a citywide rally.

Yvonne Peña, head of the department, told the Herald-Sun newspaper: "We will not accept this kind of activity whatsoever. We're a diverse community and we're striving to overcome racial barriers." □

Baltimore's Abu Ghraib?

Continued from page 3

ance" and police quotas.

State Sen. Verna Jones offered her support for Smoot's family. She said the FBI had begun an investigation and now all information was sealed. "Even state officials cannot get information."

Both Eric Easton and Andre Powell, who co-chaired the meeting, proposed actions and a list of demands that were greeted with shouts of approval. Easton, who is a longtime community organizer

from Baltimore's Westside and the All Peoples Congress, called for a citywide protest on June 14.

Powell, a union activist and organizer with the All Peoples Congress, presented the following demands: justice for Raymond Smoot and all victims; end abuse and killings at Central Booking and city jails; stop police brutality and killings; end "zero tolerance," police sweeps and quotas; an independent people's investigation; jobs, education and health care, not jails and war. □

Former political prisoner speaks



Robert Wilkerson May 25.

Robert Wilkerson, right, a member of the Angola 3 who spent 29 years in solitary confinement at Louisiana State Penitentiary, was a featured speaker at a May 25 forum entitled "Racism & the Criminal Justice System" at Fordham University in the Bronx, N.Y. Wilkerson, along with Angola 3 members Herman Wallace and Albert Woodfox, organized a prison chapter of the Black Panther Party. All three were serving long prison terms when they were falsely accused of murdering a white prison guard. Wallace and Woodfox remain in prison. Wilkerson was released in February 2001. The forum was sponsored by the People's Institute for Survival & Beyond and the New York Anti-Racist Alliance.

—Photo and story by Anne Pruden

Gays against Korean War

Continued from page 2

ual rights organization.

"As it turned out, they had more in common than their homosexuality, since Rowland and Hull had also been Communist Party members." ("Sexual Politics")

D'Emilio explained that Rowland had "come out" at the University of Minnesota, where the militant mood of 1930s Minneapolis also swept him into campus protests "in support of the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War and against compulsory military training for students." ("Sexual Politics")

Hull attended the university at the same time, but the two men didn't meet each other in the Twin Cities until 1940. By that time Bob Hull, who had a graduate degree in chemistry, was following his passion as a pianist. The two men became lovers, and later, remained dear friends.

Hull and Rowland moved to Los Angeles together. Rowland had left the Communist Party USA by then, for personal

reasons. Hull, who was still active in the CPUSA, took part in one of its southern California cultural units and the People's Educational Center, where he enrolled in Hay's music class.

But after that class ended, Hull and Rowland lost touch with Harry Hay.

In November 1950, Hay told Gernreich that Bob Hull had re-registered for his music course, and that he had a friend: "I think they might be interested."

Hay described the anxiety he felt as he later physically handed the prospectus in an envelope to Hull after class.

"On the following Saturday afternoon he calls up and asks whether he could come over. He sounds kind of distant. Well, Bob Hull, Chuck Rowland and Dale Jennings come flying into my yard waving the prospectus, saying, "We could have written this ourselves—when do we begin?"

Next: Cold War 'Lavender Scare' sparks struggle

Los Angeles elects first Latino mayor since 1872

By Page Getz
Los Angeles

Los Angeles will have its first Latin@ mayor in over 125 years as a result of the May 17 run-off election. City Council member Antonio Villaraigosa soundly defeated incumbent Mayor James Hahn, by 59 percent to 41 percent of the votes.

Los Angeles has a Latin@ population that is 46 percent of the 3.9 million people who live here. It is the biggest U.S. city ever to elect a Latin@ mayor. The last time it happened was in 1872, when the population was just 5,000.

Raised in an impoverished East Los Angeles neighborhood, Villaraigosa was a high-school drop-out who spent his early days working as a union organizer for United Teachers of Los Angeles and the Bus Riders Union. He is also the former head of the Southern California chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Hahn and Villaraigosa faced each other in a rematch of the 2001 run-off, but this

time it was Villaraigosa who won.

It didn't hurt that Hahn had federal investigations hanging over his campaign for shady fundraising. The last year of his term had been fraught with nearly a dozen resignations at City Hall due to his administration's involvement in the scandal.

As an assemblyperson for the California legislature and later the assembly speaker, Villaraigosa had the kind of voting record you might get shot for in another state. He is viewed as pro-labor and pro-immigrant and he played a pivotal role in drawing attention to the Justice for Janitors campaign of Service Employees Local 1877.

As a city council member, he was credited with helping to resolve a 2003 transit strike, which most thought favorable for the workers. But unlike the 2001 race, the County Federation of Labor endorsed Hahn instead of Villaraigosa. Even though Hahn had this coveted labor endorsement, polls showed Villaraigosa had the unwavering support of much of the union

rank and file.

There couldn't be a more critical time to have a vocal immigrant-rights advocate and offspring of Mexican immigrants at the helm in City Hall.

The last year has been a harsh one for immigrants in Southern California. Latin@ communities have been targeted by immigration agents who follow families home from church and often detain the undocumented, splitting families in half. Day laborers have been increasingly harassed by law enforcement, taken into custody and deported.

And now the Minutemen who are "guarding" the border in Arizona are threatening to organize in California, with the governor's blessing.

Significantly, Villaraigosa's support doubled among Black voters since the 2001 election, reaching 48 percent. Outgoing Mayor Hahn is the son of former Mayor Kenneth Hahn, who was supported in his time by the African American political leadership in Los Angeles. That reputation helped Hahn win against Villaraigosa in the previous contest.

In a city where the media often point to a "schism" between the African American and Latin@ communities, the shift in support during this election is significant.

Across the board, Villaraigosa gained support in every community, but the turnout among Latin@ voters has been widely described as a surge. According to a poll by the Los Angeles Times, the Latin@ electorate reached 25 percent of the total—up from 22 percent in the 2001 run-off. It marks the highest turnout in modern history, up from just 10 percent in the 1993 mayoral race.

Among Latin@ voters, Villaraigosa won 84 percent of the vote. Turnout was highest in East L.A., where Villaraigosa grew up.

Villaraigosa, who will be sworn in July 1, made his victory speech just before midnight on election night in downtown Los Angeles. He promised, "I will never forget where I came from," as a diverse crowd of supporters chanted, "Si se puede." □

Los Angeles protest hits anti-immigrant racists

By Jim McMahan
Los Angeles

On May 25, some 400 people demonstrated against the racist anti-immigrant Minuteman Project organization in Garden Grove, near Los Angeles. The Minuteman Project's founder, James ("I'm damned proud to be a vigilante") Gilchrist of Orange County, was the featured speaker and honoree at a club banquet.

Also at the banquet were other racists such as Barbara Coe, chairwoman of the Coalition for Immigration Reform. Coe was the leader of the racist Proposition 187 campaign, which sought to deny all social and economic rights to undocumented workers.

The Minutemen have recently formed a much ballyhooed project, sending armed racists to the United States/Mexico border to terrorize Mexicans seeking work in the United States.

The anti-racist demonstration surrounded the club where a hundred or so KKK-racists had gathered. The racists

were defended by over 100 cops with tear-gas canisters and shotguns, and 20 cops on horseback.

Not intimidated, the fierce demonstrators were loud. They bombarded the Minutemen for over three hours with chants and denunciations such as: "Immigrants yes, save our state! We don't want your racist hate!"

The demonstration remained strong although there were arrests and casualties. Two demonstrators were run over by a racist as he drove into the lot. They were taken to the hospital and the racist, Hal Netkin, was arrested, but then released after the demonstration.

Eight demonstrators, including a man in a wheelchair, were arrested on trumped-up felony charges.

Organizers and participants at the demonstration included the Alianza Indigenes, which vows to continue the struggle. Other groups there in support were the Centro Cultural Mexicano, International Socialist Organization, Carecen, and International Action Center. □

2,500 rally for immigrant rights in Charlotte, N.C.

