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U.S. war exercises threaten Caribbean May 20 protests to demand

Hands off Cuba and Venezuela

MAY 18, 2006

ARKERS WORI

By Cheryl LaBash

Even as a nuclear-powered U.S. war fleet and 6,500 Marines are conducting maneuvers in the Caribbean that threaten Cuba, Venezuela and other anti-imperialist countries throughout the Americas, another kind of mobilization is occurring across the globe.

On May 20, demonstrations from Austria to Australia, from Brazil to Canada, will coincide with a march in Washington, D.C., to demand "U.S. hands off Venezuela and Cuba"—"Manos fuera de Venezuela y Cuba."

The situation is urgent. According to the Cuban newspaper Granma, the scope of the U.S. military maneuvers dwarfs even the Pentagon's naval deployment during the October 1962 missile crisis. Similar maneuvers in the past were used to gather information needed to launch aggression, like the "exercises" that preceded the U.S. invasion of Grenada in 1983.

They can also be used to send a direct threat, as the Virginian-Pilot newspaper, which is published in the heavily militarized Hampton Roads area, noted in a March 28 article:

"Some defense analysts suggested that the unusual twomonth-long deployment, set to begin in early April, could be interpreted as a show of force by anti-American governments in Venezuela and Cuba. 'The presence of a U.S. carrier task force in the Caribbean will definitely be interpreted as some sort of signal by the governments of Cuba and Venezuela,' said Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute, a pro-defense think tank in Washington. 'If I was sitting in the Venezuela capital looking at this American task force, the message I would be getting is America still is not so distracted by Iraq that it is unable to enforce its interests in the Caribbean,' Thompson said."

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

VOL. 48, NO. 19

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Radio Havana says this ominous show of force will be followed by yet another maneuver in the Caribbean involving 4,000 NATO troops and lasting from May 23 to June 15.

Students, labor, Latin@s mobilize

Who is answering the call to be in the streets on May 20?

New York high school students have filled two buses and are getting a third. The New York Health and Hospital Union, 1199 SEIU, printed leaflets that were passed out at the massive May 1 boycott demanding full rights for all immigrants and at the April 29 march to bring the troops home from Iraq.

Cuban Americans and Bolivarian Circle activists are traveling to D.C. from Miami. Other marchers will be converging on the capital by van from Detroit and Atlanta, by bus from Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Richmond, Va., and other areas, and by car and metro in Washington, D.C. They intend to say no in person to new anti-Cuba and anti-Venezuela measures planned by the U.S. government.

May 20 is also African Liberation Day. Particularly noteworthy is the collaboration with ALD organizers, who are sharing their stage and sound at the Malcolm X Park gathering site with this mobilization. There will also be strong participation of *Continued on page 8*



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Vindicated but still victimized by racism

By Stephen Millies

Clyde Kennard has been vindicated and a day named in his honor in Mississippi. Yet Gov. Haley Barbour still refuses him a posthumous pardon.

Kennard died in Chicago on July 4, 1963. The 36-year-old African American never saw much of the "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" promised in the Declaration of Independence.

He had been dying of cancer when, five months earlier, he was released from Mississippi's Parchman Prison, where he was serving a sevenyear term after being framed for stealing \$25 worth of chicken feed. Activist entertainer Dick Gregory accompanied Kennard and his sister, Sara Tarpley, on the flight to Chicago.

Kennard's real crime was to repeatedly apply for admission to then all-white Mississippi Southern College in Hattiesburg, since renamed the University of Southern Mississippi. Officials of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission—a terrorist agency that worked hand-inhand with the Ku Klux Klan—plotted to kill or frame him. They did both.

Kennard was born in Hattiesburg in 1927 and moved to Chicago when he was 12 years old. He spent seven years in the U.S. Army, was sent to Korea and was awarded the Bronze Star. With his savings, he bought his mom a small farm.

The veteran enrolled in the University of Chicago in 1952 and majored in political science. But after three years of study he had to come home to help his mother.

Kennard became president of Hattiesburg's NAACP youth chapter. He also wanted to finish his schooling by transferring to Mississippi Southern, which was just a 15minute drive from his family's farm.

Democratic Gov. J.P. Coleman offered to pay Kennard to go to any other college in the United States rather than let him break the color line.

The college's president, W.D. McCain, was in contact with the White Citizens Council. Its local leader said he would "take care" of the "troublemaker." Zack J. Van Landingham—the Sovereignty Commission's chief bloodhound—was present in a Sept. 15, 1959, interview between McCain and Kennard.

Activist's life tragically cut short

DAMU SMITH, a long-time, respected African-American activist, died on May 5 in Atlanta after a long bout with cancer. Smith participated in many struggles, including fighting for environmental justice and an end to the racist, apartheid regime in South Africa. He was a founder of Black Voices for Peace, a Washington, D.C., community-based, antiwar coalition that opposed U.S. military aggression in Iraq and elsewhere. A more in-depth obituary on the contributions of Smith to the progressive movement will appear in a future issue of Workers World.

A public celebration of Smith's life is scheduled



Clyde Kennard

Immediately afterwards cops charged Kennard with reckless driving. They also claimed to have found five liquor bottles in his station wagon. A justice of the peace fined Kennard \$600 and court costs.

When this didn't stop the civil rights activist, authorities coerced a young Black man—Johnny Lee Roberts, 19—into lying. Roberts claimed Kennard paid him \$10 to steal five bags of chicken feed from the Forrest County Cooperative warehouse on Sept. 25, 1960.

Jess Brown, one of only four Black attorneys in Mississippi at the time, courageously defended Kennard. It took only 10 minutes for the all-white jury to convict him.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal.

Mississippi NAACP leader Medgar Evers was sentenced to 30 days in jail for calling the verdict a "mockery of justice." Evers was assassinated on June 12, 1963.

While at Parchman Prison, Kennard was sent to an outside hospital for a cancer operation. Doctors wanted him to come back in 30 days for additional treatment. Prison authorities refused to let him go and continued to force him to perform slave labor in the fields. When he was finally brought to the hospital again six months later, it was too late.

Black people in Mississippi and the Jackson Advocate newspaper never forgot Kennard. The good work of Adlai Stevenson High School students in Lincolnshire, Ill., and reporter Jerry Mitchell of the Jackson, Miss., Clarion Ledger helped revive his case.

Johnny Lee Roberts, who had earlier been coerced to testify against Kennard, declared under oath before a judge on Jan. 27 of this year that Kennard was innocent.

March 30 has been declared "Clyde Kennard" day in Mississippi. Even the conservative Republican governor, Barbour, issued a proclamation praising him.

Yet Barbour refuses to issue a pardon.

This former chairperson of the Republican National Committee may be thinking of all the other frame-up cases that a pardon for Kennard could open up.

Such as Willie McGee, who was executed on May 8, 1951, on phony rape charges despite a worldwide campaign to save him. The state's electric chair was moved to Laurel, Miss., to give the local racists a thrill.

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Workers World

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A public celebration of Smith's life is scheduled for May 20 at 5:00 p.m. at Plymouth Congre- gational Church, 5301 North Capitol St. NE, Washington, D.C. –Monica Moorehead			A few hours before he died, Kennard said, "I would be glad that this happened if it would only show people in this land where racism leads." \Box			
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Cover-up exposed in teen's boot camp death

By Larry Hales

It took four months for the state of Florida to verify what the family of Martin Lee Anderson, 14, already knew—that the young African American had died as a result of brutal treatment at the hands of guards at a juvenile boot camp. The confirmation came by way of a second autopsy performed by Dr. Venard Adams, Tampa Bay's leading medical examiner, after Bay County Medical Examiner Charles Siebert had declared Anderson's death was due to "natural causes."

Anderson had arrived at the boot camp on Jan. 5 for a violation of probation stemming from a joy ride he took in his grandmother's car. He had been there just a few hours before collapsing from physical exertion. Youth at the militaristic camp are forced to do physical training, which includes running, pushups and other calisthenics characteristic of military training.

The guards at the camp, which is run by the Bay County sheriff's department, began beating the boy when he complained of shortness of breath.

The beating was captured on video, though the tape was not released until Feb. 17. The videotaped beating shows the thin young man being pummeled by the stout guards. He is hit and kneed, all while a nurse stands nearby. Ammonia capsules are held to his nose at some point. It is clear that the young man goes limp. The guards' response is to continue the beating and to drag his body. The beating went on for at least 30-40 minutes.

Anderson died at a hospital just hours after arriving. He had been at the Bay County boot camp for less than 24 hours.

Salt was heaped on the open wounds of Gina Jones and Robert Anderson, the young man's mother and father, when medical examiner Siebert stated that he died of natural causes. Some would say that for Siebert to have a medical degree is tragic comedy, since he stated that Anderson died from sickle cell trait, which is generally a benign condition. This effort to cover up the truth failed.

In rare circumstances, people with sickle cell trait can die. Death can occur

through physical exertion and high heat, but this is extremely rare. And even if it had been the case here, then at the very least severe criminal neglect and abuse would still have been the cause of death because, after the young man complained of shortness of breath, he was beaten and denied medical treatment.

