

MUNDO OBRERO

Inmigrantes bajo ataque, resisten 12

LGBT PRIDE in struggle



WWW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

- ▼ **BIGOTS' tour drowned out** 7
- ▼ **FIST youth leader on movement-building** 7
- ▼ **AFRICA, imperialism and AIDS** 7
- ▼ **1950: Why gay organizing ignited** 6

RUMSFELD MENACES CHINA old threats new reality **EDITORIAL 10**

DEATH ROW visiting MUMIA 3

REAL ESTATE MARKET Goldilocks & the 'bear' 4

Subscribe to Workers World

Trial subscription: \$2 for 8 weeks

One year subscription: \$25

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

Workers World Newspaper
55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011 212-627-2994
www.workers.org

Cuba conference hits U.S. gov't terror

By Teresa Gutierrez
Havana, Cuba

The U.S. capitalist class has a tremendous ability to turn everything into its opposite: night into day, up into down. It is allowing right-wing terrorists to walk freely on the streets of Miami. It has jailed those fighting this terror.

But now Cuba has put the issue of "Who are the REAL terrorists?" squarely on the agenda of the revolutionary and working class movement.

In less than a week's time, the Cuban government organized the "International Encounter against Terrorism, for Truth and Justice," that took place in Havana from June 2-4.

It was a phenomenal feat in such a short period of time. As several Cuban leaders pointed out, an event of this magnitude would often require a year to organize. But in just six days and five nights, more than 1,500 Cubans and international guests were brought together to discuss this critical topic.

Representatives from 63 countries took part. A prestigious group of scholars and journalists, who had just been invited days before, led seven panels on various aspects about terrorism.

Presenters and delegates delved into the theme of U.S.-sponsored terrorism in Latin America and the Caribbean. Of course, high on the agenda was the role of counter-revolutionary Cuban commandos operating out of the U.S., particularly the group led by Luis Posada Carriles.

From "Operation Condor" to the bombing of a Cubana airliner in 1976 that killed 73 people, all roads lead back to this neo-fascist group—trained, aided and abetted by the U.S. government.

Developments around the case of Luis Posada Carriles led to the organizing of this emergency conference. Posada Carriles entered the U.S. in March. U.S. government officials hinted they would grant him political asylum.

This created a political uproar. The Bush administration announcement led to a worldwide condemnation of the U.S. government and exposed the incredible hypocrisy of imperialism.

Posada Carriles is an avowed terrorist. He has boasted about his actions to several Miami news agencies and to the New York Times. Since 1959, his entire life has been dedicated to carrying

Miami terrorist Posada Carriles Link to JFK assassination? 8

out acts of sabotage against the Cuban Revolution, including assassination attempts against the life of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Posada Carriles, along with co-conspirators like Orlando Bosch, has masterminded or known about and supported acts such as the bombing of tourist hotels in Cuba. An Italian tourist was killed in Havana in 1997 as a result. Several Cuban missions have been bombed—from Mexico to Spain to the U.S.—resulting in the deaths of distinguished diplomats.

A breadth of well-researched and documented information about these acts of terror was provided to participants at the Havana conference. A dispassionate and objective analysis presented a wealth of information. It was a thoroughly historical view; not a single participant could have left the event without grasping the full significance of the actions of Posada Carriles and his ilk.

Bloody hands of CIA

Journalists and victims of U.S.-sponsored terrorist actions gave poignant and heart-rending testimony. Manuel Guerrero from Chile talked about the bloody events of the CIA-led 1973 coup against the Socialist Party leader and president of Chile, Salvador Allende. Guerrero's father was killed as a result of this massacre.

Hebe Bonafini brought the crowd to their feet when she talked about her Argentine movement, "Mothers of the Revolution." Her organization is made up of a group of women whose children were "disappeared" as a result of CIA-backed atrocities during the "dirty war" by the military regime in Argentina during the 1970s. She gave a stirring talk, inspiring the crowd with the spirit of the revolutionary period of the 1960s and 1970s.

Irma González, the daughter of René González, one of the Cuban Five heroes, made a moving presentation that left few with

Continued on page 8



Dorchester, Mass., June 5.

WWW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Somerville 5 case: 'Racism!'

By Elizabeth A. West

"Are we going backwards?"

This was the question asked at a June 5 news conference in Dorchester, Mass., held to publicize the demand that five Somerville African American youths be immediately reinstated as students at Somerville High School near Boston and that trumped-up police charges against them be dropped.

The Somerville 5—Calvin Belfon, 17, Cassius Belfon, 15, Earl Guerra, 16, Isiah Anderson, 17, and Marquis Anderson, 16—were victims of racial profiling and a brutal, unprovoked attack by Medford police on April 20. The five have been indefinitely suspended from school. And they face false charges, including assault with a deadly weapon, assault and battery, and disorderly conduct.

The news conference was held on the steps of the Greater Love

Continued on page 3

Wachovia admits slave trade profits

By Betsey Piette

After initially denying ties to slavery in January, executives at Wachovia Bank disclosed in a June 2 report that the bank's predecessor institutions—the Bank of Charleston, S.C., and the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company—“owned” at least 162 enslaved Africans and accepted 529 more as “collateral” on loans.

The 111-page report was prepared by the History Factory, a firm specializing in corporate archival work. It also revealed that war financier Robert Morris—a founder of a forerunner institution, Bank of North America—used profits from the slave trade to start Wachovia in 1781.

And the Bank of Charleston provided financial assistance to the confederate government throughout the Civil War.

The admission by the North-Carolina-based Wachovia, the country's fourth-biggest bank, follows similar disclosures by Lehman Brothers; J.P. Morgan Chase and Co., which is parent company of Bank One; and the Savings Bank of Baltimore, which is part of the Wachovia network.

Like Wachovia, J. P. Morgan Chase initially disavowed ties to slavery. Eventually, Morgan executives were forced to acknowledge that two predecessor banks accepted 13,000 enslaved Africans “as collateral,” taking “ownership” of 1,250 when loans defaulted.

There were over 4 million enslaved Africans by 1865, when slavery was abolished upon ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution after the military defeat of the Confederacy in the Civil War. The legacy of slavery, however, continues to be felt today in rampant racism.

Major struggles for reparations are being waged. These include demands for federal reparations legislation. There are also lawsuits seeking billions of dollars from such companies as R.J. Reynolds, Aetna Inc. and CSX Corp. for the descendants of enslaved Africans.

The disclosures by these major banking institutions were made under pressure from the cities of Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Detroit and Richmond, Va. These cities passed ordinances calling on city contractors to reveal any history of making money from slavery.

Chicago's Slave Era Disclosure Ordinance, passed in

2003, was designed to demonstrate how enslaved Africans were the life blood of the original 13 colonies as well as the new United States after independence from England.

Put money where your mouth is!

Wachovia is the leading manager of the Philadelphia city government's bank accounts. Philadelphia's ordinance, signed in February, asks corporations that seek contracts with the city to disclose if they profited from slavery.

Wachovia issued an apology. Officials said the bank would offer support for community organizations working to further awareness and education of African American history. But Philadelphia attorney Michael Coard, leader of the Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, described Wachovia's action as “a publicity stunt that had nothing to do with sincere remorse but everything to do with denying its racism of the past from slave profiteering and of the present from discriminatory redlining.”

Coard said: “If Wachovia is truly remorseful, it would put its money where its mouth is. Talk is cheap!”

ATAC, as part of the overall reparations movement, has been waging an increasingly successful battle to force the federal government to commemorate the enslaved Africans who were owned by George Washington at the first “White House,” which is at the current site of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

Like most major urban areas, communities of color in Philadelphia have been devastated by decades of redlining. In much the same way that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have kept developing countries impoverished and at the mercy of the multinational banks and corporations by only extending loans with excessively high rates of interest, U.S. banks have withheld home loans from neighborhoods considered poor investment risks. This has led to widespread economic decline in these areas. Now laws prohibiting redlining are under attack from the Bush administration.

These banks could not have become the powerful financial institutions they are today if it weren't for the tremendous profits they made off the cruel slave trade and slavery. □

Law targets immigrant eateries

Cristobal Hinojosa of Mexicanos en Accion (pictured here) addressed a June 3 news conference called by a coalition of immigrant rights supporters in Houston outside the local office of State Representative Dwayne Bohac.

Bohac railroaded a bill through the state legislature designed to shut down mobile taco stands by imposing impossible-to-meet regulations. Among other things, the law requires restrooms for the eateries that are only kitchens on wheels.

The mobile taco stands park in immigrant neighborhoods and at work sites. They are mostly family-owned and operated. Thousands of people depend on the mobile taquerias for their livelihoods. Thousands of others, who lack cooking facilities at home or work, depend on them for their only hot meals.

A coalition which includes the Working Families Association and the International Action Center's Committee to Defend Immigrant Workers says Bohac lied in a meeting where he gave assurances that his bill would change nothing for the mobile businesses.



Cristobal Hinojosa speaking to reporter.

They added that his office also failed to keep a promise to notify them when the bill would be debated in the legislature. There was no debate, and the measure reportedly passed in less than one minute.

Bohac's campaign contributors include the Texas Restaurant Association.

Already more than two dozen grassroots businesses have been raided, with some receiving warning citations and others being shut down.

The coalition plans an outreach effort to progressive forces in order to mount a militant fightback to this racist legislation.

—Story and photo by Joanne Gavin

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

- Somerville 5 case: 'Racism!' 1
- Wachovia admits slave trade profits 2
- Law targets immigrant eateries. 2
- A memorable day with Mumia Abu-Jamal 3
- Lynne Stewart fights for her freedom 3
- North Carolina death penalty 3
- Rally against cross-burnings 3
- Goldilocks and the bear market 4
- Paying respects to hero of labor 4
- On the picket line 4
- Solidarity—from Gwangju to Falluja. 5
- Smallpox threat may re-emerge 5
- Ft. Detrick's bio-weapons kill 5
- When idea for gay political organizing ignited 6
- Anti-LGBT tour drowned out. 7
- Nat'l FIST leader: 'We need a movement' 7
- LGBT Pride, Africa and the AIDS crisis. 7
- Posada Carriles and the Kennedy assassination 8
- Hell no, they don't want to go! 9

★ Around the world

- Cuba conference hits U.S. gov't terror 1
- Iraq resistance strong, popular anger growing 9
- Barcelona Tribunal. 9
- New book, video defend Yugoslavia 10
- A tale of two pipelines 11

★ Editorials

- Rumsfeld shakes big stick at China. 10
- U.S.: Hands off Bolivia! 10

★ Noticias En Español

- Inmigrantes bajo ataque, resisten 12
- Mítin de protesta contra los grupos racistas 12

WW CALENDAR

NEW YORK

Fri., June 10

Workers World Party Meeting: Guest speaker Ismael Guadalupe, a leader of the movement to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques, P.R., on the current struggle; Monica Moorehead, WW managing editor, on her June 5 meeting with revo-

lutionary 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.

Workers World

55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org
Vol. 47, No. 23 • June 16, 2005
Closing date: June 8, 2005

Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Milt Neidenberg
Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Adrian Garcia, Maggie Vascassenno
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas, Teresa Gutierrez
Internet: Janet Mayes

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Send an e-mail message to wnewssubscribe@workersworld.net.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.



JOIN US. Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
(212) 627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
(404) 627-0815
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
(410) 235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Armory St., Boston,
MA 02130
(617) 983-3835
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
P.O. Box 1204
Buffalo, NY 14213
(716) 566-1115
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
(773) 381-5839
Fax (773) 761-9330
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
phone (216) 531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 831-0750
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 130322,
Houston, TX 77219
(713) 861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5274 West Pico Blvd.,
Suite 203
Los Angeles, CA 90019
(323) 936-1416
la@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, PA 19139
(610) 453-0490
phila@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221
richmond@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
(585) 436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
3930 Oregon St.,
Suite 230
San Diego, CA 92104
(619) 692-4496

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco,
CA 94103
(415) 561-9752
sf@workers.org

State College, Pa.
100 Grandview Rd.,
State College,
PA 16801
(814) 237-8695

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org

Death-row visit

A memorable day with Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Monica Moorehead
SCI-Greene Prison
Waynesburg, Pa.

Visiting someone in prison can be one of life's most heartbreaking experiences.

As you approach the prison, you can't help but be affected by the impenetrable thick brick walls topped with coils of barbed wire—or by the steady stream of women and children, disproportionately people of color, who have traveled from far distances to visit their loved ones, who are spending years locked up in steel cages, sometimes for 23-and-a-half hours daily.

This is the situation that death-row political prisoner and revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal has faced for almost 23 years now.

Larry Holmes and I took a seven-hour car trip to visit with Mumia on June 5 at the remote SCI-Greene prison unit near the West Virginia border.

After going through the standard security checkpoints to get to the visiting area, we came face to face with a handcuffed, smiling Mumia.

Separated by a plexiglass barrier, Larry and I instinctively press our hands up against the glass to meet Mumia's hands, even with the knowledge that human contact is almost forbidden under these unimaginable circumstances.

Yet somehow the omnipresent physical barriers take a back seat during a face-to-face meeting with Mumia. Since he is allowed only one visit per week, excluding his lawyers, we decided to make every minute count. As it turned out, the six hours that we spent with him went by so quickly.