By David Dixon
Charlotte, N.C.

At least 2,500 people, mainly Latin@s, gathered in Charlotte, N.C.'s uptown Marshall Park May 28 to rally for immigrant rights.

The main demands were passage of NC House Bill 1183, which would allow immigrant students with good grades to pay lower in-state college tuition fees instead of much higher out-of-state fees, and of U.S. Senate Bill 1033, the "McCain Kennedy Secure American and Orderly Immigration Act"; and defeat of the Bush administration's "REAL I.D." plan.

At the very spirited rally, there were talks by representatives of the Latin@ community, including the Colombian United Group, and solidarity messages from the NAACP and Crises Assistance

Ministries, a social service organization.

German Di Castro of the Latin America Coalition gave the keynote speech. He said: "The United States has been built by immigrants since its birth. The English came first, and by the way, they did not learn to speak Native American languages. They imported the Africans against their will."

Di Castro emphasized the strong Latino participation in the military over the years and reminded the crowd that the first U.S. soldier to die in Iraq was a Mexican immigrant. He said this should be reason enough to pass NC House Bill 1183 and other pro-immigrant reforms.

Throughout the rally there were many chants of "Latin@s, unidos, jamas seran vencidos"—Latin@s, united, will never be defeated. In addition to the speakers, musicians also livened up the crowd with songs.

Bolivian masses in motion

The mobilizations that have shaken this Andean country for three weeks continued over the last weekend in May despite the Corpus Christi holiday and calls by some leaders for a recess until May 31.

On May 27, Mother's Day in Bolivia, there were two marches in La Paz led by women—one by the "Bartolina Sisa" National Federation of Peasant Women of Bolivia and the women of the Tropic of Cochabamba, and the other by urban teachers who have been on strike for several days.

In El Alto, Aymara (indigenous) peasants and rural teachers blocked roads in two separate actions. The teachers, while laying rocks in two segments of the highway that links El Alto with La Paz, smashed a toll booth and confronted the police who shot tear gas at the demonstrators.

On May 30, some 20,000 people marched from El Alto to La Paz, in the biggest demonstration so far. Aymara peasants from the northern provinces and workers from El Alto Workers Regional Federation joined peasant farmers from southern La Paz, mine workers and others.

They continued demanding the nationalization of hydrocarbon (gas) and its use for the benefit of the Bolivian people, and they protested the government's criminalization of their demonstrations. In a statement, President Carlos Mesa had accused protest leaders of irresponsibility, calling the demonstrators a "minority."

Charges of conspiracy were filed by his minister of government against Jaime Solares, head of the COB, the Bolivian Workers Federation, and against Roberto de la Cruz, an Aymara city council member.

More mobilizations were expected for May 31, the first day of a session of congress when the Constitutional Assembly, one demand of a large sector of the demonstrators, will be discussed. So far, according to Indymedia, thousands of people—miners, workers, teachers and students—are demonstrating in La Paz, in front of the National Congress. The police tried in vain to disperse the crowd with tear gas.

Venezuelans remain vigilant against U.S. threats

A day after the Bush administration rejected a petition to extradite Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela, tens of thousands of people marched in Caracas May 28 to demand the extradition and in support of the Bolivarian government. The march's slogan was: "Against terrorism and in defense of our new PDVSA {Petróleos de Venezuela S.A.}, Venezuela should be respected."

At the massive rally, the first major event since President Hugo Chávez stated that he was a socialist, Vice President José Vicente Rangel cautioned that there are still opposition forces trying to destabilize the revolution. Saying that "coups, terrorist acts and possibility of an attempt against Chavez" are still possible, he cautioned the opposition: "Do not dare raise your hand against Hugo Chávez Frías! Do not dare! Do not

The Posada Carriles case

Continued from page 1

that he feared "persecution" in Cuba because of his long years working for the CIA.

George H.W. Bush, father of the current president, became head of the CIA in 1976, the same year that the Cuban airliner was exploded by terrorists acting on the orders of Posada Carriles.

Posada Carriles is now in a detention center in El Paso, Texas, awaiting a hearing on June 13. The U.S. government has already turned down a request by Venezuela to extradite him, prompting an angered President Hugo Chávez to threaten the breaking of diplomatic relations with the U.S.

Venezuela has recently ended a military agreement with the U.S. that allowed U.S. "advisers" to work with members of the Venezuelan military. Similar agreements in the past have been used by Washington to promote military coups in countries like Indonesia and Chile.

There will be demonstrations across the U.S. on June 13 demanding that Posada Carriles be extradited to Venezuela. □

LATIN AMERICA BRIEFS

attempt to provoke chaos in the Republic! The Empire should not be mistaken either!"

In a release by the Venezuelan Bolivarian News Agency, Rangel was also quoted as saying, "We are going forward in democracy, in peace and in socialism"—that is, that the project of social change and the socialist road have growing support from the people.

Work stoppages, protests grip Peru

In Peru, while President Alejandro Toledo leaves for a 16-day trip to Asia, protests and work stoppages are increas-

ing. Coca growers in the north confronted police who were carrying out the Peruvian and United States anti-drug program. In the region of Tocache, 500 kilometers north of Lima, more than 200 police were repelled by 3,000 peasants. (eluniversal.com)

For centuries, peasants in Peru and Latin America have grown coca for medicinal and traditional cultural purposes. The Peruvian peasants had signed an agreement with the National Coca Enterprise, Enaco, which allows sales of the coca leaf. Despite this, the police destroyed 40 hectares of the plantation, shooting at and repressing the growers. Coca growers now plan a strike for June 27.

In a manner resembling the corrupt and repressive government of former presidents Fujimori and Montesinos, Toledo's administration has been imposing International Monetary Fund and World Bank dictates along with Washington's "anti-drug" war at the expense of the Peruvian people. The result has been an increase of militant mass responses. Peasants, state workers, nurses and Aymara Indigenous people in several parts of the country are rising up.

Rice producers are staging a strike because of the low prices of the produce. Peasants are blocking vital main roads. Residents of the Espinar province surrounded the copper mine Tintaya, owned by the British-Australian firm

BHP Billiton, protesting contamination and demanding social investment in roads and protection of the environment. The firm had to close and send employees to another city when the people set fires around the mine to press for their demands.

Seven thousand Social Security nurses were in their second day of a strike for higher pay over the May 29 weekend. State workers in the north, fighting for a new labor law, set tires on fire and threw paint on an airline office. Aymara Indigenous people from the Uros Island in the Titicaca Lake staged a 48-hour strike to gain access to the natural resources in their area.

—Berta Joubert-Ceci

Solidarity with expelled Haitians from the Dominican Republic

By G. Dunkel

On May 16, the Dominican government rounded up and expelled at least 3,000 Haitian residents and Black Dominicans, including many migrant workers. The round-ups came just days before tens of thousands took to the streets in neighboring Haiti to celebrate the creation of that country's blue and red flag 202 years ago on May 18.

The Flag Day ceremonies were sponsored by the illegitimate government now in control of Haiti under United States/United Nations auspices. But the tens of thousands who came out in Port-au-Prince and elsewhere made it clear that they want democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide returned, the constitution respected, the 2,000 political prisoners currently in jail freed and an end to political repression.

Since the UN "stabilization force" protected the demonstration, Haitian police only attacked it at the end. Samuel Joseph, who lived in the poor neighborhood of Cite Soleil, was shot dead in front of his wife and two children on the same corner where another protester was killed Feb. 28. Two other protesters were also seen to fall in the police attack.

Days earlier, the Dominican Army had rounded up any Black people it found on the streets—children going to school, parents coming home, shoppers, workers—after four Haitians were arrested and charged with killing a shopkeeper.

Even when those captured had documents indicating they had legal authorization to be in the Dominican Republic, the soldiers destroyed their papers, then loaded them onto buses and trucks and shuttled them to the border. Most of those deported were women and children.