Siebert virtually exonerated the guards and nurse of any culpability when he released his Feb. 16 autopsy

report. "This is a valid, backed-by-science diagnosis," Siebert stated. He also said, "There was no trauma significant enough to contribute to or cause his death."

Siebert further said in his findings that the physical blows were not responsible and that the guards and nurse were "mistaken" in not getting Anderson medical treatment. He mentioned nothing faintly resembling admonishment of the guards or nurse for the death of this teenager.

Video sets off storm of action

The videotape was released a day after the autopsy report. Anyone who saw the



Leading a march in Tallahassee, Fla., are (from left) the Rev. Al Sharpton; Gina Jones, mother of Martin Lee Anderson; and the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

video could see the brutality and that Anderson went limp as a result of the beating.

The video and report set in motion a storm of action, from the parents as well as from Black communities in Florida and around the country. Bay County responded not out of compassion, but from the reaction that reverberated *Continued on page 5*

In rebuilding after Katrina, it's the same corrupt story

By LeiLani Dowell

A House of Representatives report released on May 4 reveals that contractors working on recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina have been overpaid by the government for their services through overstated mileage claims, duplicate bills for the same service, mixing toxic with non-toxic debris to inflate the cost of removing it, and layer upon layer of subcontractors that increase fees.

In one example, the Army Corps of Engineers allowed contracts totaling more than \$300 million for roof repairs using cheap blue plastic sheeting.

While these businesses have been raking in recovery money, however, it's another story when it comes to the workers. The Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance reports that it has had to fight to reclaim \$500,000 in back wages for workers in the Gulf region who had not been paid by contractors and subcontractors. Thousands of these workers protested in New Orleans on May Day as part of the national immigrant rights rallies.

In New Orleans, a struggle has emerged in a Vietnamese community after city officials decided to place a new landfill less than two miles away to dump debris remaining from the hurricane.

The officials claim they don't need to install clay liners, used as a safeguard in existing dumps, in the new landfill because debris from demolition is cleaner than other kinds of trash. However, this assessment does not take into account the toxic mold that has emerged on many of the destroyed houses, nor the numerous chemicals that are present in most households-found in bleach, cleaning supplies, gardening products and more. The landfill will take 2.6 million tons of debris left by Hurricane Katrina, and will sit across a canal from the largest urban wildlife refuge in the country. (New York Times, May 8) Since the hurricane, officials have also reopened the Old Gentilly landfill, another unlined dump that was closed in 1986.

Environmental groups caution that

official regulations are being disregarded in the creation of the landfill, citing a dump, created under similar conditions in the wake of Hurricane Betsey in 1965, that ended up being a Superfund site. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Superfund sites are "uncontrolled or abandoned places where hazardous waste is located, possibly affecting local ecosystems or people."

With the hurricane season just a few weeks away, government officials continue their finger-pointing around Hurricane Katrina. A Senate panel has recommended the complete dismantling of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, calling for a new agency, the National Preparedness and Response Authority, to be created in its place. This agency, according to the recommendations, would remain under the auspices of Homeland Security.

The bungling of FEMA before, during and after the hurricane, undoubtedly caused an unimaginable amount of suffering to the people of the Gulf region. However, writer and political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal points out that the Senate panel's recommendation not only ignores the role of all levels of government in the catastrophe, but also does nothing to end the suffering nor prevent further fiascoes from occurring.

"To abolish an agency, just for the political sake of abolishing it," Abu-Jamal writes, "is but to abolish its memory. At bottom is the conservative antipathy for the very notion of a government designed to help people, especially those most in need. The ideologues of 'limited government' recognize only the role of the state in social repression of the poor and the powerless. When the state is called to serve, it will always encounter resistance from those quarters....

"To lay all of this on FEMA is but the latest political diversion. The Hurricane Katrina disaster exposed serious and continuing problems in American society. To abolish FEMA does nothing to begin to solve them." \Box

Somerville 5 activists ask public support

By Phebe Eckfeldt Boston

Backers of the Somerville 5 are asking for public expressions of support before the trial of two of the youths, which is scheduled to begin on May 15.

It has been one year since five Black students from Somerville High School, all teenagers and none with prior police records, were racially profiled, Maced and beaten by 10 white Medford, Mass., police while trying to attend a carnival there. They were arrested and charged with numerous crimes.

The case of the Somerville 5—Calvin Belfon, Jr., Isiah Anderson, Marquis Anderson, Earl Guerra and Cassius Belfon—has become a symbol across the city of rampant police brutality against youth of color. It has also become a symbol of standing up and fighting back.

Casandra Clark-Mazariegos, a Latina youth cultural worker and leader of Urban Essence, a political youth dance troupe, stated, "Youth are racially profiled on a regular basis. It affects our lives in the long run and we want to minimize the impact. People have to suffer very stressful situations, whether it is a night in jail or months. We want to let the community know that we will do what we can to stop racial profiling."

Clark-Mazariegos and Urban Essence youth organized a very successful benefit concert for the Somerville 5 in March, when youth performers took a stand against police brutality through spoken word, dance and music.

Community leaders, activists, family and friends will be demonstrating outside the Cambridge District courthouse at 40 Thorndike St. on Monday, May 15, at 1:30 p.m., when the trial of two of the five, who have since turned 18 and can be tried as adults, begins. A press conference will be held at 2:30 p.m.

"We will be out in full force to demand "Hands off our youth" and "Stop the racist frame-up," said Gerry Scoppettuolo of the Committee to Defend the Somerville 5. "We are asking supporters to please call D.A. Martha Coakley's office at (617) 494-4300 or (617) 679-6500 or fax (617) 225-0871 and demand that all charges be dropped now."

Earl Guerra, one of the Somerville 5, stated, "The police are doing this and getting away with it. Kids are being beaten up for what they are wearing and questioned about being in a gang. It's time for us to stop discrimination and racial profiling." He added, "We are fighting each other when there is a bigger fight. We need to be fighting the politicians and the officials for our rights and equal job opportunities."

Community activists are also coming to the defense of four young Chinese-American women who were brutally attacked by Quincy, Mass., police on April 30, 2006. The women say they had pulled their car over to a curb when a state trooper approached them. As they spoke to the trooper, a Quincy police car pulled up. A cop jumped out and peppersprayed all four women. Karen Chen, an organizer with the Chinese Progressive Association, was tackled by three cops and received a black eve and bruises to the face. One woman was knocked unconscious and all were arrested. A community meeting is being organized to set up a defense committee. \Box

Rocky road ahead Gold, oil & Picasso soar as dollar tumbles

By Milt Neidenberg

Fasten your seat belts! The U.S. economy is on a rocky road.

Gold is skyrocketing. It broke new ground in early May when it reached \$700 an ounce, a 25-year high, up from \$250 in 2001. Gold is the universal measure of value in capitalist property relations. Accepted by everyone and refused by none, it is a port in the storm of spiraling inflation.

In an article titled "Finding Comfort (and New Friends) in Gold," the May 7 New York Times reported, "Investment banks like J.P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs are putting out bullish research notes ... and the trading desks of investment banks have been piling into the market, especially in the last week."

The article, referring to gold investor and enthusiast James E. Sinclair, noted that the surging price of gold "is sending out clear signals that take him back to the 1970s, when inflation, a weak dollar and an oil spike driven by turmoil in the Middle East propelled gold to a high of \$875 an ounce, or more than \$1,800 in current dollars after adjusting for inflation." And it led to the economic crisis of 1979-1982.

Sinclair explains: "Gold is a barometer of the common stock of a country, and right now gold is sniffing out weakness in the management of the United States as a business. ... Iran is becoming a nuclear power. The chairman of the Federal Reserve is on a puppet string controlled by the White House, and there is no such thing as a strong-dollar policy when the dollar is heading south."

The nervousness of investors over inflation was also reflected in the highest price ever paid for a painting: \$95 million for Picasso's "Dora Marr with Cat."

Speculation and debt

The huge accumulation of dollars has debased and devalued the currency as floods of paper money chase too few goods and services. Speculation is rampant as derivatives and hedge funds pour excess dollars into the world markets. It's casino capitalism and there is no end in sight. The U.S. national debt is growing toward \$9 trillion, while interest paid by the government to Wall Street banks and financial investors already comes to over \$200 billion this fiscal year.

In the recent period there has been an enormous expansion of credit, debt and speculation. The housing bubble is about to burst. The stock market has been booming and there is a spate of corporate and banking mergers.

The capitalist economy is overloaded with IOUs, much related to Pentagon spending on the quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan that seems to have no limits. Lavish nobid contracts for domestic projects feed the same military-industrial complex, including for contractors plundering the Gulf Coast. The deficit in this year's federal budget comes to over \$300 billion. Besides this, the 2006 U.S. trade deficit is over \$260 billion and rising. The price of oil hovers around \$70 a barrel and is spiking.