He said that he is in relatively good health and that the swelling in his feet had gone down. This has been an ongoing problem due to prison conditions.

When we asked him about the May 27 Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas dismissal of his request for a new Post Conviction Relief Act hearing, Mumia stated that this came to no surprise given the biased nature of the courts.

Mumia can no longer receive important news sources like C-Span because of new regulations.

The bulk of our political discussion focused on the problems and prospects facing the anti-war movement in light of the deepening Iraqi resistance and the outcome of the 2004 U.S. presidential elections, the development of the Black-led Million Workers March Movement, the upcoming Millions More March this October, and the growing impact of immigrant workers' rights on the overall labor movement.

We also discussed the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Montgomery bus boycott, which helped launch the modern civil rights struggle, and how to best impart the important lessons this event can have on today's struggle against war, racism and cutbacks. Mumia shared with us his fond memories of his last visit with the actor Ossie Davis, who

remained a committed activist until his recent death.

When we were forced to say good-bye and leave him behind, Mumia flashed his stunning smile and with his cuffed hands in fists, told us to tell everyone to keep up the good fight. Larry and I left the prison sad but also so grateful for time that we spent with this remarkable revolutionary leader and comrade in the struggle.



Monica Moorehead and Mumia Abu-Jamal at SCI-Greene prison, March 1996.

WW PHOTO: LARRY HOLMES

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners!

Moorehead and Holmes are members of Workers World Party's secretariat, an elected body of WWP's national committee.

Lynne Stewart fights for her freedom

By John Catalinotto
New York

Radical human rights attorney Lynne Stewart reviewed her own continuing legal struggle at a Workers World Party forum in New York on June 3. Stewart and her supporters charge that she has been falsely accused of "helping terrorists." She was convicted and faces a possible 30 years in prison at her Sept. 23 sentencing at the U.S. courthouse in downtown Manhattan.

The attorney's defenders are working on both legal and popular challenges to her conviction. Their hope is to either get the case thrown out based on her First Amendment rights or to minimize the sentence to no actual jail time.

Specifically, Stewart was convicted for violating Special Administrative Measures (SAMS), imposed by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, by issuing a news release about her client Sheik Abdel-Rahman in 1995. There was a gag order on the case of her client. He had been convicted of planning the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center.

She explained that violating a SAMS is normally punished by refusing the attorney further contact with her client. In this case, the government used a conspiracy law to "bootstrap" the SAMS into criminal charges. Stewart spoke of the legitimate role of an attorney of "keeping your client alive in the media" to explain why she issued a news release for Abdel-Rahman.

The government's goal with these charges was to intimidate attorneys from representing radical or revolutionary clients, Stewart said. But some lawyers have told Stewart that her struggle has inspired them to become active and aggressive defense attorneys.

Stewart has received much support from the progressive legal community and from the many left political activists who know what an important contribution she



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Lynne Stewart

has made over her 27 years as an attorney.

She has represented, among other people, David Gilbert of the Weather Underground; Richard Williams of the United Freedom Front; Larry Davis, acquitted by reason of self-defense of the attempted murder of New York police officers; Sekou Odinga of the Black Liberation Army; and Nasser Ahmed, released after being imprisoned for over three years on non-existent "secret evidence."

On the web site for Stewart's defense, lynnstewart.org, readers can find a list of her many upcoming speaking engagements, plans to demonstrate at her sentencing on Sept. 23, and details of a campaign to write letters asking for clemency to Manhattan federal Judge John Koeltl by way of the defense committee. Readers can also get information by calling (212) 625-9696.

Also at the WWP forum, Andre Powell of the Baltimore All-Peoples Congress reported on the struggle against that city's Central Booking, where an average of more than one detainee a month has died while awaiting trial, and against the police sweeps of African American neighborhoods.

Sara Flounders, a national co-coordinator of the International Action Center, discussed developments in the anti-war movement. □

DEATH PENALTY N.C. moves towards 2-year halt

The House Judicial Committee passed a bill May 31 that would suspend executions in North Carolina for two years while the state studies the capital punishment system. This moved the bill, HB 529, to the floor of the House for a vote, which was delayed. The state Senate passed a similar bill during the 2003-2004 legislature and will not consider it again until the House passes the bill.

Former prisoners Alan Gell and Darryl Hunt testified at North Carolina House of Representatives Judicial Committee proceedings in Raleigh. Gell and Hunt spent nine and 18 years respectively in North Carolina prisons for crimes they did not commit before being exonerated.

Anti-death penalty advocates have been working for six years to ban capital punishment in the state and vowed to keep the pressure on. They point out that problems with the death penalty in North Carolina have included hidden evidence, racial bias and incompetent defense lawyers.

— David Dixon

Racism in Somerville 5 case

Continued from page 1

Tabernacle Church. Congregation and community members filled the church steps and immediate sidewalk. Speakers included the Rev. William Dickerson, pastor of the church; Leonard Alkins, president of the Boston NAACP; Minister Rodney Muhammed, Nation of Islam; Robert Traynham of the International Action Center; and a representative of the Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers.

Speakers put out a call for Somerville Public Schools Superintendent Albert Argenziano to immediately reinstate the youths in school; for Middlesex County District Attorney Martha Coakley and Massachusetts Attorney General Thomas Riley to thoroughly investigate the Medford Police Department; for Gov. Mitt Romney to effectively respond to the police misconduct charges; and for the U.S. Justice Department to conduct a

thorough and impartial investigation of the incident.

Various speakers compared this case to the recent trial held in Milton, Mass., involving five white men at Milton Academy who were charged with sexual assault. They were "sentenced" to 100 hours of community service, counseling, and two years of probation.

This obvious slap on the wrist is the sort historically given to white men in the racist, sexist criminal justice system. Pointing out this racial disparity, Minister Muhammed said, "Everything bad in society gets dumped on the Black community."

The Somerville 5 case is of national importance. It exposes the ongoing crime of racial profiling by the police, and police brutality—both faced every day by communities of color in the United States. The question remaining, as asked at the news conference, is whether there can be "a new day in this old town." □

1,000 rally against cross-burnings

By David Dixon

In response to community outrage against three cross burnings on May 25, Durham, N.C., leaders held a unity rally on June 5. Some 1,000 people of all nationalities packed the Durham Armory wearing blue ribbons to signify peace, unity and reconciliation. They held hands, sang and prayed.

The Southern Anti-Racism Network chartered a bus to pick up low-income residents. The city gave out free bus passes to

those who wanted to attend the rally.

Residents' reaction has been so strong that North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper told the crowd, "Cross burning with this intent to intimidate and incite violence is an act of domestic terrorism."

The people made clear they will not tolerate these racist acts and want those responsible punished. A growing reward for the cross burners' arrest is now at \$22,000. Durham residents also said they will continue to hold anti-racist actions. □

Goldilocks & the 'bear' market

By Milt Neidenberg

Not too hot. Not too cold. Just right. Wall Street used the Goldilocks fairy tale to create an image of a capitalist economy on steady course, encouraging investors to continue sinking money into the capitalist markets. But Wall Street is worried about 1970s-style stagflation.

According to the May 31 Wall Street Journal, "The prevailing view of the stock market is one of celebration. Low inflation, moderate economic growth and an end soon to Fed rate increases. That kind of 'Goldilocks' economy ... is just fine for stocks." Alan Greenspan, chairperson of the Federal Reserve Board, agreed wholeheartedly with this rosy picture.

Less than a week later, on June 3, the fairy tale was exploded by Poppa Bear. A "bear market" is a sellers' market that panics investors. Stock prices are driven down by speculators who buy stocks and don't pay up front. When the stocks go down, they meet those obligations and huge profits can be made. But if the stocks go up, heavy losses are incurred. It is risky and speculative and one factor in the volatility of the stock market. That day the stock market plunged 93 points.

Economic reports for May put this in perspective. The Labor Department reported that employers added only 78,000 workers. It was the weakest

growth since August 2003 and a sharp drop from 274,000 jobs in April.

The Institute of Supply Management (ISM), a closely watched survey, showed slower growth in the index of non-manufacturing business activity—58.5 in May to 61.7 in April. According to the ISM, a reading of 50 or below means the economy is tanking. The survey measures the vitality of various service industries such as construction, insurance and real estate.

Wall Street depends upon the service sector to expand its "Goldilocks" economy. Weakness in the service sector worries Wall Street analysts that a broader economic slowdown is in the making.

Manufacturers, led by General Motors, Ford and their parts divisions, IBM and a myriad of suppliers and contractors, are a drag on the economy. The ripple effect has been a disaster for the industrial workforce. Corporations cut 7,000 jobs in May, following a loss of 9,000 in April, and are down almost 70,000 jobs since last August.

Average hourly earnings increased a miserly three cents for May, far short of the inflation rate. With food, energy, transportation and rent costs soaring along with health care, a low-paid workforce must make hard decisions. Workers can't buy back the very products they produce and the services they need, in contrast to the wealth they create for a parasitical billionaire ruling class.

Consumer spending is two-thirds of the Gross Domestic Product—the value of all goods and services produced.

A bubble and a pop

There are early signs that the housing bubble is about to run out of air or burst. Construction companies reported their May payrolls increased by only 20,000, compared with 48,000 in April. Greenspan, a master manipulator of the word, admitted that housing prices showed signs of "froth." He said there were "little bubbles" floating throughout the country—a feeble attempt to ease the fears of Wall Street.

Those "little bubbles" are really one giant bubble. When it bursts, it will create a ripple effect that would be catastrophic for the economy. The collapse would immediately affect the job security of millions of workers in the construction and consumer industries that build and produce the consumer products that stock these newly-bought homes.

Rising real-estate prices have powered the economic recovery as investors and consumers borrow astronomical sums to finance home ownership and to furnish them, incurring more debt. High prices boosted the value of the real estate market and stimulated the economy but encouraged risky speculation.

There is a frenzy to speculate in real estate—not to own a home, but to buy only to sell at prices that have reached unprecedented levels. Long-term, 30-year mortgages feed the bubble, because interest rates are still low for now. Mortgage brokers and bankers are making a quick buck. They encourage home buyers to borrow far beyond their income.

According to Barron's Online of May 25, there has been an unprecedented run-up of over \$5.5 trillion to the total market during the last five years.

Here's how they suck in the working population, who dream of owning their own homes. The consumer buys into contracts from blood-sucking lenders called "interest rate only" and "adjustable mortgage rate," where the buyer needs to pay only interest for a defined time period. The headaches come later when they have to pay the principal and the interest combined. When interest rates jump, the home owner is stuck with more debt. Over 63 percent of new mortgages are covered by these speculative investments.

The Fed has raised short-term interest rates eight times since last June. They plan to raise it once again in August.

Foreclosures on the rise

For many home owners, particularly people of color and white workers in urban centers, the housing bubble has already burst. According to Foreclosure.com,

"Foreclosure rates rose in 47 states in March."

The May 30 Washington Post reported: "The rates in Florida, Texas and Colorado are more than twice the national average. Even in New York City and Boston ... foreclosures are rising in working-class neighborhoods... Allegheny County, which includes Pittsburgh, had record auctions of foreclosed homes ... and officials speak of a 'Depression-era' problem."

"The foreclosures fall particularly hard on Black and Latino families ... Should the nation's housing bubble deflate, as many economists and federal officials expect, the foreclosures could prefigure a national crisis."

A great many cities face huge budget deficits and bankruptcy. Detroit, with an overwhelmingly Black population, has double-digit unemployment. These depression-like conditions are spreading throughout the country. The Bush administration has ignored this capitalist decay and hypocritically speaks of an "ownership society."

Renters who can't afford to buy a home have also been deeply affected by inflated prices in the real-estate market. The May 22 New York Magazine reported in a comprehensive analysis, "The ratio of prices to rents is already higher than at any time in the past two decades, including the late eighties." The cover is plastered with the word "CRASH—Is It Coming? How Bad? How Soon?"

A week later, the May 31 New York Times headlined an article, "Fed Debates Pricking the U.S. Housing 'Bubble.'" The article points out the fruitless efforts by the Fed to control the housing bubble. "Mr. Greenspan and other top officials argued that it was a mistake to head off potential bubbles, in part because they are difficult to identify in advance, and in part, because the effort might easily cause more damage than it prevents."

The signs are getting clearer that U.S. imperialism, super-global power, is heading for a crash landing. The "Goldilocks" economy remains a fairy-tale. The U.S. is a humongous debtor nation owing trillions of dollars to central banks and private institutions abroad to finance its global ambitions.

By spending hundreds of billions on endless war, the bonanza for the military-industrial complex and tax cuts for the wealthy, the ruling class is on a collision course with workers, the poor and the oppressed nationalities here and abroad.

A constellation of new class forces will rise from below that can forge a fight-back program which opposes endless imperialist wars and unites their issues. U.S. monopoly capitalism—a decaying, crisis-ridden system that threatens the globe—is on trial. The verdict is "Guilty." □

Paying respects to hero of labor: MIGUEL CONTRERAS

By Sue Davis

Miguel Contreras accomplished so much in his 52 years. Schooled in the California fields by Cesar Chavez in the 1970s, Contreras took those lessons about courage and self-worth and applied them to all workers after he was elected political director of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, in 1996.