According to the Rev. Regino Martinez of the Jesuit Service for Refugees in Ouanaminthe (Wanamant): "Never have we seen such a massive and indiscriminate repatriation, including boys, girls and pregnant women. The worst is that many Dominicans of Haitian descent and Haitians who have legal status were included."

The presence of thousands of totally destitute people on the border just adds to the growing misery inside Haiti. Haitians go to the Dominican Republic, itself a very poor country, because Haiti is so much poorer. Haiti's per capita income is one-quarter the Dominican Republic's.

According to Haiti-Progres newspaper (May 25-31), it is likely that the Dominican government used the expulsions to get rid

of easily replaced seasonal workers, while the illegitimate government in Port-au-Prince now gets a distraction, a cause and an issue it can use to hide its complicity in the misery afflicting the Haitian people.

While only one major newspaper in the United States, the Houston Chronicle, covered the expulsions, the Dominican and Haitian communities in this country have their own sources of information and responded quickly.

Dominican, Haitian communities respond

A group of Haitian and Dominican organizations in New York City jointly sponsored a May 23 picket line in front of the Dominican Consulate in Times Square.

Radhames Perez of the Movimiento Revolucionario Nuevo Patria declared: "It is not the Dominican people who lead this campaign against our Haitian brothers and sisters. It is the reactionary policy of the government of President Leonel Fernandez and the Dominican ruling class."

A number of North American progressives also joined the protest.

The Rev. Luis Barrios, a well-known professor of sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, had earlier drawn up an open letter to President Fernandez that he circulated in Spanish. The Dominican Coalition in Solidarity with the Haitian Community in the Dominican Republic translated it into English. It was presented to the consulate May 23 by a Solidarity Coalition of both Dominican and Haitian activists.

The letter states: "This case demonstrates how endemic anti-Haitianism is in the Dominican Republic and how much it is justified, promoted, and blessed within the society. To make matters worse, discrimination and racism also led to the deportation of more than 50 Dominican citizens because they are Black and minors without the appropriate protection and supervision. Racial hostility, blatantly expressed through collective panic, reflects the historic and cultural prejudices toward the Haitian community."

It continues, "This Solidarity Coalition recognizes that it is not correct or possible to deny the fact that within the construction and sugar industries—just to mention two examples—the Haitian community throughout the years and into the present has made significant contributions to the national life of the Dominican Republic."

Furthermore, "As a Solidarity Coalition we also understand that all this discrimi-



CREDIT: HAITI PROGRES

May 23 demonstration in front of Dominican Republic Consulate in Manhattan.

nation and lack of regard is nothing more than a reflection of a social crisis of xenophobic prejudices."

The statement reminds Fernandez, "his government and the rest of the Dominican

people that here in the United States we ourselves experience exploitation with every day that passes. This is why through our activism we combat the immorality that dehumanizes us." □

Letter to the editor

Shaking up Coke in Charlotte

I decided that since the current situation is so dire for our brothers and sisters in Colombia, I'd go ahead and picket a local Coke office here in Charlotte, N.C., on May 25.

Several minutes after arriving, I was holding a "Coca-Cola Kills in Colombia" sign when two men approached me from the Coca-Cola building. One knew my name, which means the police gave it to them, and introduced himself as a police officer (which turned out to be a lie). They began questioning me about the truth of my sign. I explained to them that Coca-Cola hires paramilitaries in Colombia to murder, torture and kidnap union leaders and their families.

They asked me if I had proof. I said yes, it's documented by the Colombian union leaders, human-rights organizations and journalists. I told them to see the killer-coke.org web site.

They told me: "Well, it's not us. We're the bottler. We're a different company."

I said, "Yes, but the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. pays a percentage of its profit to the Coca-Cola Enterprise. You could use your considerable influence to persuade Coke to stop killing and issue a public statement that you don't agree with Coke killing people in Colombia."

They told me I didn't know what I was talking about. They wanted to know if the media were coming.

The men asked if I planned to stay at the corner and I replied that I did. They told me there was a cutoff on the public sidewalk that I could not cross. They were particularly worried about me protesting near their fancy fountain; the office is located in the upscale South Park area.

I told them that I could demonstrate anywhere on the sidewalk.

I got a positive reaction from a lot of people going by. I was cheered on by some passing Latin@s. Several people stopped to ask what was going on. They listened and took a copy of Workers World with a feature article on Colombia. Another man told me he had just left Coke and they were definitely taking notice.

I got some negative reactions from some of the Coke executives. One guy in a fancy car and suit shouted a curse at me. One also returned with a friend. They were patrolling the perimeter and stopped by to taunt me. They said: "Are you thirsty? Do you want me to get you a Coke?"

Coca-Cola was freaking out about one guy with a sign. They really don't want anybody to know about their role in Colombia. The problem was not that what I was saying about Coca-Cola might be true but that I was bringing it to the public's attention.

There will definitely be future actions at Coke, and other events to educate the public about what's going on in Colombia. The Boycott Killer Coke-Charlotte For Colombia Campaign has been born. Email: actforjustice@yahoo.com to stay informed about this campaign and get involved.

Boycott killer Coke!

—David Dixon
Action Center for Justice
(local IAC affiliate)
Charlotte, N.C.

U.S. losing grip on world events

Collapse of UN non-proliferation session

By Fred Goldstein

When the Bush National Security Council, with its Cabinet members and advisers, sits around the table to survey the world these days, its discussions are undoubtedly filled with expressions of frustration. When State Department diplomats attend functions in capitals around the world, they must be feeling the chill wind of negative global public opinion as they try to skillfully steer clear of embarrassing subjects—like the quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan, Amnesty International's damning report on torture at Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and Bagram, the desecration of the Koran, nuclear "bunker busters," failed coups in Venezuela, the state of the dollar and like subjects.

These are hardly topics to conjure up respect or win friends and influence governments. But they are on the minds of every government, every diplomat and every leader of a mass movement.

A new hot topic that is surely agitating the diplomatic circuit is the disastrous collapse of the much-awaited month-long United Nations Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty five-year review, which just concluded without any resolution.

Over 150 governments came seeking to attain their ends. The vast majority of them represented an even vaster proportion of the world's population. These non-nuclear states, most of which were once colonies, seek to enforce the legality of the treaty

on Washington and to restrain and push back the Pentagon and Israel.

But also present was the U.S. administration, which had long planned to use the session to gang up on Iran and North Korea, while retaining all its own aggressive nuclear options.

In the end, not only was the Bush administration unable to accomplish its aims, but it ran into a firestorm of anti-U.S. sentiment and was forced to retreat from the UN arena.

"The UN conference on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty failed to reach substantive agreement among participants Friday," wrote UPI on May 31, "with the United States singled out for most of the blame. ... 'This is the most acute failure in the history of the NPT,' said Thomas Graham, U.S. negotiator at the 1995 NPT review."

"The United States tried to keep the focus on alleged nuclear threats from Iran and North Korea instead of its pledges to whittle down its own nuclear arsenal," wrote the Los Angeles Times of May 28. "Iran, which contends that its atomic program is strictly for generating electricity, refused to discuss proposals to restrict access to nuclear fuel and objected to being singled out as a 'proliferation concern.' And Egypt joined Iran in demanding that the conference address Israel's nuclear status and declare the Middle East a 'nuclear-free zone.'"

The U.S. refused to reaffirm the 13 steps toward nuclear disarmament it had agreed to in 2000 or allow discussion of Israel's nuclear status.

It is significant that a normally compli-

ant client state of the U.S. like the Egyptian government joined with Iran to set the tone of rebellion against Washington's bullying. The atmosphere was so hostile that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was pulled back from attending, although all the other governments were represented at the foreign ministry level.

Iran's 'withering attack'

The conference, chaired by Brazil, allowed Iranian Ambassador Javad Zarif to be the final speaker. Zarif really summarized the overwhelming attitude of the conference when, according to UPI, he "let loose on Washington with both barrels, delivering a withering attack. ..."