Is the economy entering a period of stagflation that will add to the woes of the U.S. imperialist military superpower? The Federal Reserve Board, under new chairperson Ben Bernanke-a former economic adviser to President George W. Bush-raised short-term interest rates again on May 10 for the 16th consecutive time since June 2004. Their hope: that raising the rate to 5 percent would shore up the dollar and reassure Wall Street that inflation is under control. Instead, the dollar immediately dropped to a one-year low against the euro. It also fell to its lowest point since September against the Japanese yen.

Continually raising interest rates slows down the economy, as borrowing and debt become more expensive. The Labor Department has reported a gain of only 138,000 jobs in April, far short of the 200,000 predicted and below what is needed to keep up with new workers entering the job market. The department also revised its earlier estimates of job growth in February and March, subtracting 36,000 jobs. Weak job reports along with strong productivity growth show that the exploitation of the laboring masses has intensified.

Inflation lowers the living standards of the workers and the oppressed. Wages lag far behind the rising prices of food, energy, housing, health care and other necessities, driving them deeper into debt. At the same time, they are forced to work even harder. In the first quarter of the year, employers squeezed 3.2 percent more output on an annualized basis from each hour of work, compared to the previous quarter.

This translates into overproduction and bitter competition in the global market. The U.S. manufacturing sector is losing ground and has shrunk dramatically. The industrial work force has been cut by hundreds of thousands—as exemplified by General Motors, Ford and DaimlerChrysler.

According to the March 15 Wall Street Journal, "The number of factories in the U.S. shrank last year to 336,000, down 10 percent from its 1997 peak, part of a steady decline that shows no sign of reversing. Yet it isn't the shuttering of old plants that is the problem. It is the lack of new ones. ... This shift in industrial demographics is stirring concern about the long-term health of U.S. manufacturing. New factories not only create jobs, they also use cutting-edge technology, making them crucial to the nation's competitiveness. They are also vital to U.S. defense industries, with many of the most-advanced components and electronics made at newer facilities."

Wall Street investors and speculators have been pouring their excess profits into a booming stock market. It's at its highest level since January 2000, the month in which the market bubble burst, leading to the 2001 crash.

In "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," Frederick Engels, a cothinker of Karl Marx, explains this capitalist phenomenon. "The financial crisis comes at the very height of the capitalist cycle. The collapse of the market brings about the period of stagnation."

UM workers to hold union vote

ON THE PICKETLINE

By Sue Davis

May Day was an unparalleled success as immigrant workers took to the streets by the millions all over the country to demand their rights. But a group of immigrant workers in Miami had something special to celebrate.

May Day marked the end of a hard-fought two-month strike for union representation by service workers, mostly immigrants, at the University of Miami. Their employer, Unicco Service Co., finally bowed to the workers' demands and agreed to let Service Employees Local 11 hold a union election. The settlement stipulated that an impartial vote must be held by Aug. 1 with at least 60 percent of the workers voting.

The janitors, housekeepers, landscapers and other service workers attracted national attention when some members opted to go on a water-only hunger strike on April 14 to dramatize their demands for collective bargaining. Students carried out a number of solidarity actions to pressure University of Miami head Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services during the Clinton administration, to intervene on behalf of the workers. She didn't, but many faculty members did, and there was a huge outpouring of support from the progressive community. As the old saying goes: In unity there is strength.

UAW sets Delphi strike vote

Anticipating that a bankruptcy court will set aside union contracts at auto parts supplier Delphi on May 9, the Auto Workers union announced on May 3 that its 24,000 Delphi workers will vote on whether to strike by May 14. Members of the Electrical Workers, another Delphi union, have already authorized a strike.

Backed by the bankruptcy court, Delphi, which was spun off from General Motors in 1999, has requested draconian wage cuts from the current \$27.50 an hour to \$16.50 or even \$12.50. That and cuts in benefits would slash the workers' living standards.

The stakes are very high. It's projected that, because of the close connection between Delphi and General Motors, if the workers strike at Delphi, General Motors would file for bankruptcy.

But the workers aren't intimidated. They held a demonstration on May 9 outside the Southern District Bankruptcy Court in New York City to "put the brakes on Delphi."

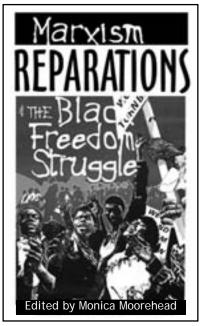
NYU grad workers demand union

It's official. The American Arbitration Association certified on April 21 that the majority of graduate teaching and research assistants at New York University want to continue being represented by the Graduate Student Organizing Committee, UAW Local 2110.

On April 27 the student workers staged a sit-in that stopped traffic on campus to demand that GSOC-UAW represent them; 57 were arrested. For graduation day, May 11, GSOC-UAW has called a rally and march, with the support of the New York City Central Labor Council.

GSOC-UAW has represented the NYU workers since 2002. In 2004 the National Labor Relations Board, stacked with Bush appointees, reversed a previous ruling and announced that graduate employees in private universities were not eligible for union representation, even though those at public institutions could join unions. GSOC-UAW has been fighting to renew its contract since last fall, when NYU president John Sexton refused to negotiate with the union.

Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle



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- ♦ Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery Sam Marcy
- Reparations & Black Liberation Monica Moorehead
- ♦ Harriet Tubman: woman warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal (Guest Commentary)
- ♦ Black labor & the fight for reparations Bill Cecil
- ♦ Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of slavery, sharecropping & segregation Consuela Lee (Guest commentary)
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- ♦ The driving force behind the land seizures Monica Moorehead

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Students arrested for supporting workers

Students at the University of Virginia have been fighting for the past 15 years for a living wage for all workers at UVA. Their struggle took a dramatic turn in early April when 17 students from the Living Wage Campaign were arrested for sitting in at the administration building. The students were held in jail for two days before being released on \$500 bonds.

Best-selling author Barbara Ehrenreich pointed out in the April 15 New River Free Press that the university "found \$2 million to upgrade the football stadium this year but can't manage to pay its workers decently."

Why Big Oil won't rein in galloping gas prices

By Greg Butterfield

The price of a gallon of gasoline averaged \$2.95 in the United States on May 7, up 4 cents from late April, according to the Lundberg Survey. Millions of people are suffering due to high fuel costs. Some are being forced to cut back on food and other necessities or pawn personal items just to afford the gas they need to drive to work.

Under the circumstances, you could be excused for thinking that Big Oil profiteers would be lying low. After all, amidst the crisis, oil companies are making record profits as oil prices hover around \$70 a barrel.

You might even imagine that they would exert some of their enormous economic power and political influence to push prices down and protect themselves from the public ire.

Oh, no.

Instead, on May 3, ExxonMobil Chief Executive Officer Rex Tillerson appeared on NBC's "Today Show" to defend ballooning oil company profits.

"It's the free market," he said, throwing up his hands, as though that was the only explanation required.

He pleaded not guilty to banditry at the expense of workers who are emptying their wallets to get to the grocery store, visit the doctor and pick up their kids from school.

He said ExxonMobil and other companies were using some of their profits to "boost refining capacity and launch new exploration projects." Well, yes—capitalists reinvest their profits so they can make more. Big deal.

"We're in business to make money," Tillerson added helpfully. True, and last year, ExxonMobil raked in the biggest annual profit of any company in history\$36.16 billion—up 43 percent from 2004. (Washington Post, Jan. 30)

ExxonMobil's profits rose again in the first quarter of 2006, to \$8.4 billion, up from \$7.86 billion in the same period last year. (Bloomberg, May 8)

Tillerson's not alone. Business Week Online reported May 5 that the 2006 earnings forecast for ExxonMobil, BP, Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron, Total and ConocoPhillips totals \$135 billion—much more than the gross domestic product of many countries.

According to a report in The Independent of London on May 7, Big Oil has spent an estimated \$20 million on public relations advertising in the U.S. since the beginning of this year. And that's just a foretaste of the millions of dollars in campaign spending, lobbying and advertising planned as mid-term elections approach in November.

Don't believe the hype

Make no mistake: obscene profits make the executives and big shareholders of the major oil companies happy as hogs in mud. Times have been good to them. After all, the White House and Congress are controlled by their closest cronies, and the world's biggest war machine is mobilized full-time on their behalf.

Yet they're worried. Why?

As capitalist enterprises, the oil monopolies are driven by intense competition to maintain and increase their rate of profit. Anger against them is growing globally. It's reached the point where future earnings could be threatened.

On May 1, to the applause of many of his people, Bolivian President Evo Morales announced "a historic day in which Bolivia retakes absolute control of our natural resources." Morales put natural gas and oil reserves under state control and ordered 25 foreign energy companies to renegotiate the terms of their contracts.

Bolivia has joined with Cuba and Venezuela, one of the world's leading oil producers, in a trade agreement opposed to exploitative treaties pushed by Washington. Venezuela, too, has demanded more equitable arrangements from foreign companies—while offering low-cost heating oil to impoverished U.S. communities as an act of solidarity.

On May 8, Iraqi resistance forces bombed an oil pipeline south of Baghdad, the latest of many such attacks that have hampered oil production, export and profiteering under the U.S. occupation. George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq was supposed to make that country into a private U.S. oil reserve. The popular resistance has stymied that plan indefinitely.