No wonder workers wearing union T-shirts as well as symbols of their trades—from hardhats to chefs' toques—filled the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels on May 12 to honor a hero of labor who was cut down in his prime by a heart attack six days earlier.

But it wasn't just workers who showed their respects. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and presidents of four national unions, politicians from all levels of government, community leaders and clergy joined with working people of all trades, nationalities and ages to commemorate Contreras's enormous contributions to the struggle of workers and the oppressed for justice, dignity and everything that enriches life.

The May 13 Los Angeles Times credited this son of migrant farmworkers "with reviving a moribund union movement [in Los Angeles] at a time of rapid demographic change." He built "a formidable coalition, in part by pulling [345] diverse unions together through strikes and contract campaigns." And he made sure to extend labor's hand to immigrants. At the time of his death Contreras was executive secretary-treasurer of the LA County Federation.

"Miguel was as passionate about the struggles of electricians and actors and longshoremen as he was about home-care workers and janitors and nurses and hotel housekeepers," said Contreras's life partner, UNITE HERE Local 11 President Maria Elena Durazo, during her eulogy.

"He fought for each worker with the same heart and the same soul."

She urged the workers to fully realize Contreras's legacy: "With the example of Miguel's life and work as our guide—with the sacrifice and suffering of ordinary workers who organize, march and walk [a picket line] everyday—let us continue the fight to grow this movement, seeking divine assistance and inspiration, yet recognizing that ultimate success or failure rests in our own hands.

"Sisters and brothers, there are certain things in life that are worth fighting for. For jobs that provide working people with a decent life—fight! For dignity and respect—fight!"

Birth of a union organizer

Contreras traced his labor consciousness to the day in 1973 when the ranch supervisor and crew bosses in Dinuba, Calif., fired the entire Contreras family of six sons at 4:30 a.m.

"With the headlights from their pickup trucks glaring in our eyes, they fired us all because, as the supervisor told my father, 'Julio, you're the best worker we ever had, but we can't have any more Chavistas' [followers of Cesar Chavez]," Contreras told the labor federation's First Delegates Congress in September 2004.

He continued: "I've been a union man since that day when being put on the growers' blacklist was my dad's only reward for 24 years of hard labor at that ranch. I've been a union man since my father and I led the strike at L.R. Hamilton Farms, and I was arrested with my dad 18 times in three months for violating anti-picketing injunctions."

Contreras concluded his remarks: "What we do here will set the pace for organized labor across the country. We can create a new vision of what a labor movement can do to make ourselves more effective and relevant to the people we represent." □

ON THE PICKET LINE

by Sue Davis

Farmworkers march on Albany, N.Y.

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

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

One worker, who wouldn't risk losing

her job by giving her name, said through a translator, "My goals are to receive better treatment and have more rights."

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

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

LOS ANGELES

Solidarity—from Gwangju to Falluja

By Scott Scheffer
Los Angeles

About 100 people from the Korean community in Los Angeles and the progressive movement listened to two veteran activists from South Korea who wound up a speaking tour of the U.S. and Canada with a final stop here on June 3 in Koreatown.

The meeting was co-chaired by Kim Hyong Chon of One Korea-L.A. Forum and Maggie Vascassenno of the International Action Center.

The tour commemorated the 25th anniversary of the heroic people's uprising at Gwangju, South Korea. In May 1980, the people of Gwangju actually took control of the large port city and fought to hold it for 10 days.

Like the Paris Commune 109 years earlier, the uprising was drowned in blood, but continues to inspire the progressive and anti-imperialist movement around the world.

The Chun Doo Hwan regime was secretly given the green light to use the military by U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus

Vance of the Carter administration.

The meeting satisfied the crowd's hunger for information about Gwangju, and was truly inspirational in many ways. For instance, Kim Hyo-seok, a veteran of the uprising who was imprisoned for his activities, was visibly moved when he reported, early in his talk, that the two had participated in a commemoration of Malcolm X during the tour.

He spoke solemnly of the horrors of the repression and of his personal losses during the Gwangju uprising, but was at the same time hopeful and positive because of the anti-imperialist movement that Gwangju spawned in South Korea.

Lee Shin defended the right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea—North Korea—to defend itself from U.S. aggression, describing the ongoing military provocations by the United States since the close of the Vietnam War as a grave threat to all Koreans.

He recounted a recent poll that asked South Koreans who they would support in the event of a nuclear confrontation



San Francisco meeting on May 31 commemorating the 25th anniversary of the heroic people's uprising at Gwangju, South Korea.

WW PHOTO: JOAN MARQUARDT

between the DPRK and the U.S. Some 48 percent said they would side with North Korea and only 36 percent with the U.S.

Both men spoke of the struggle of the Iraqi people, and Kim referred to Falluja as the "Iraqi people's Gwangju." Lee reminded the crowd of a widely circulated photo of an anti-war demonstration in Seoul on March 19 in which there

were candles held by demonstrators as far as the eye could see. He vowed that when Bush returns to South Korea there will be even more protests.

The great feeling of solidarity in the hall was expressed by John Parker who sang a song about the Gwangju Uprising and a poem in Korean by Harim Kim of One Korea. □

Pentagon the real WMD danger

Smallpox threat may re-emerge

By Hillel Cohen

This May a real international smallpox threat emerged. The capitalist media has been silent about it. This contrasts with the time before the invasion of Iraq, when the Bush administration spread rumors that Iraq might be storing smallpox virus as one of the so-called weapons of mass destruction (WMD). As with the other WMD, the smallpox story was a total lie.

The campaign in early 2003 to vaccinate medical caregivers, who are first-responders, as a response to the alleged smallpox threat was also a fraud. This campaign led to the deaths of at least four health professionals from side-effects of the vaccine.

In late May in Geneva, Switzerland, the 58th World Health Assembly, representative body of the World Health Organization (WHO), was asked by U.S. representatives to change WHO's rules governing smallpox virus. The rule changes would allow expanded research with the extremely dangerous virus.

For centuries, smallpox had been one of the most deadly diseases. It killed hundreds of millions of people around the world. Although a vaccine made from cow pox (the word vaccine comes from vacca—Latin for cow) was introduced in 1796, for over 150 years routine vaccination was limited to the wealthier countries. As many as 300 million people died from smallpox in the 20th century until the final eradication.

The very last human cases were in 1978 when the virus escaped from a hospital laboratory in Britain and infected a photographer working in a nearby room. The photographer also infected her parents.

After that incident, WHO passed a resolution to kill all remaining stocks of the virus except for samples that would be kept in laboratory freezers in the U.S. and the USSR.

Pentagon objects

By the 1990s the remaining stocks were supposed to be destroyed as well, but the U.S. and particularly the Pentagon objected, claiming the virus was needed to study how to protect people in the unlikely

event that some unknown smallpox virus still existed.

The argument was absurd, because smallpox vaccine is made from cowpox, not smallpox. If by some chance the virus had survived and infected someone, that infection could provide samples if research was needed.

Nonetheless, the WHO was powerless to overcome the Pentagon's objections, and the 1999 destruction date was postponed to 2002. The U.S. government used the excuse of 9/11 and the anthrax outbreak that came soon after—which has since been traced to U.S. military labs—to again put off destruction and to petition for an expansion of research.

In fact, U.S. researchers had already secretly created a hybrid virus combining smallpox with other animal pox viruses, including rabbitpox and cowpox.

The rule changes recently requested would allow researchers to carry out genetic modification of smallpox and allow virus samples to be distributed to more laboratories. Genetic modification would mean taking genes from smallpox virus and inserting them in other viruses or vice-versa, an expansion of the hybridization that had already been secretly done.

Natural smallpox already killed about one-third of those people infected. The modification process could lead to either a more deadly virus or a virus that could spread even more readily and that could also be carried by other animals.

That smallpox was limited to infecting humans made it possible to eradicate the disease. If animal hosts could carry it, it would be almost impossible to fully contain it.

Rule changes pose terrible dangers

Such rule changes would pose two terrible dangers.

First, it would give the U.S. military—which, through its Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease (AMRIID), controls the research—an opportunity to develop a new, deadlier bio-weapon.

Second, taking the virus out of the freezer and sharing it with more laboratories increases the risk of accidental

release. If a genetically modified version gets released, current vaccines might not be effective to stop it.

Under pressure from other countries in the WHO, rule changes about genetic modifications were rejected. But ominously, the WHO leadership, under tremendous U.S. pressure, has not ruled out the possibility of allowing more research. The door has been left open which could lead to a smallpox virus escape.

There was never a danger of smallpox

from Iraq. Now that it's clear that there is a very real danger coming from the Army's biological weapons laboratories in Ft. Detrick, Md., the silence from the big business media is deafening.

Doctor of Public Health Hillel Cohen has written extensively critiquing the government's bioterrorism preparedness programs. He thanks the Third World Network and the Sunshine Project for the research material used in this article.

Ft. Detrick's bio-weapons kill

'Under attack from our own anthrax'

By Kermit Leibensperger
Frederick, Md.

About 200 citizens of Frederick, Md., and the surrounding area rallied at Baker Park on June 5, then marched through town to a community festival to spread the word about the massive expansion of Ft. Detrick. The expansion includes building BSL-4 labs, used for experimentation with infectious agents for which there exists neither a vaccine nor a cure.

The tax money to be wasted on the Department of Homeland Security's bio-weapons programs "dwarfs the size of the U.S. program back when [the U.S. was] overtly producing bio-weapons for offensive use," according to www.frederick-pac.org. Frederick Progressive Action Coalition spokesperson Chris Stevenson's call for a halt to all operations at Ft. Detrick was well-received by the predominantly young crowd.

Watu Mwariama of the African People's Socialist Party and a Frederick resident, told of Ft. Detrick's abuse of prisoners, alcoholics and drug abusers as guinea pigs. Agents of the fort go into prisons and poor neighborhoods, offering a few dollars to people for allowing themselves to be injected.

One federal employee, filled with hor-

ror and regret for not knowing what he was doing by injecting people, took a sick ex-prisoner into his home whose health had been ruined by the experimental injections. The skin came off the body of another poverty-stricken Frederick resident who took money in exchange for participating in an experiment, said Mwariama.

He also reported there have been many deaths from mysterious causes of Black custodial workers, whose jobs included handling dead and infected animals at the fort.

Unity of opposition to the bio-weapons labs was also expressed by many local and area activists, including representatives of Code Pink, Democracy Rising, Green Party, Institute for Social Ecology, International Socialist Organization, Women in Black, several local folk singers, and nationally acclaimed revolutionary rapper Son of Nun, whose politically incisive lyrics received the loudest applause of the day.

The marchers were well-received by the town's people as they chanted, "Exxon Mobile, B.P., Shell. Take your war and go to hell!" and "We're under attack from our own anthrax!"

Frederick Progressive Action Coalition organized the protest. □

When idea for gay political organizing finally ignited

By Leslie Feinberg

Harry Hay, Rudi Gernreich, Dale Jennings, Bob Hull and Chuck Rowland met for the first of a series of weekly meetings at Hay's home in the Silver Lake neighborhood in Los Angeles on Nov. 11, 1950, to discuss organizing for homosexual emancipation.

Each of the five brought their own history of activist mettle and revolutionary perspective to this bodacious initiative.

Rudi Gernreich was a gay Jewish immigrant from Vienna who knew about the rise of the German Homosexual Emancipation Movement. He had fled fascism and immigrated to the U.S. as a 16-year-old.

Gernreich and Hay had been organizing to stop the U.S. war against Korea and to bring the GIs home.

Hull and Hay were still members of the Communist Party USA, although Bob Hull was not as active as Harry Hay.

Hull and his lover Chuck Rowland—a former CPUSA member—had briefly lost touch with Harry Hay in the spring of 1950 when they moved to Mexico. Rowland stressed, “That was not just a wild, romantic spree; we were fleeing the witch hunts along with thousands of other [North] Americans from all parts of the country.” Months later, the two decided it was safe enough to return to the U.S. to continue their work there. (“Making Trouble,” John D’Emilio)

Dale Jennings was a writer and an activist who worked to defend the civil rights of Japanese-Americans who had been interned in the U.S. during World War II.

“Though Jennings was not a Party member,” Hay biographer Stuart Timmons wrote, “Harry knew his sister and their mother, ‘Ma Jennings,’ from Party circles of the thirties, and Hay and Rowland regarded Dale Jennings as ‘one hell of a fellow traveler.’” (“The Trouble with Harry Hay”)

Chuck Rowland had worked for the American Veterans Committee, which drew progressives, when he returned to civilian life after World War II. “I was made organizer for North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin. ... I was making speeches and advocating all the leftist things.

“We did some very daring things in the AVC. To start with, we were interracial—and I was organizing chapters in places like Missouri and southern Iowa. It was incredible. I didn’t know of any other interracial organizations at that time. ... Plus, women were admitted on an equal basis. We didn’t have a women’s auxiliary or anything like that.” (“Making History,” Eric Marcus)

AVC national officers charged in 1946 that communists had “infiltrated” the group. “Rowland’s own inquires established that Communists were prominent among the AVC organizers, but in his opinion they invariably turned out to be ‘the most dedicated workers and sound strategists.’” (“Sexual Politics,” D’Emilio)

Rowland joined the party and was finally forced out of the AVC as a result. After that, he said, “I became head of the youth division of the Party, which was called the American Youth for Democracy, for both Dakotas and Minnesota. ... “I left the Communist Party in 1948, not because I was kicked out, not because I disagreed with anything, but because I just wanted out.” (“Making History”)

Timmons noted that neither Hull nor

Rowland had experienced problems in the CPUSA because of their homosexuality. Rowland elaborated: “All the kids I worked with in AYD knew I was gay. It was not an issue you discussed, but they knew. Leaders of the Party in Minnesota knew. But I don’t recall the issue arising in the two years I was active. I didn’t even discuss it with Bob or another gay friend who was in the Party.”