"He said the United States adopted its nuclear posture by stressing the essential role of nuclear weapons as an effective tool for achieving security and in foreign policy objectives; developing new nuclear weapons systems and constructing new

facilities for producing nuclear weapons, resuming efforts to develop and deploy tactical nuclear weapons despite commitment to reverse this process and effectively reduce them, targeting non-nuclear weapons states party to the treaty and 'planning to attack these states.'"

Zarif attacked Washington for abrogating the anti-ballistic missile treaty, rejecting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, continuing the deployment of nuclear forces on other territories, providing a nuclear umbrella for non-nuclear weapon states and signing an agreement of cooperation

with Israel to provide scientists access to its nuclear facilities.

"The extremist attitude," he continued, "seems to indicate that no lessons have been learned from the nightmares of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If history is any guide, nuclear arms, ladies and gentlemen, are in the most dangerous hands."

Washington declared that it has other, smaller and friendlier forums where it can take up its nuclear plans, such as the G-8 (the club of imperialist powers), the Nuclear Material Suppliers Group, a nebulous group of nuclear powers, and the friendliest of all places, the State Department, where Rice is going to "reveal" new efforts to organize countries into a so-called Proliferation Security Initiative. This is a group of countries that has allegedly agreed to work with Washington to interdict the shipment of nuclear materials.

The problem is that Rice is going to be "vague about most of the details" when she reveals "quiet successes" the U.S. government has had, because "some foreign governments are concerned about retribution if they are seen to be closely cooperating with the United States and other Western nations." (New York Times, May 31)

At the UN conference, Washington came before the governments of the world and displayed arrogant, imperialist disregard for world opinion. But that opinion was almost uniformly hostile and the Bush administration was unable to make an inch of significant diplomatic progress in its attempts to isolate North Korea and Iran. Instead, it became the universal object of criticism in a major world forum that lasted a full month.

The Bush group pulled back Condoleezza Rice from attending and adopted the reactionary tactic of a boycott. But in

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truth, Washington was forced to turn down the opportunity to address the world forum because its political line was totally discredited. Wash-

ington went there to isolate Iran and the DPRK, but got isolated itself. It has retreated to options, outside of the framework of treaties, that do not require the permission of any others but fellow imperialists and puppets.

In every diplomatic forum, whether it is the six-party talks on North Korea or the European talks with Iran, where Washington is in the background permanently trying to dictate to both the Europeans and the Iranian government, it has met with frustration.

U.S. can't isolate Venezuela

In Latin America it has attempted to isolate the revolutionary government of Hugo Chávez, but has been unable to do so. Now the Bush administration is in the unenviable position of openly giving protection to a Cuban counter-revolutionary terrorist, Luis Posada Carriles, a CIA agent who blew up a Cuban airliner in 1976, killing all 73 people aboard. He was in a Venezuelan prison awaiting trial for the bombing when the CIA broke him out in 1985.

Tens of thousands of people recently demonstrated in front of the U.S. Embassy in Caracas protesting the refusal of Washington to arrest Posada Carriles as a preliminary step to extradition. Demonstrators were defending Venezuelan sovereignty, including the right for the state-owned oil company, PdVSA, to be free of sabotage by U.S. imperialism and its Venezuelan ruling class stooges. This demonstration followed one of 1.2 million people that took place in Havana earlier.

Rice has been working overtime to isolate Venezuela. But the Chávez government, with its growing alliance with revolutionary socialist Cuba and the government of Fidel Castro, is growing more popular by the day as it challenges the hated Yankee imperialists and defies their sabotage, coup attempts and threats. In her confirmation talks, Rice denounced the Chávez government and she recently traveled to Latin America to try to resuscitate the Organization of American States and use it against Venezuela.

The May 17 Cuban newspaper Granma, commenting on this maneuver, recalled Che Guevara's characterization of the OAS as "the Ministry of the Yankee Colonies." Washington is trying to put over a new OAS committee, pushed by reactionary Assistant Secretary of State Roger Noriega, that would "monitor," that is, intervene in Venezuela, to see that it is "democratic." According to the Bush definition, that means leave the propertied classes alone and let the U.S. take Venezuelan oil.

Jose Miguel Insulza, former interior minister of Chile, who is supposed to be a "leftist," and was not the original U.S. candidate, has agreed to try to finesse some sort of deal at the upcoming OAS meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., starting in June. Rice will chair the meeting.

But already there is rumbling against the plan. Argentina, Mexico and other Latin American governments are getting nervous about such a proposal coming up at Fort Lauderdale. Washington is going to have its hands full diplomatically, just

as it did in the UN and in every other forum.

New fighter-bombers to Korea

The more isolated Washington becomes diplomatically, the more dangerous it becomes militarily. The danger of U.S. direct intervention, assassination, subversion, and so on will grow stronger if the Bush administration does not get its way in Fort Lauderdale. Likewise, it is becoming more dangerous after having suffered a defeat at the UN.

Vice President Dick Cheney went on CNN's Larry King Live show on May 30 to attack North Korea viciously and prod China to line up with Washington. And a week earlier, according to the New York Sun of May 31, "the Pentagon announced that it would send 15 F-117A Nighthawk stealth fighter-bombers to South Korea." A Pentagon statement said that "aircraft crews for the planes needed to familiarize themselves with the Korean peninsula's terrain."

A Reuters dispatch of May 28 said that the F-117A Nighthawks, which are radar-evading planes, "began flying from Holloman Air Force Base in southern New Mexico to U.S. air bases in South Korea this week in a deployment expected to last four months..." About 250 airmen from the U.S. 49th Fighter Wing are going along.

Last summer about 24 stealth fighters were sent to Kunsan Air Base in South Korea to "penetrate deep into enemy air space to deliver satellite and laser-guided munitions onto time-sensitive, high-value targets," according to the Air Force.

In March of this year F-15s were sent to Guam, following a gradual deployment of three submarines. The Pentagon is considering sending an aircraft carrier to the region. This deployment is aimed not only at North Korea but at China in the Taiwan Straits. These menacing gestures are combined with numerous rumors and reports of new military guidelines that would allow tactical nuclear strikes at Iran and North Korea aimed at destroying their nuclear facilities.

Base closings and Pentagon's global plans

These deployments to the East give a strong clue to the meaning of the latest round of base closings in the U.S. proposed by Rumsfeld. The so-called Base Realignment and Closing plan is part of the global military posture review scheduled to be delivered next year.

Much of the emphasis is on taking troops out of Germany and from the Northeast and the Midwest of the U.S. The old positioning of the military was to fight the USSR. With the collapse of the USSR, the reorientation of military forces is towards the East and the South.

"United States' nuclear strategy has been rewritten, as have regional war-fighting plans, and efforts are under way to restructure and relocate the forces permanently based overseas. The goal is to reduce the number of large, cold-war-era bases, especially in Germany, in favor of access to countries closer to future battlefronts across the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa," wrote Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt. (New York Times, May 11)

The Pentagon is planning to centralize and coordinate the services; use more advanced technology in warfare; and reposition its forces in accordance with the aspirations of U.S. monopoly capital to

Continued on page 11

U.S. abuses at Guantanamo Bay confirmed

By David Hoskins

Reports by Newsweek magazine that U.S. soldiers flushed copies of the Koran down a toilet at the Guantanamo Bay prison camp sparked a firestorm of protest across the Muslim world.

After Newsweek published the story, uprisings against the brutal U.S. occupation spread throughout Afghanistan. Dozens of protesters were killed and hundreds more were injured as Hamid Karzai's puppet regime unleashed its police forces on crowds of resisters.

Many Arabs and Muslims view the Koran desecration as another example of the human-rights abuses perpetrated by U.S. forces, from the torture chambers of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib to the streets of Falluja.

The Bush administration adamantly denied the allegations. Pentagon officials claimed the Newsweek report "was irresponsible and ... is demonstrably false." Pentagon spokesperson Bryan Whitman has insisted that there is no evidence of "willful Koran desecration."