The Bush administration is now bullying Iran, another major oil producer, over its development of nuclear technology. In response, Iran's government has threatened to cut off oil exports to the West.

Unrest in Nigeria, Sudan, Chad and other African countries is making it hard for Big Oil to follow through on plans to exploit their oil reserves. Russia is demanding more control of its petroleum resources. And so on.

Exxon exec paid \$144,574 a day

Residents of the small town of Beeville, Texas, have launched a boycott of Exxon-Mobil, the Associated Press reported May 8. Though modest, such actions demonstrate the depth of anger against Big Oil here at home.

Outrage was stoked by a New York Times report that former ExxonMobil CEO Lee R. Raymond was paid the equivalent of \$144,574 a day over 13 years, including a nearly \$400 million windfall in 2005.

Raymond is a particularly gross illustration of the fact that CEOs make on average 531 times what their workers are paid.

Meanwhile, the likelihood of poor people in the U.S. raising their standard of living significantly—slim to begin with—is shrinking.

According to "Understanding Mobility in America," a study released in April by economist Tom Hertz of American University, a child born into a poor family has only a 1 percent change of ever getting into the top 5 percent of income-makers.

In fact, the "land of opportunity" has one of the lowest levels of income mobility among the wealthy capitalist countries.

Most workers in the U.S. have not read this report, of course. But they live with its consequences every day—not only at the gas pump, but whenever a friend or loved one comes home in a body bag from Iraq, or when a prescription medication is priced out of reach.

Big Oil execs know that quiet anger is starting to turn into mass political action. If there were any doubts, the May Day outpouring of immigrant workers and their supporters proved it.

In an attempt to co-opt and divert mass anger into safe channels, congressional Democrats are calling for a tax on what they term "excessive profits." President Bush has committed the federal government to investigate charges of "price gouging." Some states, like California, are following suit.

Even if these initiatives were followed through, they would only amount to a slap on the wrist. But Big Oil can't tolerate the thought of it—hence the millions being pumped into congressional election campaigns, ads and lobbying.

If the rate of profit is great enough, Karl Marx said, there is no crime capitalists will not stoop to, no atrocity they will not commit. Ultimately, to end high fuel prices, oil wars and the environmental destruction caused by abuse of fossil fuels, the working class must expropriate Big Oil and all capitalist industries and run them for people's needs, not profits.

Cover-up exposed in teen's boot camp death

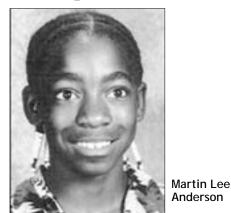
Continued from page 3

around the country.

Anderson's body was exhumed on March 10. The family had always demanded the truth and felt there was a cover-up. The family hired a private doctor to observe the second autopsy.

Dr. Michael Braden, the private doctor, said that Anderson did not die of natural causes.

Late in March it was revealed that Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Guy Tunnell had been exchanging e-mails with those he was supposed to be investigating. The emails were "chummy," revealing a back-scratching relationship that had up to that point seemed to cover up Anderson's killing.



Michigan coalition launched Network to defend reproductive rights

By Kris Hamel

Students in Florida put pressure on the state to take action. National Black leaders converged on Florida to demand justice. The state responded to the evergrowing din.

On May 5, the official second autopsy report was released. It showed that Anderson had been suffocated by the guards. The second autopsy revealed that the lethal amount of ammonia Anderson was made to inhale caused the young man's throat to seize. His mouth was covered, while guards held the ammonia capsules under his nose.

The guards at the camp are now under investigation and all boot camps in the state have been shut down. It is important to highlight that it took over a month



before the truth began to be revealed.

These kinds of incidents at the hands of racist cops are commonplace in prisons and jails and on the streets. Cops and the prison-industrial complex are just weapons of the capitalist class. In fact, these representations of the state are not much different from the CIA prisons at Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib.

People of color are aware of the above facts because the police and prison system are used more often against oppressed communities, which have the most to gain by decisive action against state repression. As the family, the community and supporters demand justice for the killing of Martin Lee Anderson, the measures that led to his death must be further scrutinized and an analysis made as to why this beating and killing of a young man was not merely an exception. \Box

Detroit

Pro-choice activists came together here on May 6 to launch the Detroit Action Network for Reproductive Rights (DAN-FORR), a coalition of individuals and groups committed to carrying out a struggle-oriented approach to defending and expanding women's reproductive rights in Michigan and nationally. Participants included a representative from Planned Parenthood and an administrator of a Detroit-area reproductive services/abortion provider clinic.

A lively discussion and exchange of ideas and action proposals took place at the group's initial organizing meeting. Members agreed to do extensive educational outreach as well as mount demonstrations and other pro-choice actions.

A new South Dakota law banning virtually all abortions in that state was the topic of much discussion, including the couraFire Thunder to build a women's clinic on the historic Pine Ridge Reservation in the state. Fire Thunder is a leader of the South Dakota Campaign for Healthy Families, which is petitioning voters to place the new law on the November ballot in hopes of overturning it.

DANFORR plans to organize a rally in solidarity with Fire Thunder and the women of South Dakota as well as raise funds for the new clinic. Organizers also decided to hold a press conference and rally at the end of June, just before the nochoice South Dakota law goes into effect on July 1, to say they will not allow Michigan to join South Dakota in taking away the right of women to choose.

Other action ideas will be discussed and implemented at the next organizing meeting of DANFORR on May 19. To get involved or for more information, call (313) 378-2369 or e-mail detroitaction@netscape.net. □

The May Day uprising of 2006: A wake-up call (for all of us)

This contribution from Larry Holmes of the Workers World Party Secretariat was written for discussion at the May 13-14 conference on socialism in New York.

The U.S. capitalist class-and anyone else who has sought to keep the working class in North America shackled to the ideology and the political parties of the ruling class and prevent it from developing class consciousness, militancy and solidarity with workers around the planet-has suffered a stunning defeat of epic proportions. To almost everyone's surprise, millions of immigrant workers, from Los Angeles to New York to Chicago and more than 100 other cities, left their jobs and schools to take to the streets, bringing back May Day-International Workers' Day-in a big way to the country of its origin.

Not only did immigrants reclaim May Day, a day that U.S. imperialists thought they had forever wiped out in this country, but these workers also pulled off the first truly national general strike-and what's more, a strike against the government over political demands as opposed to a strike directed at this or that employer in a particular industry over economic issues.

May Day 2006 is a wake-up call for all who consider themselves progressive. socialist or pro-socialist, whether they be in the labor unions, the anti-war movement or wherever. Those who did not participate in or support the May Day uprising especially need to reassess their inaction immediately.

May Day 2006 is a wake-up call for all those who once were, and perhaps still remain, a part of the good fight but had given up on the working class and the prospect of a qualitative and historic break coming from down below, in spite of the seemingly endless prevalence of bourgeois reactionary politics. It's time to reassess those doubts.

Perhaps most importantly, May Day 2006 is a clarion call to legions of new soldiers who are ready to join the class struggle on the workers' side.

Potential for unity

The "Sleeping Giant," as some have called the millions of workers who took to the streets on May Day in the U.S., is not only distinguished by the fact that many of these workers are undocumented. They are also the face of the working class in this country right now, and will be even more so in the future.

In every industry and in every part of the country, the working class is more often than not made up of workers in lowwage jobs, many of whom are recent immigrants, people of color and women. Many come from countries where May Day is a holiday and class consciousness is far ahead of what it is in the U.S. today. Imperialist globalization-the impetus behind the large migration of workershas re-introduced class struggle and militancy into the working class worldwide. At the same time that imperialism is globalizing super-wage exploitation, it's also globalizing working-class consciousness and militancy. In many ways the composition of the New York City May 1 coalition exemplifies the extraordinary potential for uniting the various nationalities who make up the working class in the United States. The coalition meetings were held at Local 808 of the Teamsters, in Long Island City. This was made possible by Chris Silvera, who is the secretary treasurer of the local,



regional co-director of the Million Worker March Movement, and chair of the **Teamsters National Black Caucus.**

Usually present at the meetings were representatives of immigrant communities from Mexico, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Puerto Rico and other Central and South American countries, the Philippines, China, Pakistan, India, Senegal and countries of the Middle East, and, of special significance, Black trade unionists and activists.

Join them!

While the outpouring of immigrant workers was spontaneous in nature, it was not without organization. While the larger U.S. labor unions have not been able to, or not tried to, organize immigrants, workers from Central and South America, the Caribbean, Asia, Africa and the Middle East have organized themselves into workers' associations. This new network is active in every region of the country, doing everything from providing food and legal assistance to workers and their families, to fighting for basic workers' rights in sweatshops of all sizes.

The biggest lesson for the tens of millions of workers in the U.S. who are being ordered from on high to fear and fight immigrant workers is, "Don't fight and fear your immigrant sisters and brothersjoin them and take a lesson from them!"