Rowland held on to his revolutionary perspective. “To most [North] Americans, Communists were wicked, horrid people. Even to liberals. But the so-called liberals sat around and talked about socialized medicine, integration, and the rights of women. The Communists, on the other hand, were out there on the barricades or picketing or closing down something—doing something about it instead of just talking.” (“Making History”)

‘I could have written this myself!’

The November 1950 meeting of these five revolutionary activists in Los Angeles was not the first time that the idea of organizing homosexuals had been discussed.

Rowland recalled, “I don’t think there was any thinking gay person who hadn’t, at some time back in the 1920s or 1930s, said at a bar one night when feeling a little happy, ‘You know, we should have an organization. We should get together and have a gay organization.’ And usually you would be laughed out of the place.

“I think we started talking about a gay organization in Los Angeles in 1949, but I know the Mattachine wasn’t formally organized until 1950. I don’t think we had anything written down. It was just something my lover, Bob Hull, and I talked about. ...

“Bob had a music class taught by Harry Hay. One day Harry showed Bob something he had written about a gay organization. Bob brought this home and showed it to me. When I read what Harry had written I said, ‘My God, I could have written this myself!’

“So Bob said, ‘You’ve got to meet Harry.’

“Harry lived up in the Silverlake district on Fargo. We drove up there. Harry says I jumped out of my car waving the document saying, ‘I could have written this myself!’

“I don’t think I would have approached a stranger in that way at that time, but that’s the way Harry tells the story.”

Tinder for the sparks

If the idea for homosexual organizing had been discussed for decades, why did it suddenly ignite? Like flint striking flint, the idea needed the dry tinder of material conditions in order to catch fire.

D’Emilio explains, “The movement’s history cannot be understood merely as a chronicle of how activists worked to mobilize masses of gay men and lesbians and to achieve a fixed agenda. Instead, the movement constitutes a phase, albeit a decisive one, of a much longer historical process through which a group of men and women came into existence as a self-conscious, cohesive minority.

“Before a movement could take shape, that process had to be far enough along so that at least some gay women and men could perceive themselves as members of an oppressed minority, sharing an identity that subjected them to systematic injustice.” (“Sexual Politics”)

The centralizing force of capitalism had drawn populations from rural and small town life into large cities. The second

world imperialist war accelerated this historic process.

This massive migration was not just numerical. Large-scale war-time industry and military conscription of millions transformed the economic landscape, shook up the old family structures, and brought vast numbers of people who might never have come into contact with each other in the past into an anonymous—often same-sex—employment, rooming houses and barracks.

After the war, many chose to stay to live and work in urban areas, which helped create milieus and subcultures that were the material precondition for gay organizing in 1950. (It would take another five years after that for the first large-scale lesbian organization to coalesce.)

‘Lavender Scare’ sounds the tocsin

The five activists who met at Harry Hay’s home in November 1950 were also alarmed into action by the ominous and mounting Cold War “Lavender Scare.” This targeting of gays and lesbians, meshing with the “Red Scare” anti-communist campaign, helped ignite homosexual organizing.

In February, Sen. Joseph McCarthy had delivered his infamous speech in which he declared that “card-carrying” communists were moles in the State Department. A month later, Deputy Undersecretary John Peurifoy testified before a congressional subcommittee that no communists were found in the department’s employ, but that homosexual employees were the “security risks.”

Peurifoy’s testimony about gay and lesbian workers in the State Department, noted David K. Johnson in his comprehensive book “The Lavender Scare,” generated “heated debates on the floors of Congress, congressional committee investigations, countless newspaper articles, and numerous White House meetings. It eventually led to the ouster of thousands of government employees. It marked the beginnings of a Lavender Scare.”

The anti-communist drum beat was growing louder as the Pentagon waged imperial war against Korea. The federal government established “loyalty commissions” to spy on government workers.

This government snooping also worried federal workers who fell along the LGBT spectra. Barry D. Adam explained: “The commissions scrutinized their personal lives for what they thought were ‘tell-tale’ details: ‘communist associates,’ ‘un-American’ magazines or books, affiliation with Henry Wallace’s Progressive party—even ‘too great sociability with Black people or unorthodox styles of dress.’” (“The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement”)

Adam noted that a 1949 Newsweek article headlined “Queer People” had “already named homosexuals as ‘sex murderers,’ echoing a consistent media theme identifying homosexuals as destroyers of society. From there, it was but a small step to brand gay people as traitors and to call for their expulsion from public life.”

David K. Johnson documents the chilling effect the government witch hunt had on what he described as “the vibrant lesbian and gay subculture that had developed in Washington as a result of the large influx of young people during the New

Deal and World War II.”

But he adds this very important conclusion: “Though intended to contain what was perceived as a growing homosexual menace, the Lavender Scare inspired not only the founding of the first sustained gay organization in the United States in southern California in 1951—an area heavily dependent on government-sponsored defense work—but also the later radicalization of the movement in 1960s Washington.”

An idea whose time had come

Hay had been tipped off by an acquaintance about the State Department

expulsions two years before they became media headlines in 1950. In notes he made in July 1950, Hay made clear he thought the purge of homosexual civil servants was part of an imminent takeover of the federal government by fascists.

As a communist organizer, Hay felt the hot breath of the House Un-American Activities Committee in Hollywood. Johnson adds, “Moreover, California had its own anti-communist investigating committee, and the two organizations in which Hay was most active had already come under its scrutiny.”

Hay also feared that the federal purge of government workers accused of being gay or lesbian would set the stage for mass firings in privately-owned industries, particularly as U.S. capital’s war against Korea deepened. “With ‘the Government’s announced plans for eventual 100 percent war production mobilization,’ Hay reasoned that all commerce would be conducted by government contract, ‘making it impossible for Androgynes to secure employment.’ Working in Southern California, an area already heavily dependent on government contracts for much of its manufacturing base, Hay knew very well the influence the federal government could have on private enterprise.” (Johnson)

In 1946, after the foundry he worked in was closed by the government, Hay had been employed at Interstate Aircraft. He was fired from that job after he and a co-worker organized about 15 employees into the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians. He also had to pass up some jobs because as a communist he couldn’t get security clearance. (Timmons)

So Hay understood that the federal anti-gay and anti-communist witch hunts would also have a broad impact on manufacturers that relied on big government contracts.

The whole state depended on government contracts—they fueled half the economic growth in that region in the decade after the war. And there were a quarter of a million federal workers in California, which was dubbed “a second United States capital.” (Johnson)

“Given this experience and his fears about the future,” Johnson concluded, “Hay felt that homosexuals in California had to organize a response to the encroaching federal purges.”

Organizing—it was an idea whose time had finally come. And although communists didn’t create these conditions that had made the political organizing of homosexuals possible, it was gay revolutionaries who took action.

Next: “We need a theory!”



PART 37

MASSACHUSETTS

Anti-LGBT tour drowned out

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Brookline, Mass.

A wide range of progressive forces and community members soundly defeated “the Rev.” Fred Phelps’ Massachusetts recruiting efforts June 4-6.

Phelps, known for leading a vile anti-gay protest at Matthew Shepard’s funeral, didn’t attend any of the events in Massachusetts. Instead his daughter Shirley Phelps-Roper led the tour.

The bigots targeted religious institutions and individual schools in Dracut, Lexington and Bedford. But they were met with rejection by most students, teachers and community members.

Phelps said he chose Massachusetts for a recruiting tour because of its recent legalization of same-sex marriage and

other pro-lesbian/gay/bi/trans laws. The Phelps tour was made easier by Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney’s ongoing denunciations of same-sex marriage and his other attacks on the LGBT communities.

In Brookline the bigots targeted the high school graduation ceremony because of the school’s popular and well-known Gay Straight Alliance. They were met with a militant, angry counter-demonstration that drowned them out.

As soon as the counter-demonstrators spotted the bigots being escorted to a “free-speech” area by the police, they started chanting: “Bigotry—shut it down. Fred Phelps out of our town.” Other chants included: “Gay, straight, Black and white, all unite to fight the right” and “Brookline High under attack—what do

we do? Act up! Fight back!”

Knowing the Phelps group brings racist and anti-gay signs to its events, a group of high school students had prepared a beautiful hand-made multi-colored banner. They hoisted it in front of the “free-speech” area so graduates and their loved ones wouldn’t have to look at the Phelps group’s signs. It read: “Congrats ’05: All forms of love are beautiful. All forms of hate are ugly.”

Counter-demonstrators holding other banners and placards surrounded the Phelps group. Only the exit/entrance to the “free-speech” area was left open—guarded by police.

Many graduates and their loved ones thanked the counter-demonstrators or joined in the anti-Phelps protest.

After about 45 minutes the Phelps

group packed up and scurried to vehicles, escorted by Brookline police—and trailed by dozens of protesters chanting, “Bigots go home.”

A few Neo-Nazis had come to support the Phelps group—but the progressive forces also ran them out of the area.

Many local youths and students participated in the anti-Phelps Brookline protest. So did members of the AFL-CIO Pride at Work, Anarchist Black Cross, Workers World Party, the Communist Party USA, the International Action Center, the International Socialist Organization, Fight Imperialism Stand Together, Service Employees Local 509, Stonewall Warriors, UNITE HERE Local 26, Steel Workers Local 8751 and the Women’s Fightback Network. □

Nat'l FIST leader:

‘We need a movement that fights for all our rights’

By Sarah Glod
FIST member, Boston

LeiLani Dowell, a national leader of the group Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—FIST—spoke June 4 in Boston about lesbian/gay/bi/trans oppression and the war, domestic and abroad. The Pride meeting was organized by the Boston branch of FIST, Stonewall Warriors and Workers World Party.

Dowell began her talk with a history of the roots of LGBT oppression. She explained that the capitalist class, and ruling classes before it, upheld the “sanctity” of marriage and the traditional heterosexual nuclear family in order to assure that wealth is passed down to male heirs in an orderly manner. Anything that threatens this structure is a direct threat to the ruling class.

“An end to state discrimination against same-sex couples threatens the ability of the ruling class to sow divisions,” said Dowell. But, she added, “We will not be divided.”

She also reminded those gathered that capitalism—like feudalism and slavery before it—will not last forever, a fact that the ruling class tries to mask. Dowell explained that if a timeline of the history of humanity was a yardstick, patriarchy would cover less than an inch. She pointed out that the long history of pre-class, communal societies did not end until human labor became so productive that wealth began to accumulate.

Dowell said it is necessary for the women’s and LGBT struggles to refute the lies and proclaim the right to equality, acceptance and self-determination. “The system of capitalism is untenable,” she asserted. “We need an independent movement that fights for all of our rights.”

She emphasized that Massachusetts is at the forefront of the fight for equal marriage rights. There are more than 2,000 marriage benefits not paid to same-sex couples, Dowell said, and these benefits should be available to all.

She pointed toward another struggle against LGBT discrimination at the hands of the state: the military. She said it’s a complex subject, but that struggle against Pentagon discrimination and at the same time against U.S. wars are not incompat-

ible. Both, said Dowell, are necessary to expose the nature of the capitalist military.

She also related her experiences in counter-recruiting as a representative of FIST. She said she reminds young people that even though there is no formal draft at present, there is already a very real poverty draft operating, driven by the military-industrial complex. Also, a formal draft can be fully operational within 90 days of the president’s approval.

Dowell said that young people need to kick the recruiters out of their schools. Apparently, efforts of this sort are having an effect: Recruiting numbers are down for all the armed services, despite the fact that schools are at the mercy of a state that wants youth for cannon fodder.

Dowell reported that FIST and the group “No Draft, No War” are producing a “Guide to Counter-Recruiting and Draft Resistance.” This will be a primer that covers how to organize in a school setting, fighting discrimination in the military, and other important information—in an easy-to-carry pocket size. It should be out in time for the upcoming school year.

Fighting HIV/AIDS and capitalism

Mia Campbell from “Politician’ with the Sisters” also spoke at the June 4 meeting, about HIV/AIDS. She explained that the LGBT and Haitian communities were instrumental in getting the public to realize that HIV/AIDS is a threat to everyone. Also, she said, women were often misdiagnosed, which resulted in higher death rates. They had to fight for research to determine how HIV/AIDS manifests itself in women specifically, and for treatment.

Campbell also discussed how imperialism undermines efforts to combat AIDS in impoverished countries, using aid money as a political lever against oppressed nations. She specifically mentioned the case of Uganda, which had a comprehensive program to combat HIV/AIDS.

Uganda provided proper sex education, distributed condoms to all sections of society and, even with meager resources, managed to lower infection rates.

The United States, however, takes a far different approach. In order for a nation

to receive aid, it must teach abstinence. It must not distribute condoms or give proper education to sex workers. And the aid comes with stipulations against treatment of LGBT people or education about same-sex love.