The White House and State Department both issued statements blaming Newsweek for the loss of life that resulted when police used force to contain the protests in Afghanistan.

These government officials' words and actions have had a chilling effect on the U.S. media. Under pressure from administration officials and the Pentagon,

Newsweek eventually retracted its story and apologized for unspecified errors in its reporting.

The Pentagon has yet to demonstrate that the claims are false. Contrary to Whitman's statement, newly declassified FBI documents confirm that credible reports of Koran desecration at Guantanamo surfaced as early as 2002. The Red Cross says it warned Washington about incidents of Koran desecration by U.S. interrogators years before Newsweek published its story.

A second round of demonstrations erupted throughout Asia and the Middle East after U.S. investigators were forced to admit that soldiers at Guantanamo had mishandled the Koran on several occasions. Pakistan, Egypt, Lebanon, Indonesia and Malaysia were rocked by protests.

Demonstrators burned U.S. flags and effigies of President George W. Bush. They chanted slogans against the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and for the liberation of Palestine.

In response to the anger of their citizens, the governments of Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia and Pakistan condemned the reported desecrations. Pakistan has called on the United States to launch a "serious probe" into the claims of Koran abuse.

As more evidence surfaces to confirm the Newsweek story, it appears that the Bush administration may need to retract

its own statements that no credible allegations of Koran desecration exist.

'Systematic torture' at Guantanamo

Amnesty International recently weighed in on the controversy, releasing its report documenting a pattern of systematic torture of Guantanamo detainees.

U.S. officials have attempted to intimidate AI in a fashion similar to its attacks on Newsweek, calling the report "irresponsible" and "absurd." Amnesty has called on the United States to close its Guantanamo Bay operations and release all prisoners who have not been formally charged with a crime.

American Civil Liberties Union Executive Director Anthony Romero laid the blame solely on the Bush administration. In a recent news release, Romero said, "The United States government continues to turn a blind eye to mounting evidence of widespread abuse of detainees held in its custody."

Romero has called on the Bush administration to "hold accountable high-ranking officials who allow the continuing abuse and torture of detainees."

But Washington has no incentive to hold its officials accountable. The Koran desecration is part and parcel of the Bush administration's policy of systematic torture and dehumanization that has accompanied the racist "war on terror" from the beginning.

Behind the facade of democracy

U.S. imperialism demonstrated its disregard for the lives of poor people of color in the Middle East and Central Asia with its use of indiscriminate force at the beginning of the Afghan and Iraqi invasions. Its "shock and awe" campaign in Iraq purposely maximized civilian casualties in an attempt to demoralize the masses and break their will to resist.

These tactics contradict Washington's claim that its goal is to bring democracy to the region. The Bush administration does not practice democracy at home; it does not intend to spread it abroad.

The war in Iraq fulfills the U.S. ruling class's economic goal: control of that nation's oil reserves. The imperialist powers had looked for an opportunity to intervene for decades since, a progressive national revolution nationalized Iraq's petroleum resources.

The brutal U.S.-led occupation is extremely unpopular with the Iraqis and Afghans who bear the brunt of allied oppression. Bush's quest of total U.S.-Israeli domination of the Middle East is increasingly threatened by a resistance movement determined to drive out the occupying forces.

Acts of torture and prisoner abuse only fuel the insurgency. And they have given rise to an ever louder call that echoes down the streets from New York City to Najaf: U.S. troops out now! □

U.S. policies condemned

Losing hearts, minds and battles in Iraq

By John Catalinotto

U.S. imperialism has already lost its criminal adventure in Iraq. The remaining question is when the Iraqi people, with help from anti-war forces all over the world, will overcome the tremendous disadvantages they face and drive out the occupation troops to liberate Iraq.

No one questions the Pentagon's ability to inflict suffering on Iraqis. The U.S. occupation has already created conditions of over 50-percent unemployment, of electricity on only one-third of the day in the heat of an Iraqi summer, of insecurity and danger lurking in every street.

The military strategy promoted by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld counted on a quick victory over the former Iraqi army and government, plus no more than another month to stabilize Iraq and start exploiting its resources. The U.S. military was supposed to be ready for its next intervention against Iran or Syria or North Korea within two months of the invasion of Iraq.

It's now over two years later. There are 150,000 U.S. troops and tens of thousands of mercenaries and CIA agents in Iraq—and no stability in sight.

In addition, the Pentagon is less and less able to attract volunteers to the Army, Reserves and National Guard and even the Marines.

The last weekend in May saw a new U.S. strategy to bring even more misery to the 5.5 million people living in Baghdad. According to the Iraqi puppet government that recently managed to take office after its "election" last January, some 40,000

Iraqi troops backed by U.S. forces were to set up 675 "checkpoints" within Baghdad.

Within the neighborhoods, they would do house-to-house searches for alleged "insurgents." They will round up every male between the ages of 15 and 55 and sort them out later.

Resistance continues

Iraqis suspect the 40,000 number is an exaggeration, as there are many fewer puppet troops trained for such an exercise. Ordinary Iraqis in Baghdad call members of the Iraqi National Guard the "dogs of the Americans."

So far the military noose around Baghdad has set off a new wave of resistance attacks on the ING and the occupation forces. Dozens of soldiers and police have been killed with roadside explosives, car bombs and even in protracted gun battles, according to resistance reports and those from independent news sources. The U.S. corporate media report an Italian helicopter crash with four killed and some deaths of U.S. soldiers as well as those of more Iraqis.

U.S. military sources exaggerate their "success" in eliminating what they call "insurgents"—that is, resistance fighters. Evidence is beginning to appear that the Pentagon also under-reports U.S. casualties.

The following comment appeared in an editorial in the New York-based Spanish-language daily newspaper *El Diario/La Prensa* on May 29:

"The official U.S. toll of soldiers killed in Iraq is 1,649. But *El Diario/La Prensa's* review of military documents provided to

the government of Puerto Rico indicates that the death toll is actually much higher, at 4,076."

Amnesty International

Not only is U.S. imperialism losing control of Iraq and exposing its military weakness. It has completely lost its ability to successfully present itself as bringing democracy and human rights with military intervention, as it did during its bloody air war against Yugoslavia in 1999.

Amnesty International was a useful U.S. ally during the Cold War against the USSR. Now AI has turned its verbal fire on U.S. policies toward prisoners.

On May 25, Amnesty International USA urged foreign governments to use international law to investigate Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, former CIA Director

George Tenet, Vice President Dick Cheney and other U.S. "architects of torture" at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and other similar prisons.

"If those investigations support prosecution, the governments should arrest any official who enters their territory and begin legal proceedings against them," said William Schulz, executive director of the U.S. branch of AI. Schulz said there is no statute of limitations on crimes such as torture. So for years to come, the director warned, "the apparent high-level architects of torture should think twice before planning their next vacation to places like Acapulco or the French Riviera."

The United States has lost the support of all but a handful of Iraqis, it has lost the morale of its military, and it has lost the propaganda war before the world. □





Deeper than Deep Throat

W. Mark Felt, 91 years old and formerly second-in-command at the FBI, says that he is the source that Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein called Deep Throat in their book about the Watergate break-in that was organized out of the Nixon White House.

Since the time when Richard “Tricky Dick” Nixon was forced to resign from the presidency, finding the identity of Woodward and Bernstein’s Deep Throat has been a popular speculative sport. The revisionist histories all seem to say that it was the work of the two Washington Post journalists and Deep Throat’s revelations that brought down the president.

The corporate media are already giving this twist to the reports on Felt’s admission. Felt has become the hero of the hour. And buried with Felt’s new hero status is the fact that Felt himself is one of only two FBI officials convicted for the notorious Counter-Intelligence Program—Cointelpro. Felt was one of the architects of Cointelpro, a murderous campaign that sought to derail and destroy Black, Latin@, Native and Asian civil rights and national liberation movements in this country. Cointelpro also sought to target and disrupt the movements against the Vietnam War and for women’s and gay liberation. Though convicted for his role in illegal Cointelpro operations, Felt never spent a day in prison; he was pardoned by then-President Ronald Reagan.