Just imagine if 3 or 4 million workers from all nationalities had joined with immigrant workers on May Day to press demands for all workers. What if the idea of a workers' boycott or general strike caught on in other sectors of the working class? Just think: a general strike to end the war and/or to demand health insurance for all! While it is still too early to say for sure that the immigrant worker movement has defeated the most repressive features of the anti-immigrant legislation known as HR4437-particularly the section of the bill that would have made it a felony to be in the country without documentsclearly, at least for the moment, the momentum behind that bill has been pushed back.

whom are not able to vote even if they wanted to-were able to push back repression through mass action, as opposed to waiting for the elections in order to place their hopes on the Democratic Party.

Political divide

Can the upsurge of immigrant workers spread to all workers? Yes it can, if there is leadership and direction. At the earliest possible time a national framework for a united workers' struggle should be created with a program of demands that concretely unites the struggle of immigrant workers for full legalization with the struggle for justice for the survivors of Katrina, the fight for higher wages for all workers, health care and pensions, the right to a job, the right to a union, and opposition to the new wave of mass layoffs and plant closings that so many workers are facing.

But before such a plan for programmatic and organizational unity can be fully launched, the undocumented workers and their demands need to be supported.

The May Day uprising is first and foremost a rebellion against racist legislation that would criminalize undocumented workers and their supporters. Beyond this, it is a struggle to win full legal rights for the undocumented.

The immigrant rights movement is split over what course the movement should

PHOTO: WORKPLACE PROJECT

ate demands, as well as open new potential for a wider class struggle, lies with the leadership of the militants, stand closer to those political forces. Nonetheless, the main responsibility for those who are in solidarity with the struggle of the immigrants is to do everything within their power to insure that the immigrant workers' struggle is not isolated, but instead wins the support of broader and broader sections of the progressive and workers' movement.

Build multi-national alliance

In this regard, at this moment, nothing could be more important then the solidarity between the Black movement and the immigrant rights movement. The solidarity of Black labor unionists with May Day in New York City was both concrete and decisive. After more moderate forces in the immigrant rights struggle declined support for the May Day boycott, it was Black labor unionists in the Million Worker March movement who made sure that the May 1 coalition had labor support.

The ruling class knows that if Black and Latin@ forces began to join and, for example, link the struggle for immigrant rights and the struggle to rebuild New Orleans for the people who have been victimized and displaced, then it will really have a big problem. In order to undermine the prospect of Black and Brown unity, bourgeois media mouthpieces have gone out of their way to draw attention to and exacerbate divisions. The efforts to sabotage the natural unity between Black and Brown must not, and will not, succeed. In his excellent piece entitled "Build the Black and Brown alliance for justice and human rights," Saladin Muhammad of Black Workers for Justice points out, "The struggle against the U.S. system of oppression is not a competition between the oppressed to declare themselves as the leaders of the struggle. The initiative from any sector of the oppressed must be seen as an opening for all of the oppressed to come forward and intensify their struggles. "Yes, there must be recognition that these are two independent movements with their own demands and leaderships. However, there must also be a conscious effort to develop an understanding and practical work to build the political and Continued on page 7

There's a lesson in this for everyone who still thinks that they have no choice but to support the lesser-of-two-evils candidate of a capitalist political party. Millions of workers-most of whom have not voted

On one side of the divide are those who support legislation that combines granting legal status to some undocumented workers with the institution of new "guest worker" programs, and more money and measures to repress the undocumented.

The more militant forces in this struggle are fighting for full legalization and full workers' rights for all the undocumented.

Those organizations and leaders that support compromise legislation are generally inclined to lead the struggle into a Democratic Party electoral course. The more militant, struggle-oriented forces are the ones who called for May Day and the general strike and are looking to build a mass mobilization in Washington this fall.

This political divide over demands and direction is a natural and inevitable part of the struggle.

Those who believe that the greater potential for this struggle to win immedi-

LONG ISLAND, N.Y.

Racists attack Latin@ immigrants

By Heather Cottin Freehold, N.Y.

Racist violence against Latin@s in the wealthy Hamptons area of Long Island is increasing.

On April 29, three Latin@ youths were subjected to a horrifying racist attack by five white high school students. The leader of the assault, who later told police he was a neo-Nazi skinhead, invited the three teenagers-his high school classmatesinto a shed on his mother's property. Once

inside, he chased the youth of color with a revved-up chainsaw and held a machete to the neck of one, as all five white teenagers reportedly hurled vicious racist epithets. After 90 minutes of terror, the Latin@ youths escaped. (New York Times, May 9)

As word of the incident spread, school officials suspended-for only five daysthe white supremacist leader of the April 29 assault and two other students who officials said were linked to it.

After rumors that white supremacist friends of the self-avowed neo-Nazi leader



May1 New York

strategic links and interdependence of these movements as a force for progressive social change throughout the U.S. and for global justice. Workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world have been desperately hoping for such a powerful interconnecting movement to develop

inside of the U.S." Of course, the solidarity must go beyond Black and Brown, and all progressive forces have a lot of work to do because we are way behind. Nothing illustrates the magnitude of this problem more then a snapshot of two mass demonstrations in New York City, separated by 48 hours.

On April 29, hundreds of thousands marched two miles down Broadway from Union Square to Foley Square against the war. On May 1, upwards of half a million people marched the same route.

Both marches were anti-war, pro-immigrant workers' rights. But the social composition of the two marches was as different as night and day. The April 29 march was overwhelmingly white. The May Day march was probably 99 percent people of color, predominantly Latin@ workers, with significant contingents of workers of Asian and African descent. If pressed to guess how many from the April 29 march attended the May 1 mobilization, the answer would probably be such a small percentage that it was hardly noticeable. Yet if only half, or even onethird, of the April 29 marchers had demonstrated again on May Day, it would have sent a signal that all efforts to turn people against immigrant workers on the basis of race, social and legal status were doomed to fail.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

racial fragmentation in every part of society in this country, including the progressive movement.

This fragmentation goes deeper in this country than in other parts of the world.

The U.S. ruling class loves for the world to consider this country the land of opportunity and the apex of modernity, scientific, social and cultural superiority. But the U.S. really is the center of decaying imperialism, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and every other kind of reactionary social division that capitalism spawns. Inequality is celebrated here, and the poor are demonized. This country is the citadel of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois privilege, prejudice and arrogance, and the dominion of wealthy white men.

The long period that reactionary politics and policies have dominated the scene in this country, coupled with the absence of a generalized and sustained struggle coming from the working class, has made the fragmentation in the U.S. even deeper.

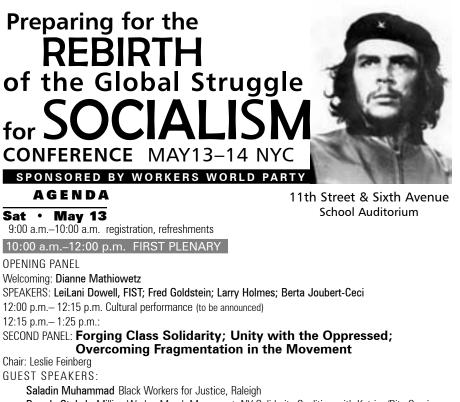
One must understand the effects of all this. even on attitudes and behavior within the progressive movement, in order to understand and to fight the conservatism, opportunism and non-struggle traditions that have corrupted much of the leadership of the labor unions and to one extent or another the forces that guide most of the progressive movements. The good news is that the fragmentation is not impossible to overcome. But it will take a ceaseless, determined, iron-willed struggle on the part of those who are ready to break down old barriers of behavior and prejudice and nurture a tradition-new for many-of solidarity in the struggle against all forms of oppression.

of the attack were planning a Columbinestyle shooting at East Hampton High School, more than 700 parents packed the school auditorium on May 8 demanding answers from school officials and police.

Isabel Sepulveda, president of Organización Latino Americana, said, "For at least two years, mothers have told me they are very worried that their kids are being abused and threatened."

Just five days after the white supremacist assault on the Latin@ youth, Robert Rossetti Jr. used his car to attack and severely injure Jonathan Cedillo. Cedillo, who is a U.S. citizen of American Indian and Mexican descent, recalled, "He was cursing at me, telling me I'm an immigrant and to get out of this country."