“We have to have a unified front to fight HIV/AIDS,” concluded Campbell.

Gerry Scoppettuolo, a member of the Boston branch of WWP, talked about how for gay and lesbian people, “our love is a natural, objective reality.”



He added: “Often, we are also rejected by friends and family. This estrangement has a price. Our suicide, alcohol- and drug-abuse rates are three to five times higher than that of the rest of the population.

“Still, our love helps us to survive and to fight back. ...

“What distinguishes WWP is our dedication to end all oppression, including its source. Socialism is the only realistic answer to capitalism,” Scoppettuolo concluded. □

LGBT Pride, Africa and the AIDS crisis

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

June is a whirlwind of Pride activities in the United States as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people commemorate the beginning of their liberation movement, the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion in New York City. Prominent among the Pride events, from San Francisco to Boston, are the annual AIDS walks. These mark the continuing struggle against the deadly AIDS virus, which was first reported in the United States within gay men’s communities during the 1980s.

Increasingly, these AIDS walks offer the LGBT communities—made up of many nationalities and sexes—another challenge: How to build solidarity in the fight against racism, women’s oppression and imperialism.

In a March 2005 report, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released figures showing that for the first time since the AIDS epidemic began in the United States, more Black and Latino men have contracted AIDS through male-to-male sexual contact than white men. The epidemic is hitting all men of color especially hard.

In 2003 the rate increased 103 percent for African American men and 40 percent for Latinos.

The Kaiser Foundation states unequivocally that AIDS is accelerating most rapidly in the U.S. among women of color.

Among all women over age 13 living with AIDS, 67 percent are African American and 16 percent are Latina.

AIDS crisis for African women, children

The U.S. figures reflect an increasing global crisis, with African peoples currently experiencing the most extreme suffering. Twenty-five million people in sub-Saharan Africa have the HIV virus. In 2004 alone, 2.3 million died. (New York Times, May 11)

One-tenth of the world’s people live in Africa. But Africans make up 70 percent of people living with AIDS. The vast majority of those affected are women. (News24.com)

According to Dr. Peter Piot, director of the United Nations AIDS program, the epidemic is still accelerating. He says, “In Swaziland, the country most affected by AIDS in the world, adult prevalence continues to climb; 42.6 percent of pregnant women there tested positive for HIV in 2004.”

An additional tragic effect of the epidemic: AIDS has orphaned 12 million children in Africa. The impact of losing their parents is falling more heavily on African girls than boys. The orphaned girls drop out of school to take care of siblings. They do the work of their mothers, cooking and walking miles for water. And they also

Continued on page 11

Posada Carriles & the Kennedy assassination

By Deirdre Griswold

The case of Luis Posada Carriles, a known terrorist whom U.S. authorities have refused to extradite to Venezuela, reaches deep into the shadowy world of CIA covert action, especially against the Cuban Revolution.

There is also mounting evidence that Posada Carriles was connected to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and was in Dallas's Dealey Plaza the day the fatal shots were fired.

Posada Carriles spent nine years in prison in Venezuela for having masterminded the mid-air bombing of a Cuban civilian airliner in 1976, killing all 73 people aboard. The CIA is known to have bribed Venezuelan prison guards to arrange his escape in 1985. That is the year that George H.W. Bush became head of the CIA. One guard, now retired, recently described these CIA efforts on Venezuelan television.

Posada Carriles was also arrested and convicted in Panama in 2000 for entering the country with the intent of killing Cuban President Fidel Castro, who was attending an Ibero-American summit meeting there. But President Mireya Moscoso, in one of her last acts in office, pardoned Posada Carriles and three other convicted terrorists after they had spent just one year in jail.

Moscoso is part of the old political establishment that was returned to power in Panama after the U.S., under the same George H.W. Bush, by then the president, invaded the country in 1989. She spent many years in Miami, where she was close to leaders of the Cuban exile community who have worked with the CIA ever since the Cuban Revolution.

Moscoso's popularity in office plummeted to the lowest of any Panamanian president, and she now faces corruption charges. She gave all 72 Panamanian legislators expensive Cartier watches and jewelry right before a vote on the government's proposed budget. Her secretary admitted to having a freezer stuffed with thousands of dollars in cash. However, this friend of the Miami exile gang says Fidel Castro is behind the corruption charges. (Dictionary of Political Figures)

Even Congress saw a conspiracy

The nexus of Cuban counter-revolutionary exiles, the CIA and organized crime figures in the Kennedy assassination has long been known. Even though the official U.S. government position remains that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin, the majority of people here and around the world don't buy it. And the one investigation of the assassination by Congress—by the House Select Committee on Assassinations—found in its final report that “President John F. Kennedy was probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy.”

Despite all the evidence showing the involvement of right-wingers, however, especially those who held Kennedy responsible for the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion, the corporate media continue to deride “conspiracy theorists.” They cite the Warren Commission as their authority—a commission that included former CIA Director Allen Dulles, the architect of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion.

Many scholars have investigated the role of Operation 40 in the Kennedy assassination. Operation 40 was a special group inside the CIA set up with the authorization of the National Security Council right before the Bay of Pigs. Historian Arthur Schlesinger referred to it in a June 1961 memo to Richard Goodwin: “The ostensible purpose of Operation 40 was to administer liberated territories in Cuba. But the CIA agent in charge, a man known as Felix, trained the members of the group in methods of third degree interrogation, torture and general terrorism.”

That man in charge was Felix Rodriguez, who in 1967 led the CIA squad that captured and then murdered Che Guevara in Bolivia. He took Che's Rolex watch and proudly displayed it to reporters afterwards. His Miami home is decorated with photos of himself and George H.W. Bush together.

Cuban view of Posada Carriles

Gen. Fabian Escalante, the former head of Cuban counter-intelligence, is author of “The Secret War: CIA Covert Operations Against Cuba, 1959-62,” and “The Plot,” both published by Ocean Press. In May of this year, he told interviewer Jean-Guy Allard about Posada Carriles's role in Oper-

ation 40 and the Kennedy assassination.

“Who in 1963 had the resources to assassinate Kennedy? Who had the means and who had the motives to kill the U.S. president?,” asked Escalante. “CIA agents from Operation 40 who were rabidly anti-Kennedy. And among them were Orlando Bosch, Luis Posada Carriles, Antonio Veciana and Felix Rodriguez Mendigutia.”

The testimony of Chauncey Holt, a self-confessed CIA operative and mob associate, backs this up. In a videotaped interview made shortly before he died, Holt identified Posada Carriles as one of the Cuban exiles who was in Dealey Plaza at the time of the Kennedy assassination.

In his interview with Allard, Escalante detailed the many CIA operations in Latin America that involved Cubans from this same group, originally trained by the CIA for the Bay of Pigs invasion. These included the coup against President Salvador Allende's government in Chile and the subsequent murder in Washington of former Chilean ambassador Orlando Letelier, as well as the Contra war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

Bush, Goss and Operation 40

In Escalante's view, it was the members of Operation 40 who had the training and the sharpshooting ability necessary to carry out the assassination of Kennedy. The Cuban counter-intelligence chief identified the North Americans in the group as David Morales, David Phillips, E. Howard Hunt, William Harvey, Frank Sturgis, Gerry Hemming, John Rosselli, “who was second head of the Chicago mafia at that time in '62,” and Porter Goss. Goss is now head of the CIA, nominated by George W.

Bush, son of the former CIA head.

In “Deadly Secrets,” authors Warren Hinkle and William Turner named Rafael ‘Chi Chi’ Quintero, Luis Posada Carriles, Felix Rodriguez and Frank Sturgis as members of Operation 40, under the overall control of E. Howard Hunt. Hunt and Sturgis later spent time in prison for the Watergate burglary and are believed to have been in Dallas the day Kennedy was assassinated.

The same cast of characters appears, again and again, committing acts of mayhem, murder and sabotage to keep Latin American countries under the control of U.S. corporate interests. And the same high-up political figures in the United States—with the Bush family at the top of the list—are their sponsors and protectors.

Today, the whole world is watching as the U.S. government, which has used the cry of “terrorism” to launch two bloody wars and to imprison, torture and murder untold numbers of Arab and Muslim people, tries to figure out what to do with Posada Carriles. He's a proven terrorist who has twice been sprung from jail and harbored by the invisible government of this country, the so-called “intelligence community.” He is more than an embarrassment for the Bush administration.

One thing is for sure: they will never let him be questioned about his activities in an open forum where he could implicate key members of the U.S. ruling class and their political operatives.

Griswold was executive director of the Citizens' Committee of Inquiry, which carried out an independent investigation of the Kennedy assassination in the 1960s.

Cuba conference hits U.S. terror

Continued from page 1

dry eyes. Irma read a statement to the conference from the Cuban Five, now behind bars in the United States serving long, long sentences. Their crime? They tried to monitor and stop anti-Cuba terror attacks being plotted from U.S. soil. The case of the Five was a running theme throughout the conference as an example of how those who fight terrorism are incarcerated by the empire while the real terrorists are allowed to carry out their venomous operations.

Other speakers included such notables as authors Alicia Herrera and Eva Golinger of Venezuela, Martín Almada of Paraguay and Pascual Serrano of Spain. Special guest speakers included Commandantes Shafik Handal of El Salvador and Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, revolutionary leaders of struggles for national liberation.

U.S. plan to assassinate Chávez exposed

One of the most important and inspiring panels was from Venezuela and included the president of the National Assembly, Nicolás Maduro, and the vice-president of the country, José Vicente Rangel.

Vice President Rangel brought testimony about well-documented plans of U.S. sabotage against

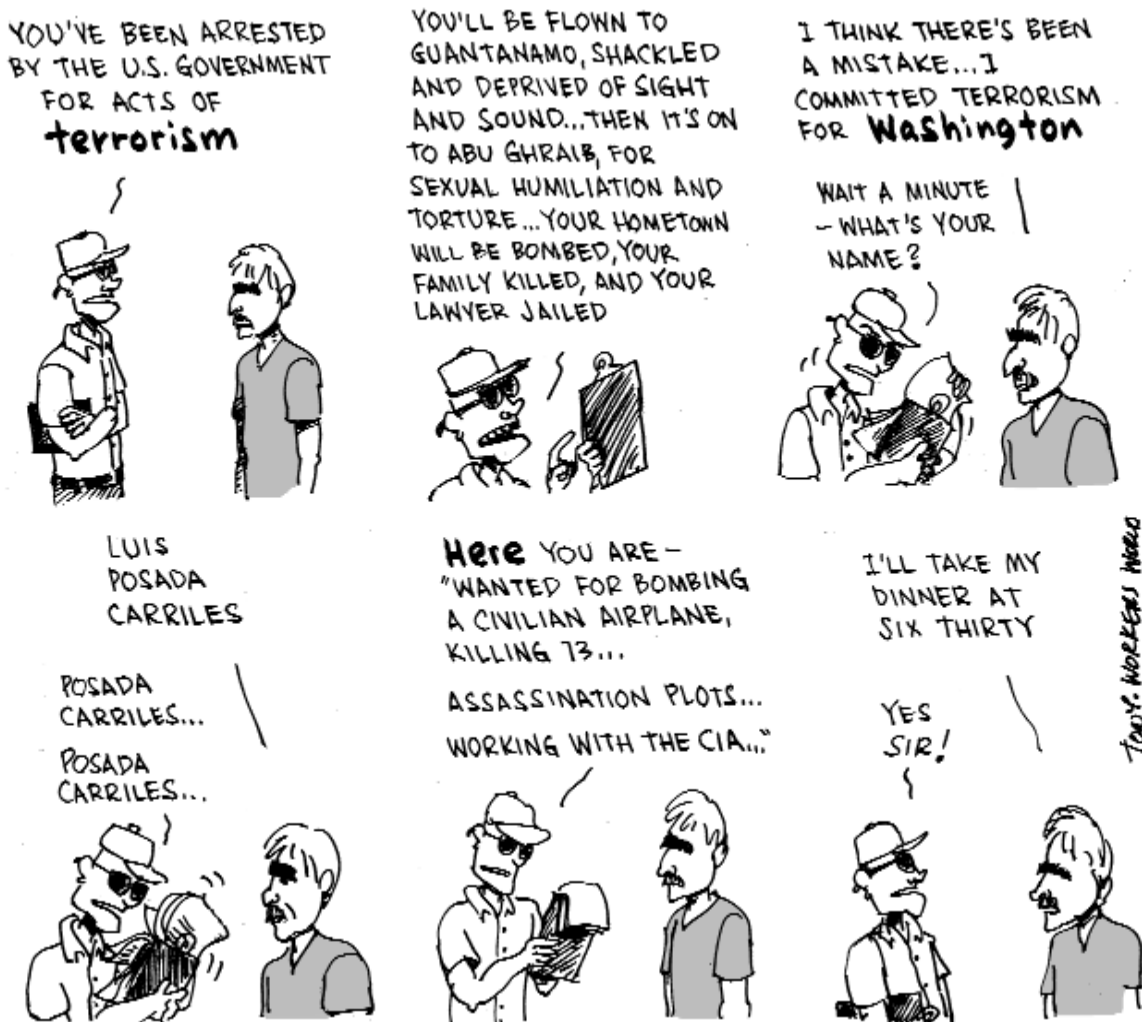
the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela, including a plot to assassinate President Hugo Chávez. But Vice President Rangel made it clear that Venezuela would defend itself from all forms of U.S. intervention—and would succeed. He stated that the people of Venezuela would respond with the same kind of anger and dignity that the people of Iraq, Cuba and elsewhere are responding with to U.S. aggression.