Before history is completely rewritten, it’s time to review what happened in the coup that toppled Richard Nixon.

Coup? That’s how Workers World reported it at the time. (See “The meaning of Nixon’s June 5 conspiracy,” by Sam Marcy, Workers World, Aug. 24, 1973.) Nixon was brought down not by two or three diligent individuals; he was brought down by a loose coalition of ruling class forces, many of whom feared that if Nixon weren’t brought down by them, he would be thrown out by a popular rebellion that could sweep away more than just the president.

Playing a big role in the move to topple Nixon was none other than

the head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. Now it is revealed that it was Hoover’s top assistant who leaked to the media the details of the criminal activities being organized out of the White House.

Marcy, in another report, summarized the events of that time:

“Nixon succeeded Johnson, basically as a result of the polarization in the country arising out of the genocidal war against Vietnam. The most right-wing faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie, headed by Air Force Chief of Staff General Curtis LeMay, urged nuclear bombing of Vietnam when he called publicly for authority to ‘bomb the Vietnamese back into the Stone Age.’ ...

“In the meantime, the very foundations of the imperialist military establishment began to be shaken by an unprecedented anti-war struggle together with the most significant revolutionary upsurge of the Black masses. The ruling class became divided over whether to continue its mad, adventurous policy. ...

“Once he became president, Nixon was besieged by both left and right within the establishment, and by an aroused, progressive mass anti-war movement and civil rights rebellions. Nixon found both the FBI and CIA unsuitable or unwilling instruments for his plans to win the wars at home and abroad.

“He called a secret and illegal meeting with all the intelligence chiefs on June 5, 1970. Its objective was to achieve ‘a plan to widen the government’s domestic spy network and increase its efficiency.’ However, FBI head J. Edgar Hoover broke away from the conspiracy because he refused to yield bureaucratic control over his personal domain.

“Nixon then established an independent spy network that became known as the Plumbers.

“The ruling class, unprepared and unwilling to continue the war, used what were in reality minor infractions of bourgeois conduct in high office (the Watergate scandal) to threaten impeachment and drive Nixon from office.” (Workers World, Sept. 12, 1991)

That’s the real history. □

French vote ‘no’ to anti-worker EU constitution

By G. Dunkel

By a solid majority—55 percent to 45 percent—French voters rejected the proposed European constitution May 29. Most French politicians and the collective capitalist class in the 25 countries currently in the European Union were stunned.

The victory for “no” gave hope to the European workers that they can begin to fight back against the systematic attack on their rights and living standards that has accelerated since the defeat of the Soviet Union in 1991. Concessions won during the Cold War period, when European bosses were in severe competition with the socialist system to the east, have been under assault since then. The new constitution that French voters rejected targets those remaining rights.

Following this electoral defeat, the EU is not going to disappear. However, a measure so significant that it was called a constitution—a measure designed to increase the EU’s central authority over its members, to remove the benefits workers have won in decades of struggle against their bosses, to limit the protections small farmers have—now will not go into effect.

This “constitution” would also have reduced democratic rights in Europe. It would have strengthened the police’s ability to act arbitrarily. It would have increased investment in Europe’s joint military forces to allow greater European military intervention, especially in Africa, the Middle East and the former USSR.

The EU leadership announced May 30 that the approval process is going to continue, even if the Netherlands rejects the constitution in its June 1 vote. In the past, the EU has forced a re-vote in the countries that reject a treaty if almost all the member states have approved that treaty.

The “no” campaign in France was organized by a loose coalition of left-wing parties, including the French Communist Party (PCF), the League for Revolutionary Communism (LCR), Workers Struggle (LO), less formal groupings like the anti-globalization group Attac, most labor unions and union confederations, peasant unions under the influence of Jose Bove, and student groups.

A working-class victory

What made this vote a working-class victory for all Europe is that the left won in the face of a unanimously solid bloc made up of the French government, business leaders and media. This ruling-class force, in alliance with the governments of the other EU countries, tried to overwhelm the left’s street meetings, leaflets, rallies and one-to-one conversations.

The media in particular played a vicious role. They pretended that the “no” campaign was based on an alliance between what the media call the “ultra” left and the fascist “ultra” right.

While it was true the racist National Front supported a “no” vote—it doesn’t want mostly Moslem Turkey in the EU—this turned out to be a minor factor in the outcome.

When it became clear that the “no” campaign was in the lead, French President Jacques Chirac started bringing in other heads of state. For example, on May 19 he held a news conference in the eastern French city of Nancy. There German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said, “We especially need France.” Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski said, “I wish for myself, for France and for all of us that this constitutional treaty will be adopted here on May 29.”

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero had come earlier in May.



Anti-EU constitution protest at the Bastille.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi also chipped in.

On the other side, workers’ and communist parties throughout Europe campaigned in solidarity with the French workers for a “no” vote.

The French voter turnout was nearly a record for a referendum. Just under 70 percent of the eligible voters went to the polls.

Over 60 percent of voters under 60 years old and 80 percent of wage workers said, “No.”

The “no” vote was surprisingly strong in rural areas, which would sharply feel the loss of farm subsidies under the proposed constitution.

Working-class voters saw the new constitution as designed to strengthen and intensify their exploitation. As one machine shop worker told a reporter from French TV, “The minimum wage should be based on salaries in developed countries like France and Germany, not poor countries in Eastern Europe.”

For example, French truckers are paid \$2,600 a month (2000 euros) while Polish truckers driving the same routes are paid only \$650 (500 euros).

The proposed constitution was what Europeans call “liberal.” It would free companies to make workers toil any number of hours, weekends, give up vacations and so on. On average, the French work 300 hours per year less than workers in the United States.

The constitution had no special provision for women’s rights, like the right to a divorce, contraception and abortion. It had no guaranteed access to health care, housing, jobs and so on.

It also had provisions establishing a European armed force. This would let Europe, under the leadership of French and German imperialists, apply military pressure along with its obvious economic and political strengths.

The Socialist Party, which can be described as a bunch of social democrats united for mainly electoral purposes, formally endorsed the “yes” campaign. But a number of SP confederations, for instance in Lille in northern France, and some major leaders, like Laurent Fabius, campaigned for the “no” vote. According to exit polls, about two-thirds of the SP voters supported “no.”

The whole political scene in France is in turmoil. President Jacques Chirac has announced that he has fired the prime minister and will appoint as the new one the current interior minister; the interior ministry is equivalent to the department of justice in the United States.

The SP is probably going to split. The PCF and LCR might try to build a more durable alliance. Labor unions, which in France are usually closely connected to political parties, are reconfiguring themselves based on positions taken on the EU constitution.

“No” is expected to win in the Netherlands vote June 1 too. Poland, Portugal and Denmark have scheduled votes for later this year. While polls show the “yes” vote is ahead in all these countries, the left and the workers throughout Europe have been energized by the French vote and will now intensify the struggle against this reactionary “constitution.” □

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WWW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Survivors of military massacre on U.S. tour

S. Koreans open eyes, get warm support

Two activists from South Korea have been touring the United States and Canada on a mission to inform the public about a people's uprising there 25 years ago and its bloody suppression. Besides speaking to meetings in many cities, the two appeared before the Detroit City Council, which passed a resolution welcoming them and calling for U.S. troops to leave Korea.

The two South Koreans, Kim Hyo-Seok and Lee Shin—in Korea, the family name appears first—are being accompanied by Yoomi Jeong, a Korean American.

Below are brief accounts of three of these meetings.

DETROIT City Council welcomes delegation

It has been 25 years since a national student-led uprising swept South Korea in response to a right-wing military coup that was supported by the U.S. government under former President Jimmy Carter. A delegation commemorating the Gwangju uprising and massacre that is touring 18 cities in the United States and Canada visited the city of Detroit on May 25. The delegation was hosted by the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice (MECAWI).