Carlos Canales of the Workplace Project says: "Something has to be done in Suffolk County, because this is part of all the antiimmigrant sentiment caused by politicians like Peter King, co-author of HR4437. We need to have organizations to respond to these attacks." \Box



Brenda Stokely Million Worker March Movement, NY Solidarity Coalition with Katrina/Rita Survivors Tony Van Der Meer Boston Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee Other speakers: Phebe Eckfeldt, Larry Hales, Monica Moorehead

1:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m. Lunch (outside of hall)

Fight Imperialism, Stand Together-FIST youth & student workshop (inside hall-see registration table for more information)

3:00 p.m.–4:15 p.m. SECOND PLENARY

The Workers' Struggles have no borders

FIRST PANEL: The significance of the immigrant rights' movement

Chair: Teresa Gutierrez GUEST SPEAKERS: Alejandro Ahumada, Association Joaquin Murieta, Los Angeles Berna Ellorin, Bayan USA; Migrante International Carlos Canales, Workplace Project, Long Island Other speakers: Sharon Black; David Hoskins, FIST; John Parker 4:15 p.m.-4:25 p.m. Cultural performance Pam Parker, singer

For more information: 212-627-2994 wwp@workers.org

For pre-registration and pre-conference documents, ao online to workersworld.net

4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.:

SECOND PANEL: Changing character and conditions of the working class Chair: Minnie Bruce Pratt

INVITED GUEST SPEAKERS:

Chris Silvera, chair, Teamsters National Black Caucus

Frantz Mendes, president, USWA Local 8751, Boston Other speakers: Martha Grevatt, Dave Sole, FIST members-Peter Gilbert, Ruth Vela 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Dinner (inside the hall)

The same problem is evident in the minimal participation of anti-war protesters at the various local and national demonstrations in solidarity with the survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

Racism fragments working class

The biggest obstacle to forging a truly multi-national working-class movement that can move in a revolutionary direction is not the might of the Pentagon, but the

Need for a revolutionary party

Understanding the utter necessity of solidarity for the struggle to move forward, and knowing the hard work and patience, the revolutionary principles, sensitivity, political maturity and experience that will be required for this job should put the appreciation of the need for Continued on page 10

LGBT meeting (see registration table for more information)

6:45 p.m.–8:30 p.m. THIRD PLENARY SESSION

PANEL: Fighting Imperialism & Building Revolutionary Internationalism Chair: Cheryl LaBash

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Nellie Bailey, Harlem Tenants Council, Troops Out Now Coalition Vannia Lara, Dominican activist Yoomi Jeong, Secretary-General, Korea Truth Commission Ignacio Meneses, National Network on Cuba; U.S. Cuba Labor Exchange Ardeshir Ommani, American-Iranian Friendship Committee Other speakers: Joyce Chediac, Sara Flounders, Arturo J. Peréz-Saad, Bryan G. Pfeifer

Cultural performance Urban Essence Dance Performance Collaborative

Sun · May 14

8:30 a.m.- registration; refreshments 9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. Discussion groups on domestic & global issues, struggles

Unless otherwise identified, the majority of speakers are members of Workers World Party, including FIST members.

11:45 a.m.–1:45 .m. FOURTH PLENARY

PANEL: Building a Revolutionary Party Chair: Rachel Nasca

Special remarks: Casandra Clark Mazariego, Urban Essence Dance Performance Collaborative & Boston Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee

Speakers: Yolanda Carrington, FIST; John Catalinotto; Deirdre Griswold; Kris Hamel; Richard Kossali Closing remarks by Larry Holmes Singing of Internationale

2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Learn about Workers World Party workshop (inside hall)

Shouts of 'war criminal' disrupt Rumsfeld

By Dianne Mathiowetz Atlanta

Four anti-war activists disrupted a speech by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at the Atlanta History Center on May 4. They included members of World Can't Wait, the International Action Center, and the Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition. Their action was reported in media around the world.

Rumsfeld is one of the chief architects of the invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, along with other neoconservatives like Vice President Dick Cheney. Rumsfeld also supports the use of torture and domestic spying in the U.S. "war on terror."

As the top civilian in the Pentagon, he has publicly stated that he does not rule out using nuclear weapons against Iran. Despite intense criticism of Rumsfeld for failing to "win" in Iraq, much of it coming from military and other right-wing quarters, President George W. Bush has continued to defend his policies. The existence of this internal conflict fueled the worldwide media attention given to the disruption and to the sharp questions directed at Rumsfeld.

Almost as soon as Rumsfeld began giving his written remarks, a small, darkhaired woman leaped to her feet, holding a piece of cloth with the words, "Guilty of War Crimes." She began denouncing the secretary's role in the illegal war on Iraq



and the use of torture at Guantanamo and other, often secret, prison camps. The crowd began booing and yelling. The banner was wrested from her hands as security rushed her out of the room.

As Rumsfeld resumed his prepared speech, a man named Randy Aronov, who had been sitting in a center seat toward the front, stood up and turned his back. Every time Rumsfeld looked up from his notes, Aronov's silent rebuke was in his range of vision, disconcerting the speaker and the audience. Security did not prevent Aronov from standing throughout the speech.

Minutes later, 62-year-old Gloria Tatum rose from her seat and shouted out a list of lies told to the U.S. public to gain support for the war. Holding a cloth sign that read, "Rumsfeld: Serial Liar," she Gloria Tatum of IAC confronts Rumsfeld.

raised the false claims by Rumsfeld that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons capability and links to terrorism. A video of her being hit from behind and dragged out of the room was shown on news programs internationally.

Later in his prepared remarks, Rumsfeld was again cut off by the loud voice of a young man who declared him a "war criminal" and was quickly removed from the room.

In the question-and-answer period, audience members lined up at the microphones. Former CIA analyst Ray McGovern grilled Rumsfeld on his prewar statements about the existence of WMD in Iraq. When the Pentagon chief denied making such remarks, McGovern quoted his exact words and gave the date and location. This revealing exchange went on for several minutes, with Rumsfeld becoming increasingly inconsistent and incoherent in his responses.

McGovern, in town for another event, had been encouraged to come to the speech by protest organizers to add another voice to the action. A high-ranking member of the CIA for 27 years, he has been vocal in his criticism of the Bush administration's drive for war, claiming that it had ignored CIA intelligence and manufactured the rationale for the invasion. McGovern said he had been inspired to ask his questions because of the disruptions and Rumsfeld's denial of the truth.

According to IAC member Tatum, the Rumsfeld speech was "the only time the public has ever had a chance to go to something in Atlanta with a top Bush official. Usually they are invitation only and the audience is hand-picked to be sure no real questions are asked. As soon as we found out about it being open, we got tickets."

In addition, a picket line outside the History Center, located in the wealthy Buckhead neighborhood of Atlanta, got much attention. Among the protesters were members of Iraq Veterans against the War and Veterans for Peace. Several people were dressed in orange jumpsuits with hoods over their faces, representing the prisoners tortured at Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and elsewhere.

Banners and signs demanded that all troops be brought home now and no new war be waged on Iran. The positive response the demonstration got from many passing by in their cars was taken note of in the local news. \Box

Prof. Sami al-Arian Harsh sentence keeps Palestinian in jail

By G. Dunkel

The case of Professor Sami al-Arian is but the latest example of how the United States government can use its vast repressive powers to grab a victory that it couldn't win before a jury.

In December of 2005, the government lost most of its case against al-Arian, whom it had accused of being the "linch pin" of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in North America. He was acquitted on eight of the most serious charges; the jury deadlocked 10-2 over acquitting him on the nine remaining. Three of his co-defendants were totally acquitted.

Al-Arian had been a professor of computer science at the University of South Florida. He also was one of the founders of the World and Islam Studies Enterprise, formed to promote dialog between the "Muslim and Western worlds." He is a Palestinian, born in Kuwait and raised in Egypt, who came to the United States in 1975, got an education, married and had five children, all born in the U.S. Al-Arian was held in solitary confinement after being arrested in February 2003, depriving him of contact with his children. After his trial, facing the possibility of a retrial and knowing he was going to be deported anyway, he agreed to a plea bargain. He pleaded guilty to helping a PIJ associate and his brother-in-law with immigration issues and accepted deportation. That would let him be reunited with his family. In return, the other charges were to be dismissed and he would receive a light sentence.

and Customs Enforcement, even though he had been acquitted of all the charges against him. ICE claimed that Israel wouldn't accept Hammoudeh's return to the West Bank, although Israeli spokesmen for three ministries told the St. Petersburg Times in late February that they knew of no problems with his return.

When al-Arian went to federal court in Tampa, Fla., on May 1 for his sentencing, U.S. District Judge James S. Moody Jr. gave him the maximum penalty of 57 months, meaning that, even with time served, he still has to serve another 18 months in jail. Moody accepted all the prosecution's accusations, even those rejected by the jury.

Al-Arian's lawyer had told the court that his client had played a significant but purely political role in PIJ-but only before it had been declared a "terrorist" organization by the U.S. government in 1995. The government had begun its investigation of al-Arian and his co-defendants in 1993, amassing 400,000 wiretapped conversations-about 8,000 a week. Even with all this effort and after spending millions of dollars, the government still wasn't able to convince a jury in Tampa that al-Arian was a terrorist. But it kept him locked up, out of contact with his family, using threats of further and continued prosecution to force him to concede. It then used his concession to brand him as a "liar and hypocrite," got the judge to break the government's agreement and punished him to the limit. The government still has the tools it needs to get the courts to mete out cruel and vindictive punishment, especially to Palestinians who challenge it.



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, René González FREE THE CUBAN FIVE NOW

May 20 protests to demand Hands off Cuba & Venezuela

Continued from page 1

African-American organizations and leaders, including People's Hurricane Relief, All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party and People of African Descent in Solidarity with Venezuela.