The event was closed by remarks from Cuba's beloved president, Fidel Castro. The fact that over 500 international delegates dropped their own plans on just a few days' notice to travel to Cuba is a small example of the kind of support and love Cuba has earned around the world. Much of that support is attributed to the leadership of Fidel Castro. He continues to inspire the world in a show of defiance against the monstrous U.S. imperialism.

The international guests were treated to a magnificent concert late Saturday night at the end of the conference. World-renowned musician and revolutionary Silvio Rodríguez was joined by Sara González and younger Cuban artists, such as Amaury Pérez. Revolutionary artists from Puerto Rico—such as Roy Brown—and from Mexico, Argentina, Chile and elsewhere also dropped their plans on short notice in order to join the guests at the encounter.

The concert paid tribute to Victor Jara, a Chilean revolutionary killed at the hands of the CIA-backed fascist coup in 1973. The revolutionary sentiments of Victor's music live on, revived anew in the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and throughout the continent.

The revolutionary class struggle in Latin America and the Caribbean is rising on the horizon in glorious splendor. And the sun of history is setting on the empire of U.S. imperialism. □



Iraq resistance strong, popular anger growing

By Greg Butterfield

President George W. Bush's practiced smiles and his cronies' anxious denials can't hide the truth: Exposures of prisoner abuse, the military recruiting crisis, the instability of Washington's client regime in Baghdad, and especially the powerful resistance movement are slamming the U.S.-led occupation.

Inexorably, inevitably, the skein of lies holding together the occupation of Iraq is coming undone.

Resistance fighters have doubled their daily attacks since April, the Pentagon admitted on May 31. At least 77 U.S. troops were killed in May.

That is the highest number since January, when U.S.-sponsored national elections were held, Reuters reported. The Associated Press put the number of U.S. casualties for the month at 80.

Military actions by the resistance slowed briefly after the Jan. 30 elections. That led Bush & Co. to virtually crow, "Mission accomplished," all over again. The military brass spoke of reducing troop numbers by the end of the year—not as a move to end the occupation, but because they believed Iraq would shortly be "pacified."

Instead, it appears the resistance had made a strategic decision: to retreat temporarily, giving the new occupation-sponsored government time to expose its true character to any Iraqis who might have harbored hopes that the election would herald the end of foreign occupation.

Today U.S. "experts" are singing a very different tune.

"Those who believed that the elections would be a decisive turning point undermining the insurgency are disappointed yet again," admitted Ted Carpenter, a defense analyst for the Cato Institute. "The insurgency seems as capable as ever."

Daniel Goure of the Lexington Institute predicted Washington would have to keep "significant numbers" of troops in Iraq "at least for the next five years. The reality is we have discovered, despite all our propaganda, that we are facing a very tough, resilient and smart adversary," said Goure. (Reuters, May 31)

May also marked the highest monthly death toll so far for members of the Army National Guard and the military reserves. Some 31 of them died. (AP, June 4)

Most of these part-time soldiers were recruited under the slogan, "One weekend a month, two weeks a year." Few ever expected to be deployed halfway around the world, much less to be on the front lines.

But that's exactly what is happening more and more—as the 150,000 U.S. occupation troops on the ground are stretched thinner, and dissatisfaction grows over extended stays, stop-loss orders, and former servicepeople being pulled out of retirement under the fine print of their contracts.

"The death toll among the Guard and Reserve underscores an important aspect of their recruiting problems," wrote AP military analyst Robert Burns. "More

potential recruits, citing concern about being sent to the war zone, are opting for other careers. The Army Guard missed its recruiting target last year and has fallen even farther behind this year."

The Guardian of Britain reported June 5: "The U.S. military has stopped battalion commanders from dismissing new recruits for drug abuse, alcohol, poor fitness and pregnancy in an attempt to halt the rising attrition rate in an army under growing strain as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"An internal memo sent to senior commanders said the growing dropout rate was 'a matter of great concern' in an army at war. It told officers: 'We need your concerted effort to reverse the negative trend. By reducing attrition 1 percent, we can save up to 3,000 initial-term soldiers. That's 3,000 more soldiers in our formations.'"

Officially, the U.S. military says that at least 1,668 soldiers had died in Iraq by June 4. But many believe the death toll is actually much higher.

On May 29 the Spanish-language daily newspaper El Diario/La Prensa reported that its independent review of military documents provided to the government of Puerto Rico put the number of deaths at 4,076.

Washington says it doesn't keep a tally of Iraqis killed by U.S. operations.

Iraqis refuse to serve

The U.S. occupation and its client regime are having an even harder time recruiting

Iraqis to enforce the new status quo.

On June 5, Reuters reported that an Iraqi National Guard unit, the 90-member Defense Force of Rutba, was disbanded after its members refused to participate in training overseen by U.S. advisers.

"We refused to go because we were afraid that when we came back to Rutba we would be killed," said Taha Allawi, a member of the unit. "The people here would believe that we were cooperating with U.S. forces and that is a reason for anyone to be killed."

An unnamed U.S. official who oversees the training said that Iraqis who refused to attend the courses would be dismissed. Then, almost as an afterthought, the official added that it was of course the Iraqi defense ministry's decision.

Similarly, U.S. forces are in the driver's seat of "Operation Lightning," the much-heralded door-to-door sweep of Baghdad and surrounding areas to detain suspected "insurgents." At least 900 men between the ages of 15 and 55 had been rounded up by June 6.

"In Latifiyah, 20 miles south of Baghdad," AP correspondent Antonio Castaneda reported June 5, "Iraqi forces were in the forefront of Saturday's sweep through the semi-rural region, [but] it was clear the U.S. military was still the driving force.

"About two hours into the operation, for example, American forces voiced concern that an area covered in tall grass had not been searched. ... This is a dan-

Continued on page 11

Hell no, they don't want to go!

By Dustin Langley
GI resistance counselor

"Army recruiting is in a death spiral," says retired Army Lt. Col. Charles Krohn, a lifelong Republican and former Pentagon public affairs official.

As the bloody colonial occupation of Iraq drags on into its third year, the Army missed its recruiting goals for three straight months entering May—falling short by a staggering 42 percent in April.

The Army Reserve fell short 37 percent. The Marine Corps has missed its recruiting target for four consecutive months.

After months of declining enlistments, the Pentagon has announced it will postpone the release of its numbers for May.

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, commander of Army recruiting, recently predicted that 2006 could be the toughest recruiting year since the draft was ended in 1973. According to USA Today, Rochelle "projected the service will have only half the number of recruits ready for 2006 than it did this year, when it had an unusually low number of recruits signed up in advance."

The Pentagon has responded to the crisis by increasing both the number of recruiters and the recruiting budget. The Army has increased its recruiting force by more than 25 percent. Enlistment bonuses have been increased to \$20,000.

The military is also releasing new advertising geared toward "influencers"—parents, coaches and teachers. But there is no indication that these measures are having any effect on the decline.

There is no doubt what is behind this decline: the deterioration of the occupation in Iraq and the growing sentiment in the United States against the war. Krohn, an active supporter of Bush in 2000, told friends that "the recruiting problem is an unintended consequence of a prolonged

war in Iraq, especially given the failure to find WMD [weapons of mass destruction]."

Despite more aggressive and often dishonest tactics, recruiters are encountering resistance on campuses from students who are concerned about fighting and dying in a war for empire. Even Army public-information specialist Julia Bobick admitted, "Our recruiters have experienced a lot of apprehension from recruits with regard to serving in the war on Iraq."

A recruiter in Ohio told the New York Times, "Parents are the biggest hurdle we face."

According to the Times, a Defense Department survey shows that only 25 percent of parents would recommend military service to their children, down from 42 percent in August 2003. Many parents cited opposition to the war in Iraq as their reason.

The Times reported that several recruiters say they've even been threatened with violence. "I had one father say if he saw me on his doorstep I better have some protection on me," said a recruiter in Ohio. "We see a lot of hostility."

This anger and determination to protect young people from military recruiters is leading parents and local activists to take action across the country. Some are working to educate students about a little-known provision of the No Child Left Behind Act that allows recruiters access to young peoples' personal information.

In May, the Parent Teacher Student Association of Garfield High School in Seattle adopted a resolution that says "public schools are not a place for military recruiters."

One of the Garfield parents, Steve Ludwig, said that the military is performing "illegal acts. ... What I object to is their coming here to recruit students to perform those acts. It's not about free speech."

Continued on page 10

Barcelona tribunal says: Iraq resistance is justified

By Sharon Ceci Black
Barcelona, Catalonia

Given the history of this city's role in the movement opposing the U.S. invasion of Iraq, it's not surprising that Barcelona was the site of an important three-day tribunal—which ruled May 22 that many of the acts involved in the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq constitute war crimes.

On Feb. 15, 2003, Barcelona, Catalonia, saw the world's biggest protest against the impending U.S. war on Iraq. Over 1.5 million people clogged the city's streets.

Close to 4 million people in Spain's various national regions marched that day. At the height of the U.S. bombing of Iraq, workers went on strike in protest.

This massive anti-war movement played a pivotal role in the defeat of Spain's Prime Minister Jose Maria Anzar's government in April 2004, and forced the withdrawal of Spain's troops from Iraq. It also gave enormous encouragement to the world's movement.

The May tribunal's conclusions support sovereignty for Iraq and the Iraqi people's right to resist. They call for all military contingents to immediately leave Iraq, dismantle their bases and cease repressive rule.

These conclusions were the culmination of sessions and events held in Andalusia, Asturias, Catalonia, Basque Country, Madrid, and the Region of Valencia. The Barcelona tribunal was part of the World Tribunal on Iraq—whose sessions began in Brussels, Belgium, in April 2004 and will culminate June 23-27 in Istanbul, Turkey. Sessions have been held all over Japan; in Copenhagen, Denmark; Lisbon, Portugal; Mumbai, India; Seoul, South

Korea; Stockholm, Sweden; New York; Rome; and many other cities.

A delegation from Iraq—led by Iman Ahmed Khamas, an Iraqi journalist and translator—testified to current conditions in Iraq under U.S. occupation. The Iraqi delegates included oil workers, community organizers from Baghdad, a doctor who volunteered to treat the wounded and sick after the U.S. massacre in the city of Falluja, and representatives of various human-rights organizations.

U.S. tries to divide Iraqis

Yawad Mohammad Mahdi al-Khalisi, secretary general of Iraqi Foundational National Congress and imam of Al Khadimiya Mosque in Baghdad, was clear in his statements, saying "It is not the Iraqi people or the resistance who are dividing or inflicting harm on the people—it is the occupation forces that are responsible for divisions—we are one people." He was referring to supposed difference between Sunni and Shiite Moslems, and to U.S./Pentagon attempts to divide Iraq into a weak federated government.

Dr. Intisar Muhammad Araibi brought tears to many eyes as she recounted the needless deaths in Iraqi hospitals of children who are denied medicines.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark was an honorary member of the panel. He was unable to attend but sent a videotaped presentation.

Members of the panel that judged the evidence included: Francois Houtart, Belgian sociologist and theologian, who served as president; Mercedes Garcia Aran, professor of criminal law at Barcelona University; Carlos Jimenez Villarejo,

Continued on page 11

U.S. hands off Bolivia!

The Indigenous, the poor, the working people of Bolivia are speaking out loudly for themselves, for Latin America and for much of the world when they confront the richest 1 percent of the population, their police and army, and their international backer: U.S. imperialism. The three-week-old strike by Bolivia's poor is saying "No!" to the imperialist takeover and privatization of Bolivia's natural resources. That "No!" is resounding around the world.

The first question to ask when the class struggle reaches the level it has in Bolivia is: Which side are you on?

In Bolivia the answer is clear. On one side is a tiny capitalist class of some hundreds of enormously wealthy families, the politicians who work for them, and the mercenary army they employ. These exploiters, besides being a parasitic burden on the Bolivian workers and farmers, are completely dependent on their close ties with U.S. imperialism. Their rule is increasingly dependent on bullets and tear gas.

On the other side are the rest of Bolivia's 8 million people, over 55 percent of whom are Aymara or Quechua, and over two-thirds of whom live below the poverty line in the poorest country in South America. Coca farmers, driven into poverty by the U.S.'s phony "war on drugs," are blocking the roads between Bolivia's cities. Miners are bringing their dynamite blasting caps with them to demonstrations. Teachers and civil servants are striking and demonstrating. And La Paz's entire satellite city of El Alto, where hundreds of thousands of Indigenous people

live, is joining in this struggle.

Nineteen months ago such mass demonstrations in La Paz, the capital, drove the previous Bolivian president out of office. The current president, Carlos Mesa, succeeded him, making promises to the workers and farmers that he would hold on to Bolivia's resources—especially the natural gas that the imperialist energy monopolies want to pilage—while making more discreet promises to the ruling class and its U.S. backers that he would pacify the Bolivian people.