The Korean activists were directly involved in the events of May 18-27, 1980, when in response to the military seizure of power by the dictator Gen. Chun Doo Hwan, thousands of students and workers took control of the city of Gwangju and established their own councils which effectively ran the city until the military crushed the rebellion on May 27.

This delegation included Yoomi Jeong, secretary general of the Korea Truth Commission. She has spent considerable time researching and investigating U.S. war crimes against the people of Korea. Kim Hyo-Seok, co-director of the Korea Truth Commission in Gwangju-Chonnam and co-director of the Anti-War Alliance, also took part. Kim participated in the 1980 Gwangju People's Uprising as a high school student. He was arrested during the military crackdown and spent time as a political prisoner.

Also with the delegation was Lee Shin, a former student activist who witnessed the Gwangju massacre. Lee is policy director for the Reunification Alliance in Gwangju-Chonnam and a lead investigator for the Korea Truth Commission in Gwangju-Chonnam.

A testimonial resolution in support of the Detroit leg of the tour was presented to the delegation during the morning of May 25 at the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center in downtown Detroit. Detroit City Council President Maryann Mahaffey officially welcomed the Korean delegation to Detroit. In a ceremony in the City Council auditorium, Kim, Lee and Jeong received a Testimonial Resolution from the council that also called for U.S. troops to get out of Korea. Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick was also in attendance.

The resolution read in part that "Kim Hyo-Seok and Lee Shin continue to engage in maintaining democracy and human rights through their current involvement in the anti-war movement



WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH AND DAVE SOLE
Korean delegation and anti-war activists in Detroit May 25. Detroit City Council resolution, left



against the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Korea [while] over 30,000 U.S. troops continue to occupy South Korea [for] over 50 years after the end of the Korean War at a cost to the American people of tens of billions of dollars."

The resolution continued by pointing out that "the Detroit City Council officially welcomes Kim Hyo-Seok and Lee Shin to Detroit. Council also expresses hope that their visit will lead to greater understanding between the people of the United States and the Korean people, and lead to an end of U.S. occupation and the threat of war on the Korean Peninsula."

Earlier in the day the South Korean guests had a chance to visit the Labor Legacy monument and a statue commemorating the Underground Railroad, in which Detroit was a stop for runaway slaves before they crossed to freedom across the river into Canada.

Later that evening the Korean Truth Commission delegation visited Wayne State University to participate in a public forum organized by MECAWI.

Yoomi Jeong first read a statement of solidarity from a member of the South Korean National Assembly, which took a position against the United States occupation of Iraq.

This tour is significant in light of the intensification of cold war propaganda by the U.S. against Korea. MECAWI activist David Sole, principal tour guide for the Korean delegation, pointed out that sections of the peace movement in the U.S. do not understand the significance of defending the Korean people against the imperialist provocations of the Bush administration.

—Abayomi Azikiwe

Excerpted from a report by Azikiwe, editor of Pan-African News Wire. A MECAWI activist also provided information.

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

'U.S. out of Korea, Iraq!'

On May 20, Charlotte, N.C., was very fortunate to have two speakers from South Korea visit as part of a U.S./Canada tour. The Charlotte meeting was arranged by the Action Center For Justice.

A representative of the Action Center read a statement of solidarity on behalf of the Charlotte progressive movement to the South Korean movement for social justice.

Yoomi Jeong, a fighter for democracy, self-determination and unification of Korea and the rights of immigrants in the U.S., read a strong statement of solidarity

—David Dixon

BUFFALO, N.Y.

Friends of Korea

Buffalo, N.Y., on May 29 hosted the tour of South Korean speakers commemorating the anniversary of the Gwangju People's Uprising. The program was sponsored by the Buffalo Friends of Korea.

Local activists presented a banner to the delegation that had been held in the May 1 rally for global nuclear disarmament in New York City.

—Beverly Heistand

South Korean youth hold anti-U.S. action



Thousands of South Korean students rallied and confronted the police May 29 in Seoul outside of a U.S. military base to protest against a hostile U.S. policy against North Korea. According to South Korea's Yonhap news agency, this demonstration was the largest of its kind in recent years.

U.S. losing its grip

Continued from page 8

dominate the East in the coming century. That is what the base closings are fundamentally about.

Democratic Party caves in

So while U.S. imperialism is floundering politically and economically and is in a quagmire in Iraq and Afghanistan, the militarists are plotting the future.

There is no one in the capitalist establishment, and no opposition in the Democratic Party, with an alternative to the aggressive designs of the Pentagon, the oil companies, the military-industrial complex and the monopolies, who crave new world markets and wage slaves to exploit.

The Democrats have voted for every military appropriation. While denouncing the right wing and criticizing Rumsfeld for the disaster in Iraq, they sit quietly by as he and his military cohorts chart out plans for future aggression on an even larger and more disastrous scale than Iraq.

Of course, Rumsfeld and the Pentagon have not learned the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan. As imperialist military strategists, they cannot. They regard Iraq as an aberration. Otherwise they would not be planning to repeat the same fundamental error they made in Iraq—underestimating the willingness of the masses to fight back against imperialist and colonialist aggression on a global scale involving Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

But the spineless Democratic Party leadership, which considers its judicial "compromise" on reactionary judges to be a great victory, and which signs on the dotted line to pay for a war that is bankrupting the people here and slaughtering Iraqis, is a treacherous mis-leadership that must be disregarded and bypassed in favor of the struggle of the masses of people. That is the only force that can push back the imperialists, in Iraq or right here at home. □

¿Qué hay detrás del asunto nuclear en Corea? Las verdaderas razones de la hostilidad de Washington

Por Deirdre Griswold

Cuando las tropas estadounidenses llegaron a Corea del sur a finales de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, los estrategas del imperialismo estadounidense vieron a la península como una vía hacia la eventual dominación del territorio asiático. Estos no le pusieron mucha atención al ejército revolucionario de coreanos, organizado por Kim Il Sung, que llegó desde el norte junto a tropas soviéticas y comenzaron a desarmar y remover la estructura de poder que se había formado durante la dominación colonial japonesa.

Estados Unidos no tomó en serio la gran revolución social que había comenzado en Corea. Pero el ejército de liberación encabezado por Kim, urgía al pueblo a que derrocaran no solo a los oficiales que colaboraron con el Japón, sino también a los propietarios de las tierras y a los capitalistas quienes les habían explotado y oprimido y quienes habían sido la base de la clase interna en la cual el imperialismo japonés había confiado por muchas décadas.

La reforma agraria en el norte comenzada en 1946, alivió la gran pobreza de los campesinos e inspiró el sentimiento revolucionario en el sur.

Al comenzar la Guerra Fría, la administración de Truman comenzó a caracterizar a Kim Il Sung y sus partidarios como títeres de la Unión Soviética, la cual había entrado a la guerra contra el Japón después de haber vencido al ejército de Hitler en Europa. Washington pensó que una vez que las tropas soviéticas salieran del norte de Corea, los Estados Unidos podrían poner a toda el área, incluyendo a China, bajo su “esfera de influencia.”

Pero la revolución continuó en el norte de Corea y en la vecina China. Para 1948, el sur de Corea, dominado ya por los Estados Unidos, declaró la formación de un gobierno aparte, haciendo así oficial la división del país en el paralelo 38. En respuesta, las fuerzas revolucionarias lideradas por Kim Il Sung, establecieron la República Democrática Popular de Corea en el norte. (RDPC)

Las tropas soviéticas inmediatamente comenzaron a salir del norte, el cual desde entonces ha tenido que defenderse por sí solo. Algunas de las tropas estadounidenses salieron del sur, pero muchos se quedaron como “consejeros” para la dictadura del Syngman Rhee, un derechista brutal que había vivido por décadas en los Estados Unidos antes de haber sido titulado líder de Corea del sur por Washington.

Represión y guerra

Rhee había comenzado un régimen de terror en contra de todos los progresistas, incluyendo a muchos que habían sido luchadores heroicos en contra del colonialismo japonés, mientras él esperaba en Washington el fin de la guerra.