Actor Danny Glover, anti-war leader

Weinglass represents Antonio Guerrero, one of the five Cuban anti-terrorists held unjustly in U.S. prisons. Jose Pertierra represents the government of Venezuela in extradition proceedings against Luis Posada Carriles, an admitted terrorist who is wanted in Venezuela for the 1976 mid-air bombing of a Cubana airlines flight that killed 73 people, including a young fencing team. The struggle to Free the Cuban Five and extradite Posada will be featured at the activity. Other themes include stopping U.S. intervention and hostile campaigns against Venezuela, ending Washington's economic and political war against Cuba, allowing U.S. citizens and legal residents to travel freely to Cuba, normalizing U.S.-Cuban relations, closing the Guantanamo torture camp and returning Guantanamo to Cuba, and stopping all U.S. military intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean.

He knew that one of his co-defendants, Sameeh Hammoudeh, was still being held in solitary confinement by Immigration

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Cindy Sheehan and author Noam Chomsky are all recent endorsers who have been invited to speak.

The march will begin by greeting the Cuban Interests Section and then proceed to the quasi-governmental National Endowment for Democracy, which has heavily funded the right-wing opposition in Venezuela, on its way to Lafayette Park across from the White House.

On the West Coast, a march in Los Angeles will gather at the downtown Federal Building at noon on May 20.

Audio addresses from national leaders of both Bolivarian Venezuela and Cuba will be aired in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. Other invited speakers are attorneys Leonard Weinglass and Jose Pertierra, Reverends Lucius Walker and Luis Barrios, Colombian trade unionist Gerardo Cajamarca, and Elma Beatriz Rosado, widow of slain Puerto Rican freedom fighter Filiberto Ojeda Rios.

Online donations can be made at www.may20coalition.org, which also has more information. For West Coast information, call (213) 383-9283 or (323) 936-7266. There are downloadable Los Angeles leaflets at www.iacenterla.org. □

<u>A tale of two 'copters</u> Occupiers hit in Iraq, Afghanistan

By John Catalinotto

The U.S.-led occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan continued to deteriorate as guerrillas brought down a British attack helicopter over Basra, killing five troops, and a U.S. military transport helicopter crashed in eastern Afghanistan, killing 10 troops out of Fort Drum, N.Y.

Compounding British problems, hundreds of cheering Basra residents gathered around the downed helicopter, throwing stones at soldiers from the British Army's Quick Reaction Force when they got to the scene. Some Basra residents chanted support for Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi army. The British troops then opened fire on the Iraqis, killing four or five, including a child, according to Iraqi police.

It was typical of the occupation force that its spokespeople first tried to blame the Mahdi Army for the deaths of the people, only later admitting that British troops were responsible.

The downing of the attack helicopter is a tactical problem for the British. It proves their helicopters are vulnerable to ground fire. The British occupation force has been using helicopters more frequently, just as the U.S. does farther north, since it began losing trucks and troops to roadside bombs. The British are now reviewing their use of helicopters, according to the May 8 Guardian newspaper.

But the political problem is even greater. During the first years of occupation, the south of Iraq had been overall more cooperative with the occupation than the center of the country. The occupation Mahdi Army in 2004 led an uprising in Najaf and some other cities but then joined the coalition of Shiite-based political parties to form the Iraqi puppet government. Apparently this relationship is changing.

According to the Guardian, "a commander of the Mahdi Army, Jassan Khalaf, was reported yesterday [May 7] as saying that his men brought down the helicopter and threatened more attacks."

Journalists at risk in Iraq

The BRussels Tribunal, which recently participated in a seminar in Madrid exposing U.S. responsibility for the deaths of Iraqi academicians and scientists, published a report from the Iraqi Journalists Union (IJU) on May 8 that documents 109 journalists killed in the last three years in Iraq.

The report, which names each of the journalists, "took five months of working on the ground, documenting when, where, how and by whom the journalists were killed."

According to the IJU, 69 journalists were killed by militias or unknown armed individuals, 21 were killed in explosions or fighting, 17 were shot by the U.S. troops and two were shot by the Iraqi troops.

The Belgian anti-occupation group points out that besides the 19 journalists killed directly by U.S. or puppet troops, the occupation authorities are indirectly responsible for the other killings because they should be providing a safe environment for journalists to work in.

Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, an Al Jazeera correspondent reported that Muhamad Hanif a spokesperson for the Taliban—said his movement had shot down the U.S. helicopter in Kunar province near the border with Pakistan. Hanif said that the Taliban has acquired advanced weaponry capable of destroying U.S. helicopters.

If the Taliban did shoot down the helicopter, it wouldn't be the first. Last June, in the same province, the Pentagon admitted that the Taliban shot down another U.S. military helicopter with a rocket-propelled grenade, killing all 16 Special Forces troops on board.

The Pentagon claimed no hostile fire was involved this time, implying that bad weather was behind the crash. The U.S. offensive in Kunar province depends heavily on armed helicopters.

NATO and other U.S. allies—many of which have refused to operate in Iraq or

have left—have begun to replace Pentagon forces in the west and north of Afghanistan, including the capital, Kabul. They are organized under the command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). If the political leaders making this decision are thinking there will be no political repercussions at home because there is little chance for casualties, they may be unhappily surprised.

The ISAF, which had 10,000 troops from 30 countries in Afghanistan, is scheduled to take over anti-resistance operations in the south and east from U.S. troops by the end of the year. The ISAF will then have between 23,000 and 25,000 troops in the country.

Countries like Germany, whose government refused to take part in the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, are contributing large numbers of troops to ISAF in an attempt to mend relations with Washington and play a role in the U.S.-European alliance that is trying to take control of the oil and gas resources of the Middle East.

These operations and the casualties they will inevitably cause will continue to erode popular support for intervention. The Tony Blair government in Britain just took a beating in municipal elections, with many of its problems stemming from the intervention in Iraq.

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25 years ago Irish prisoners chose death over surrender

By Dustin Langley

Twenty-five years ago, 10 Irish freedom fighters died in the 1981 Irish Hunger Strike, a campaign launched to regain basic human rights for political prisoners held by the British government.

The events that led to the hunger strike began in 1976, when the British government ended its policy of giving Special Category Status to Irish prisoners of war in Northern Ireland. Special Category status for Irish political prisoners meant they were treated as prisoners of war: they had not been required to wear prison uniforms or do prison labor.

Ending this special status was intended to break the discipline and organization of the political prisoners. It was part of an ongoing strategy to criminalize the resistance to British occupation.

In response, Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) prisoners began the "blanket protest" in which prisoners refused to wear prison uniforms and either went naked or made clothing from their blankets. After a few weeks it became clear that British government officials had no intention of meeting the prisoners' demands and had simply been bluffing in order to end the hunger strike. On March 1, 1981, a new hunger strike began.

Bobby Sands—an officer in the IRA imprisoned in Long Kesh—was the first to refuse food.

The hunger strikers knew that they were likely to die, because British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had publicly rejected any compromise.

Sands said, "They won't break me because the desire for freedom, and the freedom of the Irish people, is in my heart. The day will dawn when all the people of Ireland will have the desire for freedom to show. It is then that we will see the rising of the moon."

Sands was a long-time freedom fighter, having first been jailed at age 17 for his IRA activities. He spent all but six months of the rest of his life—a decade—in prison where he read widely, particularly the political writings of Franz Fanon and Che Guevara. Shortly after the beginning of the strike, the independent Irish republican MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone died. (To be a republican in Ireland means wanting Northern Ireland to be part of the Irish republic, not Britain.) Sands was nominated to run for the seat, and was elected to the House of Commons on April 9, 1981. He won 30,492 votes, defeating pro-British Ulster Unionist Party candidate Harry West, who got 29,046. Three weeks later, Sands died from starvation in the prison hospital. The announcement of his death prompted several days of outrage in the streets of Northern Ireland. At the funeral procession, more than 100,000 people marched behind Bobby Sands' coffin. A lone piper marched at the lead, playing a song made popular by supporters of the hunger strikes: "I'll wear no convict's uniform, nor meekly serve my time, that Britain may call Ireland's fight 800 years of crime."

Over the summer, nine more hunger strikers also died. They were Francis Hughes, Patsy O'Hara, Raymond McCreesh, Joe McDonnell, Martin Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Kieran Doherty, Thomas McElwee and Michael Devine.

In late summer, the hunger strike began to break as Catholic clergy succeeded in

convincing families of prisoners who had lost consciousness to give consent to the prison authorities to feed them intravenously. After this happened with a number of prisoners, the IRA and INLA called off the hunger strike, then at 217 days, on Oct. 3, 1981.

hungen strike Bobby Sands

tiated an agreement with the prison authorities.

In Cuba, Fidel Castro said of the hunger strikers, "Tyrants shake in the presence of men who are able to die for their ideals, after 60 days of hunger strike."

In June of 1981, a group of Palestinian prisoners in Nafha prison sent a letter to the families of the hunger strikers that read, in part, "We, revolutionaries of the Palestinian people who are under the terrorist rule of Zionism, write you this letter

> from the desert prison of Nafha. We extend our salutes and solidarity with you in the confrontation against the oppressive terrorist rule enforced upon the Irish people by the British ruling elite....