Three months ago another series of protests forced Mesa to resign. It was a temporary maneuver to win a statement of support from the Congress and from Bolivia's ruling class. But now, for the second time this year, mass demonstrations have again forced Mesa to offer his resignation. In a clear sign of who gives orders in this Andean country, Mesa's resignation offer followed a meeting with the U.S. ambassador.

In their desperation to save their situation, Bolivia's wealthy class and the U.S. imperialists are considering splitting the Andean country into two or more parts, so that Santa Cruz, with its concentration of ruling-class families, can control the fields of natural gas.

This time it looks like Mesa may stay resigned. On the one hand, he has been unable to keep a lid on the people. On the other, he cannot satisfy their demands for nationalization of Bolivia's rich fields of natural gas.

The latest reports are that the struggle continues, and it is going on all over the country. Bolivia's natural resources belong to its people. U.S. hands off! □

Rumsfeld shakes big stick at China

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld journeyed to Singapore to deliver a blunt attack on China for having the audacity, as a sovereign nation representing one-fifth of the world's population, to try to defend itself against U.S. and Japanese imperialism—two of its former colonial oppressors. The message, delivered in an arrogant tone, reeks of hypocrisy. It will not achieve its goals.

Rumsfeld told the annual gathering of Asian defense ministers that "one has to wonder why" China is building up its military strength "since no nation is threatening China."

To begin with, no one should rely on the Pentagon for any reliable facts about China's military development. For decades the Pentagon consistently overstated Soviet military capability whenever the time came to plan the U.S. military budget in order to boost military appropriations for the Cold War. Also, it just so happens that Rumsfeld's belligerent speech comes at the very moment when the Pentagon is preparing a report on the Chinese military for Congress. This report, which comes as the Pentagon revamps its global military strategy, will be a basis for future military appropriations related to U.S. imperialist military power in the Pacific.

But what is Donald Rumsfeld doing as the main speaker at an Asian defense ministers' conference? The last time we looked, the United States was firmly placed in the Western Hemisphere.

Therein lies the answer to Rumsfeld's fake question. If it is true that the People's Republic of China is strengthening its military capability, the reason lies in the U.S. Seventh Fleet's presence in the Pacific. There, U.S. warships are poised to steam into the South China Sea, the Straits of Taiwan or

anyplace else in the region to enforce the will of U.S. imperialism. So U.S. naval forces, nuclear-armed and thousands of miles from U.S. shores, threaten China and all the countries of Asia.

Rumsfeld and President George W. Bush are determined to build a missile "defense" system linking Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the U.S. military network in Asia—all aimed at paving the way for a first strike at China or North Korea. This is also what's behind the sale of advanced U.S. destroyers to Taiwan, as well as the U.S. and Japanese imperialists' joint declaration that Taiwan is "a matter of concern" to them, when it is actually an internal Chinese matter.

U.S. military bases, including conventional and nuclear forces, scattered from Guam to Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and elsewhere, are calculated to make the Pacific a U.S. lake. It is part of the historic drive by Wall Street and the Pentagon to make the Pacific Rim, with its population of over 2 billion people, open territory for plunder.

The U.S. military and political establishment, especially the generals and admirals, regard China's development into an economic and political power as trespassing on their sphere of influence. More and more countries in Asia look to China for economic and political leadership. Washington's influence in Asia is slipping—so Rumsfeld went to tell everyone that U.S. imperialism is still the boss. His message: "Don't judge us by the disaster in Iraq. We are still top dog."

But the very fact that Rumsfeld had to deliver this message is a strong indication that the days of old, when U.S. imperialism could dictate its will, are fading fast. Imperialism is running up against the multi-faceted resistance of the peoples of the world, who refuse to bow down. □

New book, video defend Yugoslavia

By John Catalinotto
New York



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO
Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark

Although U.S.-NATO forces ended their aggressive air war against Yugoslavia six years ago, their propaganda war to demonize Serbs and their leaders continues. However, despite great material disadvantages, Yugoslavia's defenders are countering this propaganda assault.

That was the message of a meeting and video showing at the International Action Center office in Manhattan June 4.

The meeting featured the New York premier of the English version of Michel Collon and Vanessa Stojilkovic's video documentary, "The Damned of Kosovo."

The IAC also launched an appeal to support its new book, "The Defense Speaks—for History and the Future." This is an English translation of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's opening defense argument before NATO's anti-Yugoslav court (ICTY) in The Hague, Netherlands, which he delivered last Aug. 31-Sept. 1.

To continue propagating the "Big Lie," on June 2 NATO's court released a videotape showing alleged atrocities by Serb forces in Srebrenica in Bosnia in 1995. Two speakers at the IAC meeting, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and Kingsborough Community College Professor Barry Lituchy, exposed the ICTY's bias on this issue. They had reiterated these arguments during an earlier interview by CNN international as well.

According to Lituchy, the video was "just a smokescreen" to cover up the ICTY's failure to bring out any credible evidence against Milosevic during two years of prosecution. The ICTY claimed the videotape would implicate President Milosevic in mass deaths at Srebrenica. Lituchy stressed that "the video doesn't link any officials in Serbia to those events in Srebrenica." He added that the official charges, and Milosevic's defense, are now limited to 1998 and 1999 in Kosovo.

IAC Co-coordinator Sara Flounders said that the excuse behind the NATO occupation—that there were mass graves in Kosovo—has long since been proven to be a fraud. Forensic teams from 17 NATO countries spent the entire summer of 1999 in Kosovo and did not find one mass grave.

"The media just continues to repeat the Clinton administration's now-disproved lies," she concluded.

Close to half the people filling the IAC meeting room June 4 were from the Yugoslav community in New York. They volunteered labor and material support for the new book. Radmila Milentijevic, a New York resident who was information minister in Milosevic's government in 1997-1998, and Milo Yeliesiyevich of Serbian Classics offered to review the English translation.

Milentijevic called Milosevic's opening defense talk "a concise and

complete history" showing how the big powers tore apart Yugoslavia from 1990 to 2000.

Flounders thanked IAC intern Jovana Ruzicic for her hard work organizing the book's text. She also called attention to Milosevic's strong statement as he ended his presentation to the ICTY: "[Y]ou cannot imagine what a privilege it is, even in these conditions that you have imposed on me, to have truth and justice as my allies."

Collon and Stojilkovic's powerful documentary video, "The Damned of Kosovo," brought out another truth. U.S. President Bill Clinton argued that the U.S.-NATO intervention was aimed at helping the people of Kosovo against supposed Serb oppression, and would prevent ethnic cleansing. Instead, NATO's occupation of the Serb province of Kosovo and Metohija has brought ethnic cleansing against all the minorities of the province: Serbs, Roma, Egyptians, Muslims, Goranis, Jews and Turks.

And it has brought misery to the majority of ethnic Albanians. And it has left the province in the hands of the terrorist NATO-backed "Kosovo Liberation Army" and organized crime.

The filmmakers show interviews with representatives of each of these groups and graphically reveal the criminal destruction of Kosovo's many Orthodox churches and homes on NATO's watch. □

Hell no!

Continued from page 9

The slump in recruiting is leading many to speculate about the return of the draft.

Defense analyst Lawrence Korb, an assistant defense secretary in the Reagan era, said the future of the all-volunteer military hinges on the success of military recruiters. If they don't succeed, it could force Congress to reconsider a draft.

J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War, recently told an audience of activists that the low recruiting numbers and the strain the Iraq war has placed on the all-volunteer military—especially the National Guard and reserves—had created a "perfect storm" of conditions that could lead to the return of conscription.

And conscription, in turn, would create a storm of resistance.

For more information visit:
www.join-snafu.org

Workers World Newspaper Subscribe now!

□ Special introductory rate \$2 for 8 weeks □ \$25 for

Workers World 55 W. 17 St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011

It's not the oil, it's the profits

A tale of two pipelines

By Bill Cecil

President George W. Bush calls it a "monumental achievement."

The Wall Street Journal says it's "the project of the century."

The State Department hails it as a "magnificent achievement of engineering and international cooperation."

The object of their praise: the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline or BTC, which began operating May 25.

The thousand-mile-long, \$4 billion project will bring 1 million barrels of oil a day from Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea oil fields across Georgia to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey.

The opening ceremony was attended by British Petroleum Chief Executive Officer John Browne, U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman, and Presidents Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, Michel Saakashvili of Georgia, Suleyman Demirel of Turkey and Nursultan Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan are all former republics of the Soviet Union.

Bodman read a letter from Bush that said: "The United States has consistently supported BTC because we believe in the project's ability to bolster global energy security, strengthen participating countries' energy diversity, enhance regional cooperation and expand international investment opportunities. We look forward to working closely with the people of Azerbaijan to advance prosperity, justice, and peace."

The Wall Street Journal praised the pipeline for "providing an alternative to Middle East oil." The biggest stake in BTC

belongs to British Petroleum, the world's biggest oil company. The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan holds 25 percent. Turkey's State Oil Company holds 7 percent. U.S. firms Unocal and Hess have 9 percent each.

Unocal was recently acquired by oil giant ChevronTexaco, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's old employer. Citigroup is among the underwriters of the project.

BP is the biggest company in Britain. But much of its capital comes from the United States. The Bush family and Karl Rove are minor stockholders. Major ones include Morgan Stanley, Citigroup, Bank of America, Fidelity Management and a Boston-based hedge fund called State Street Corporation.

BP is the lead company in Bush's plan to drill in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Reserve.

ExxonMobil, the biggest U.S. oil firm, is not directly involved in BTC. But it may use BTC to transport the output of its oil fields in Kazakhstan.

Imperialist monopolies restrict supply

Are "energy diversity" and "regional cooperation" really priorities in the White House and in oil company boardrooms?

The history of the energy industry is a history of conspiracies to rig prices by restricting supply. That's what monopoly is all about.

That was true when Rockefeller Standard Oil agents dynamited competitors' refineries in the 1870s Pennsylvania oil wars. It's true in the oil wars in the Middle East today.

In the 1980s, Western Europe tried to diversify its energy supply by buying natural gas from the Soviet Union. The result was a stupendous feat of engineering called "Urengoi 6," a 3,600-mile pipeline across Eurasia. The Wall Street Journal called it "the largest commercial transaction ever between East and West."

How did Washington react to this attempt at peaceful cooperation in the field of energy? The Reagan-Bush regime worked night and day to block the project.

Washington imposed sanctions on companies working on the pipeline. According to some accounts, the CIA tried to destroy it by sabotage. Former U.S. Air Force Secretary Thomas Reed and Reaganite Peter Schweitzer bragged about this in their respective books "On the Abyss" and "Victory."

In spite of Reagan's efforts, some

120,000 Soviet and Eastern European workers completed the pipeline. But the cost was many times higher than projected.

There are clear differences between BTC and Urengoi 6. The Soviet state no longer exists. The new pipeline's revenues will not help provide the free health care, housing and higher education the Soviet people once enjoyed. The money will not go to aid struggling countries like Nicaragua, Vietnam, Cuba or Angola, or to help freedom fighters in southern Africa or Palestine or El Salvador.

The revenues will go into the pockets of Western bankers and investors. And, unlike Urengoi 6, BTC will not loosen the U.S. and British oil monopolies' grip on Western Europe's economy. It will strengthen that grip.

Next: Cold War ends, Oil Wars continue

Iraq resistance strong

Continued from page 9

gerous area. We need helicopters and the American army,' Iraqi Brig. Gen. Najim al-Ekabi said. The U.S. soldiers, who had spent months training Iraqi soldiers, tried to persuade al-Ekabi to send his troops, saying it was likely that weapons were hidden in the fields and alongside an irrigation canal. ...

"Al-Ekabi asked for a private meeting with the Americans and departed shortly afterward in a large convoy, ostensibly to conduct the search. Maj. Ronny Echelberger later went into the area with American forces and searched a few homes, saying [he] was not sure the Iraqi search had been sufficiently thorough."

On June 5, U.S. Marines said they had discovered a well-equipped bunker used by the resistance at a quarry in Karma, near Falluja. The bunker allegedly contained a large stockpile of weapons, as well as air conditioning, showers and other facilities for guerrilla fighters.

The Bush administration immediately tried to spin the discovery as evidence of "foreign terrorists" being at the heart of the resistance. In reality, though, the bunker illustrates the indigenous resistance movement's high level of organization. It also reveals how carefully the former Iraqi government prepared before the U.S. forces invaded in March 2003.

In the months leading up to Washington's "Shock and Awe" campaign, the government of President Saddam Hussein had distributed arms and provided training to the civilian population, among other preparations for long-term resistance.

The contrast with the disorganized, demoralized forces under the Iraqi colonial government's flag couldn't be greater.

Growing anger

The Bush administration is rolling the dice on its ability to co-opt the leaders of various Iraqi religious and political factions into its "democratic process." Objectively, on the other hand, conditions increasingly fuel popular support for the militant resistance.

Unemployment is well over 50 percent throughout the country.

The colonial occupation is neglecting the task of rebuilding infrastructure and medical care, decimated by the war and more than a decade of devastating U.S./United Nations sanctions.

The number of long-term prisoners detained at Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca,

near Basra, has more than doubled since last August. There are now more than 10,000 such prisoners, according to the June 5 Los Angeles Times:

"Military sweeps have netted many guerrillas but also thousands of others whose offenses were nonexistent, minor or impossible to prove. They often are held for months, only to be released without explanation."