Comenzando en 1950, las fuerzas estadounidenses regresaron a Corea para apo-

yar la tambaleante dictadura de Rhee. Una horrible guerra en contra de la RDPC se llevó a cabo por tres años en la cual millones de coreanos murieron. Cuando el cese al fuego fue finalmente declarado, el imperialismo estadounidense, a pesar de sus enormes ventajas en tecnología militar y potencia industrial, había fallado en su objetivo—el de derrocar al régimen socialista en el norte—y así el país quedó dividido.

La guerra nunca terminó oficialmente. Washington ha rehusado siquiera discutir un tratado de paz con la RDPC. Casi 40.000 tropas estadounidenses han continuado la ocupación del sur desde entonces, y el movimiento para sacarlos ha crecido enormemente.

Hoy, la Unión Soviética —el primer estado de los trabajadores y por más de siete décadas el blanco principal, primero del imperialismo de los Nazis alemanes y luego de las amenazas nucleares y la subversión política y económica de los EEUU — ya no existe. Su desaparición fue un trauma grande y una pérdida material para todos los países que intentan evitar las garras del imperialismo.

Pero la revolución liderada por Kim Il Sung y su Partido de los Trabajadores de Corea ha comprobado su viabilidad. La República Democrática Popular de Corea bajo el liderato de Kim Jong Il sigue desafiando a los gobernantes en Washington y no va a someterse al imperio de los EEUU.

La administración de Bush está aprendiendo ahora por la vía dura lo que administraciones anteriores de los EEUU, Demócratas y Republicanas, habían aprendido sobre la RDPC. No va a rendirse por amenazas. Las amenazas solamente hacen al pueblo coreano y a sus líderes duplicar sus esfuerzos para defender su soberanía y su sistema socialista.

La cuestión hoy según Washington, es el desarrollo de armas nucleares por la RDPC.

El derecho de existir de la RDPC

Desde el punto de vista coreano sin embargo, la cuestión es la hostilidad permanente de los Estados Unidos luego de más de medio siglo de la guerra de 1950 – 1953, y su derecho a mantener una defensa fuerte contra una potencia nuclear que ha insultado a sus líderes y declarado abiertamente su intención de destruir su sistema.

Está reconocido por la mayoría del mundo hoy que el colapso de la URSS fue interpretado por un grupo extremadamente agresivo en la clase dominante de los EEUU como una luz verde para la expansión global imperialista. Los llamados neoconservadores, quienes han formulado muchas de las políticas de la administración de Bush, establecieron sus planes para la dominación mundial hace más de una década.

Sus planes militares estaban enfocados principalmente para el control exclusivo

de la riqueza petrolera del Medio Oriente —la primera guerra contra Irak coincidió con el colapso de la URSS — pero también esperaban prevalecer sobre lo que llamaron las “naciones incontrolables” que rehusaron conformarse a un mundo dominado por las corporaciones y los bancos de los EEUU.

Cuba, y la RDPC, desconectadas del intercambio comercial y tecnológico con el bloque soviético supuestamente iban a caer.

Ya han pasado 15 años. Ni Cuba ni la RDPC han caído.

La RDPC ha experimentado años de duro sufrimiento mientras enfrenta la posibilidad de una renovada agresión militar de los EEUU. Pero su estructura política, basada en un partido político de la clase trabajadora y forjada en una lucha revolucionaria de las masas, no se ha fracturado.

Uno de los lamentos de Washington, repetido con frecuencia, es que no puede interpretar bien lo que está pasando dentro de la RDPC. En otras palabras, el imperialismo no puede encontrar una base social con la cual agitar y derrocar el liderato y el sistema. Entonces describe a la RDPC como el “reino ermitaño” y otras etiquetas despectivas.

En su discurso del Estado de la Unión de enero de 2002, el Presidente George W. Bush incluyó a la RDPC en un imaginado “eje del mal”, junto con Irak e Irán. Un año después, EEUU lanzó una invasión contra Irak para derrocar a su gobierno y erigir un régimen títere.

La RDPC tomó esto muy en serio. “Nosotros consideramos que el discurso de Bush del Estado de la Unión fue una declaración de guerra contra la RDPC”, dijo el embajador de la RDPC ante la ONU, Pak Gil Yon a Mundo Obrero (Workers World) en ese momento. (Workers World, 28 de marzo de 2002)

El embajador también llamó la atención sobre el Informe de la Política Nuclear publicado por el Pentágono en enero 2002, en el cual se proponía el uso de armas nucleares contra siete países, incluyendo la RDPC. “Éste es un suceso muy grave,” subrayó el embajador, diciendo que eso canceló previos acuerdos entre los dos países.

Desde hace muchos años, los Estados Unidos han amenazado a la RDPC con su cantidad enorme de armas nucleares. El Pentágono tenía armas con base en tierra en Corea de Sur. También tenía submarinos, bombarderos y proyectiles intercontinentales, todos equipados con armas nucleares que podían utilizarse contra Corea de Norte.

El Pentágono alega que ha sacado todas sus armas nucleares de Corea de Sur, pero no hay una verificación independiente que lo compruebe. Mientras tanto, mantiene su “sombrija nuclear” amenazando a la región.

En su entrevista con MO, el embajador Pak repitió su aseveración de que el discurso de Bush fue “una declaración de

guerra,” y añadió que “serán tomadas todas las medidas necesarias para defender la soberanía del país”.

Desde entonces, la administración de Bush ha continuado su diatriba contra la RDPC, aún mientras comete terribles crímenes de guerra en Irak y Afganistán. En abril, Bush intensificó su retórica, llamando al líder coreano Kim Jong Il un “tirano” y alegando que el comportamiento de la RDPC justificó los planes estadounidenses de gastar billones de dólares para poner en el espacio un sistema “anti-proyectiles”.

Así que no debe ser ninguna sorpresa que la RDPC haya anunciado su propio programa de desarrollar armas nucleares como fuerza disuasoria a cualquier ataque por parte de los Estados Unidos. Está demandando que la cuestión más amplia de la desnuclearización de la península sea discutida para resolver pacíficamente la situación.

La administración de Bush esperaba hacer de la cuestión de las armas nucleares de la RDPC, un mayor blanco de la crítica en las reuniones recientes de la ONU sobre la no-proliferación nuclear, y quiere que la ONU imponga sanciones contra Corea del Norte. Pero los delegados provenientes de todas las partes del mundo están mucho más preocupados por las miles de armas nucleares que el Pentágono ha rehusado desmantelar y las cuales que están mantenidas en un estado de alerta máxima.

El analista Peter G. Cohen escribe: “La administración de Bush ha estado pidiendo fondos para el desarrollo de armas nuevas y para mejorar la fiabilidad de las más viejas. Las armas nucleares son todavía un elemento central en la política de defensa de Bush.” (Common Dreams, 19 de mayo)

Incluso el guerrillero Robert McNamara, escribió en la edición actual de la revista Foreign Policy (Política extranjera), “Yo caracterizaría la política estadounidense actual en cuanto a las armas nucleares como inmoral, ilegal, innecesaria militarmente, y extremadamente peligrosa.”

En cuanto a las sanciones económicas, Corea de sur está enviando ahora 200.000 toneladas de fertilizantes al norte para ayudarle con su recuperación agrícola. Tres barcos de la RDPC atracaron en los puertos de Corea del sur a mediados de mayo por primera vez en 21 años. La última vez que barcos del norte habían llegado al sur, fue para entregar cemento, arroz, y otras provisiones de socorro para sus compatriotas sureños después que un tsunami hubo devastado la región.

Hasta ahora, los peligrosos esfuerzos de la administración de Bush para intimidar, aislar y estrangular económicamente a la RDPC, dando como pretexto los esfuerzos justificables de ese país para defenderse de la amenaza abierta de agresión por el poder nuclear número uno del mundo, han sido en vano. □