Next, the U.S. occupiers will try to divert growing anger in Iraq and worldwide with the announcement that Saddam Hussein, the demonized former president of Iraq, is to stand trial on 12 charges this summer. It's up to the anti-war movement here to keep the public focus on the real issue: the demand that U.S. and all foreign occupation troops immediately, unconditionally leave Iraq. □

LGBT Pride, Africa and the AIDS crisis

Continued from page 7

need work that brings in money.

Some obtain employment as domestic workers. The economic pressure to seek money for sex is intense. This increases their risk of contracting the AIDS virus.

A new UNICEF study shows that orphaned girls in Zimbabwe are "three times more likely to become infected than girls whose parents are alive." (New York Times, June 3)

Solidarity with African peoples

And how has the U.S. government responded to this global crisis?

The Democratic Clinton-Gore administration invoked copyright law to fight African nations' attempt to produce inexpensive generic AIDS drugs that would have saved millions of lives.

The Republican Bush administration boasts of its pledge to combat AIDS. But the \$15 billion allocated in its 2003 budget was spread over three years and among 15 countries, while the United States has spent over 10 times that amount on the war on Iraq. (costofwar.com)

This "Global AIDS Bill" also mandated that up to one-third of its funds be spent on "abstinence-only" programs, which research has proved to be ineffective. (SIECUS)

These genocidal U.S. policies flow from centuries of super-exploitation of Africa by Western nations. Bush administration

officials are open about their goals, saying any aid to Africa must be part of "increased trade and private flows of capital" into the continent.

From the profits made from the slave trade, to the 19th century carving up of the continent into colonies by Britain, France, Germany and others, Africa has lost incalculable riches in resources, infrastructure and people. Today, says Global Witness Director Simon Taylor, "Western companies and banks have colluded in stripping Africa's resources." The June 1 British Guardian notes, "A new 'scramble for Africa' is taking place among the world's big powers, who are tapping into the continent for its oil and diamonds."

The devastation in Africa; the AIDS epidemic; the ravages of imperialism, racism and women's oppression—all challenge those celebrating Pride this June in the United States to internationalize the struggle. This includes demanding the right of the African peoples to reparations from the capitalist countries that plundered this continent for centuries.

Simon Nkoli—a gay South African freedom fighter, a leader of the 1976 Soweto uprising—was an AIDS activist for 13 years. Before he died of the disease in 1998, Nkoli said: "Homophobia is part of discrimination. We cannot deal with it in isolation. We are trying to link our struggle with the struggle of the majority of the people against apartheid and racism." □

Truth is Power and leftbooks.com has plenty of it.

Inmigrantes bajo ataque, resisten

Por Richard Duncan

“Hemos logrado mucho”. Esta frase ha sido empleada muchas veces en conversaciones sobre la intolerancia y el racismo de la clase dominante de los Estados Unidos. Si esta clase y su burocracia triunfan, los avances obtenidos para l@s inmigrantes van a retroceder a pasos agigantados. L@s inmigrantes están siendo atacados por todos lados.

Existe el grupo extralegal “Minutemen” (milicias) en Arizona que está aterrorizando a la gente oriunda de México. Personas de ese país devastado económicamente por el TLCNA, buscan una mejor vida acá. Si hay alguien que tiene el derecho de vivir y trabajar en los estados suroestes, son l@s mexican@s, a l@s cuales esas tierras les fueron robadas, al igual que a l@s indígenas de este lado de la frontera.

El gobernador de California Arnold Schwarzenegger, hijo de un nazi, prestó su apoyo a estos racistas de Arizona. “Mira, ellos han cortado la llegada de inmigrantes ilegales en una proporción grande. El sistema entero realmente está establecido como una invitación a la gente para entrar acá ilegalmente, y esto se tiene que parar”, dijo él en el “Show de John y Ken” en KFI-AM el 28 de abril.

Schwarzenegger había llamado anteriormente a “cerrar las fronteras en California y a través de todo México y en los EEUU” porque él considera que “es simplemente injusto tener a toda esta gente cruzando las fronteras, tenerlas abierta como ahora, y tener esta situación tan floja”.

“Es grato ver que los oficiales electos están respondiendo a la voluntad del pueblo”, dijo Chris Simcox, un organizador de los racistas Minutemen. El gobernador no tiene problema alguno con el plan de los

Minutemen de extender sus patrullas hasta California. El nexa entre el estado y los grupos extralegales trae a la memoria las imágenes de terroristas como el KKK, que tenía a sheriffs y a alcaldes aterrorizando a la gente africana americana.

Utilizando la ley contra l@s inmigrantes

También hay ataques legales. La Ley Patriótica ha sido utilizada para atacar a inmigrantes del Sur de Asia y del Medio Oriente. Los gobernantes se esconden detrás de la “seguridad nacional” para detener, torturar y deportar inmigrantes por supuestos delitos, comenzando con violaciones menores de leyes migratorias hasta delitos no revelados.

Dos estudiantes musulmanas de 16 años en escuela secundaria de la Ciudad de Nueva York fueron arrestadas en marzo pasado y detenidas en cárceles en Pennsylvania, tachadas de ser potencialmente bombas suicidas. Una de las muchachas, de Guinea en África, luego de ser liberada después de seis semanas de detención, recibió una recepción entusiasta de parte de toda la comunidad escolar. Su padre, sin embargo sigue detenido en Nueva Jersey y será deportado.

Un acuerdo fue logrado permitiendo a la segunda joven y a su familia volver a Bangla Desh apenas puedan hacer los arreglos. Su familia llegó como refugiados políticos cuando la muchacha tenía sólo cuatro años de edad.

Parte de la más reciente ley de apropiación de \$82 billones para gastos adicionales de guerra fue el “Acta de Identificación Verdadera”. Esta ley, también conocida como la Ley de Licencia de Manejar entra en vigor en el 2008. Es una ley antiinmigrante que requiere una norma federal para las licencias de mane-

jar estatales.

En realidad, ésta será un carnet nacional de identidad que pone a tod@s l@s que tratan de manejar legalmente en una base nacional de datos. Se requerirá también que los estados guarden copias de los documentos de identificación por siete a diez años, con imágenes escaneadas de cada persona que tiene licencia. Dentro de tres años un carnet aprobado por el gobierno federal será requerido para abrir una cuenta de banco, viajar por avión, o al utilizar cualquier servicio gubernamental.

Esta ley le hará la vida imposible a cualquiera persona sin estado legal. Las deportaciones fragmentarán familias y creará dificultades incalculables. Aún antes de que haya pasado esta ley, una parada de tráfico rutinaria puede resultar y ya ha resultado en detenciones y deportación. La gente que no puede manejar legalmente manejará ilegalmente. Bajo estas condiciones, una parada de tráfico para muchos significará un tiempo indefinido en la cárcel seguido probablemente por la deportación.

El papel de l@s inmigrantes en la lucha de clase

Éstos y todos los otros ataques contra l@s inmigrantes son amenazas graves a millones de personas que sólo quieren trabajar y cuidar de sus familias.

Much@s inmigrantes vienen aquí de países donde estaban involucrad@s en la lucha de clase y saben a cuál campo de clase pertenecen. Sólo están siguiendo a los recursos que los monopolios predatorios multinacionales han extraído de sus países.

La clase dominante teme a est@s trabajador@s inmigrantes aún mientras les súper explotan. La histeria creada sobre la necesidad de proteger las fronteras y

luchar contra el terrorismo es una táctica calculada para asustar, teniendo el propósito de disminuir el número de personas de color que se está añadiendo a la población estadounidense; y culpar a l@s inmigrantes de las condiciones económicas que se están empeorando aquí.

Esa misma conciencia de clase que asusta a la clase dominante, alienta a l@s organizador@s sindicales y a l@s comunistas, quienes acogen positivamente a est@s inmigrantes conscientes de su clase. Tod@s l@s trabajador@s aquí están explotad@s por la misma clase dominante que pone a unos contra otros con sus tácticas clásicas de dividir para conquistar.

Las respuestas a estos ataques contra l@s inmigrantes también vienen de muchas partes. Incluso los gobiernos estatales están explorando cómo resistir los cambios al carnet para evitar su alto costo. Algunos estados están amenazando con demandas legales e incluso con desobedecer las reglas sobre las licencias.

Muchos grupos de inmigrantes y de derechos civiles también están buscando medidas para impugnar la nueva ley. Ellos indican que la seguridad de las carreteras estará reducida por l@s muchos motoristas que no tendrán seguros ni licencia. El nuevo carnet proveerá otra manera para el robo de identidad, especialmente por incluir muchos datos e información sobre cada persona.

La gente en Texas y en California organizó manifestaciones el fin de semana del 15 de mayo para protestar los Minutemen. El Centro de Acción Internacional tiene una nueva campaña, el Comité de Defensa a Inmigrantes y Trabajador@s de Bajo Sueldo, el cual trabajará de cerca con los grupos de trabajador@s inmigrantes. La lucha ha comenzado.

El escritor es un inmigrante del Caribe.

LOS ANGELES

Mítin de protesta contra los grupos racistas

Por Ruth Vela
Baldwin Park, California

Históricamente en los Estados Unidos los indígenas, la gente de color y los pobres han tenido que cargar con el peso de ser los chivos expiatorios para la clase gobernante.

L@s trabajador@s inmigrantes son pintad@s continuamente por la prensa capitalista como seres menos humanos en un esfuerzo de crear una ambivalencia en el público sobre los estándares infrahumanos de la situación bajo las que viven y trabajan. Como si esto fuera poco, una ola reciente de histeria contra l@s inmigrantes ha cubierto al país entero y se está manifestando en forma de grupos de vigilantes racistas como el grupo “Minutemen” de Arizona y otros grupos “comunitarios” igualmente peligrosos.

En California, uno de esos grupos, que se hace llamar, “Save our State” (Salve nuestro Estado) afirma que “los californianos están cansados de ver como sus comunidades se tornan en letrina del tercer mundo como resultado de la masiva invasión de ilegales.”

“Save our State” y otro llamado, “Amigos de los Patrulleros de la Frontera”

están conectados con el grupo de Arizona Minutemen.

El 14 de mayo en Baldwin Park, no muy distante del este de Los Ángeles, una movilización racista fue convocada por el grupo Save our State para protestar contra un monumento en la estación Metro-Link de Baldwin Park. El monumento hace referencia al robo de las tierras mexicanas e indígenas por los Estados Unidos. Los racistas están exigiendo que la ciudad de Baldwin Park “voluntariamente remueva estos pasajes ofensivos antes del primero de julio, previo el fin de semana en celebración de la independencia americana.”

Ellos han amenazado con tomar “otros pasos para asegurarse que los pasajes sean removidos.”

¿Quiénes son los inmigrantes, peregrinos?

Como respuesta, muchos grupos comunitarios e individuos en Baldwin Park - Mecha, el Comité en Defensa de los Trabajadores Inmigrantes/IAC-LA, la organización FIST de San Diego y otros grupos en el sur de California se reunieron frente al monumento una hora antes de comenzar la protesta racista.

Al comienzo varias cuadras separaban a los dos grupos, y cuando un grupo de manifestantes en su mayoría jóvenes se preparaban a confrontar a los 30 racistas, la policía local les obstruyó el paso. Después de un rato de altercados y amenazas de la policía de arrestar a los manifestantes anti-racistas, l@s jóvenes, un@ por un@ y de dos en dos, y después en mayor número, pudieron usar las calles laterales para evadir la policía y acercarse a los racistas.

Al moverse los miembros de FIST y otros jóvenes por las calles laterales, la gente de la comunidad desde sus balcones y patios se les unían. En pocos minutos los racistas fueron forzados a una esquina mientras que l@s jóvenes ocupaban las otras tres.

Gritos de ira mezclados a consignas que decían, “¿quiénes son los inmigrantes, peregrinos?” y “¿de quien es la tierra?”, “¡nuestra!” se podían escuchar desde el monumento.

Todavía protegidos por la policía, los racistas insultaban a los manifestantes. Mientras tanto, las amenazas de arresto a l@s jóvenes desde los altavoces de los helicópteros, se ahogaban con el ruido de

la multitud que crecía. La tensión creció al igual que el número de policías que luchaban por mantener a los jóvenes en las aceras.

Aún así, los manifestantes en vez de retroceder llenaron las calles, casi hasta rodear a los racistas.

Después de dos horas de enfrentamiento, los racistas y sus protectores policiales tiraron la toalla. Con el rabo entre las patas y sus cabezas cabizbajas en muestra de derrota, ellos se retiraron con el sonido a sus espaldas de los cantos de victoria contra el racismo y los coros que anunciaban el mensaje de la comunidad de Baldwin Park que decía. “¡No regresen!”

Aunque se sintió fabuloso el ganar esta batalla, la arrogancia de los racistas y sus aliados policiales sirven como recordatorio de que todavía tenemos que ganar la guerra contra este sistema que crea opresión y división. Debemos tomar la bandera de la lucha de nuestros hermanos y hermanas inmigrantes y comprometernos a la lucha contra el imperialismo, para que así podamos realmente “salvar el estado” de nuestra clase obrera de las garras de la malagradecida, racista y parasítica burguesía. □