"We salute the heroic struggle of Bobby Sands and his comrades, for they have sacrificed the most valuable possession of any human being. They gave their lives for freedom. From here in Nafha prison where savage snakes and desert sands penetrate our cells, from here under the yoke of Zionist occupation, we stand alongside you. From behind our cell bars, we support you, your people and your revolutionaries who have chosen to confront death. ... Our people in Palestine and in the Zionist prisons are struggling as your people are struggling against the British monopolies, and we will both continue until victory." The example of Bobby Sands and the other heroes of the hunger strike continues to inspire resistance today. In Iran, whose people know well the brutality of U.S. and British intervention, the government has renamed the street in front of the British Embassy, formerly called Winston Churchill Street, after Bobby Sands. The Embassy moved its front door around the corner so that its letterhead would avoid bearing his name.



These protests aimed to re-establish their status as political prisoners by securing the "Five Demands":

- the right not to wear a prison uniform;
- the right not to do prison work;
- the right of free association with other prisoners;
- the right to organize their own educational and recreational facilities; and
- the right to one visit, one letter and one parcel per week.

In October 1980, the first hunger strike began. Women and men in three different prisons participated. After two months, with one prisoner close to death, the British government appeared to concede the prisoners' right to wear their own clothes. The strike was called off in December, before any prisoners died. inspired an upsurge of

resistance against British occupation and a revitalization of IRA activity, which gained many new recruits.

The success of Bobby Sands' campaign for Parliament, combined with that of prohunger-strike candidates, inspired the "armalite and ballot box" strategy, where the Sinn Féin party participated in elections throughout Ireland while the IRA continued armed resistance against the British army and right-wing paramilitary forces.

The deaths of the 10 hunger strike martyrs drew worldwide condemnation of Britain. Resistance movements all over the globe drew inspiration from their struggle.

On Robben Island, Nelson Mandela led a group of prisoners on a hunger strike that was directly inspired by Bobby Sands. Among other issues, they demanded that their young children be able to visit them. After six days, Mandela successfully nego-



It can happen here

Bush's appointee to be the new head of the CIA, Air Force Gen. Michael V. Hayden, is exactly what one would expect of this president. He fits in well with John D. Negroponte, who was chosen by Bush to fill the newly created post of director of national intelligence and is reported to have forced the resignation of the previous CIA head, Porter Goss, in order to replace him with Hayden.

Negroponte came to his job with a most sinister resumé, having been a principal figure in facilitating the deathsquad governments in Central America in the 1980s that massacred hundreds of thousands of peasants, trade unionists, students and even church workers in order to keep the area secure for superexploitation by U.S. corporations.

The many immigrants from that region who today risk all for below-minimum-wage jobs in the U.S. are fleeing the takeover of their land by agribusiness and the entrenched poverty that followed the bloody suppression of those popular movements. And in Latin American countries, the miserable conditions created by the triumph of imperialist globalization in the 1980s and 1990s are fueling a great swing to the left, inspired by the proud, independent stands taken by Cuba and Venezuela.

Hayden has another connection that endears him to the Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld crowd. He's Air Force, and he's for taking more hundreds of billions out of general tax revenues and spending them on expensive high-tech war machines and gadgets that are supposed to keep the U.S. military unbeatable all over the world.

He also likes the kinds of gadgets that spy on people here. As director of the National Security Agency from 1999 until last year, when he was appointed Negroponte's deputy, he approved Bush's program to secretly eavesdrop on 5,000 people in the U.S. without getting court approval, as required by the FISA law. Even though 9/11 was on his watch as head of national security, he seems to have the old Reagan Teflon coating: nothing sticks to this spy chief.

Bush's approval rating has been steadily dropping in the polls, and is now his lowest ever: 32 percent. The economy has soured for tens of millions people, too, and the future looks even bleaker with rising energy prices and more layoffs. Bush can't drum up much support for his occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Yet he goes on with his right-wing agenda, as the appointment of Hayden shows.

In fact, the one thing the clique in the White House has going for them is the utter spinelessness of the Democratic Party leadership, which refuses to unambiguously embrace such popular positions as end the occupation, bring the troops home, tax the rich and restore gutted social services.

Nancy Pelosi, the California Democrat who is House minority leader, brushed off suggestions by Tim Russert of NBC's Meet the Press on May 7 that if the Democrats get a majority in the midterm election, they might be for getting out of Iraq or for investigating the false assertions of the Bush administration that Iraq had WMDs. She emphatically distanced herself from Rep. John Conyers of Michigan, asserting her party had no intention of taking any steps that might lead to Bush's impeachment. "I'm the leader" in the House, she said testily.

But while the charade of democracy goes on up above, in which the "people's" party reveals it is just as beholden to big business as the Republicans, there is true movement from below. Both the instability of the capitalist economy, and the sacrifices demanded of the workers and oppressed so that U.S. imperialism can keep trying to reassert its weakening grip over the world, are breaking up the decades of "class peace" at home. Most dramatic, of course, was the great upsurge on May Day, when millions of Latin@s took the lead in demonstrations for immigrant rights that also attracted many other nationalities and support from home-grown progressives.

Yes, the intent of those who wield state power is alarming. They have already shown their ugly fangs to much of the world, and anyone expecting them to be swayed by moral arguments must wait in vain.

But this whole period since the invasion of Iraq has shown that not even the most sophisticated and expensive technology can prevail over a determined people's resistance. If in other countries

Race & class warfare in New York

book

review

By Deirdre Sinnott

"The Devil's Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America," Barnet Schecter (Walker & Company, 2005)

Toward the end of Martin Scorsese's film, "Gangs of New York," the petty squabbles and turf wars of two gangs are put into perspective as a much larger, reallife battle breaks out on the streets of New York City, reminding the viewer that the events we've been watching are taking place during the U.S. Civil War.

New York City, the main conduit for the export of slave-grown cotton, had strong economic ties to secessionist elements in the South. Run by the Southern-sympathetic Democratic Party, the city was filled with anti-Black and anti-Civil War

rhetoric. Racist demagogy trumpeted from the pages of reactionary newspapers, the halls of Congress, and on street corners

by political operatives to manipulate class anger of poor and exploited Irish and German immigrants against the city's small, super-oppressed African-American community.

When President Abraham Lincoln, faced with growing losses on the battlefield, recruitment problems, and restricted by laws preventing the use of state militias for more than nine months, considered starting a federal military-conscription draft, New York's slums exploded in a violent uprising called the Draft Riots. On July 13, 1863, people who lived in the most squalid conditions raged through the city, turning into a roving lynch mob that attacked and murdered African Americans, burned the "Colored Orphan Asylum," sacked one of the draft offices, took weapons from the state armory and caused massive property damage throughout the city.

Barnet Schecter's "The Devil's Own Work" is an important and wellresearched view of this great disaster. The author does an admirable job showing the conditions that led to the Draft Riots. He brings readers from the battlefields of the Civil War, through the Five Points slum teeming with Irish immigrants who had fled the Great Famine, and into the inner workings of the various political parties. We learn about the smoky-rooms deals of the corrupt Tammany Hall Democrats and the political wrangling in New York and Washington.

It may surprise readers to know that at the time of the Civil War, a great debate arose over the constitutionality of a federal-conscription draft when most states controlled their own militias. However, the provision in the Draft Law allowed a man to avoid military service for a \$300 fee. An idea seen in Washington as a great income-gathering device made certain that the only poor men would be drafted. At the time a worker might earn \$300 only after a years-worth of work. The rebellion continued for three days before the federal government recalled troops from the historic victory at Gettysburg, Pa., to control the city. By July 17, after multiple deadly battles between protesters and troops, New York was mostly quiet. In the wake of the uprising, thousands of people, both African-American and wealthy, had fled the city for New Jersey and Westchester. While the rich

were ultimately compensated for losses and the draftees given state money to purchase their buyouts, the African-American population didn't recover for decades.

While "The Devil's Own Work" is extremely sympathetic to the plight of the Black population of the U.S., it fails to view either the enslaved Africans or free Blacks as a social force in their own right. For that readers must go to other books that show that the enslaved population was constantly active in resistance and in attempting to end slavery. One book can never cover all aspects of a social struggle as large as slavery's end-days, but this flaw is one that weakens the in-depth view Schecter has brought to the other aspects of the period.

To supplement this book, read W.E.B. Du Bois's transcendent work, "Black

Reconstruction in America 1860-1880." Here the most oppressed are shown in their actual role as part of the great social revolution that was the Civil War and Reconstruction. To understand the

Reconstruction. To understand the depth of the struggle waged by the enslaved Africans since their kidnapping and bondage in the Western hemisphere, see "American Negro Slave Revolts" by Herbert Aptheker. Having culled from newspapers, private diaries and slave narratives, the writer brought the constant battle for freedom to life.

A beautiful novel—which takes place during the Draft Riots and interweaves the stories of Black New Yorkers, Irish immigrants, newspaper reporters and uprising participants—is "Paradise Alley" by Kevin Baker. By following the events from several perspectives and using many real-life incidents from the riots, Baker creates an overview that is both moving and cinematic.

While the period is loosely covered in director Martin Scorsese's film "Gangs of New York," a short, vivid description is provided in Herbert Asbury's book of the same title. True to its subtitle, "An Informal History of the Underworld," Asbury's tawdry narrative, dubiously billed as "non-fiction," provides a ripping good read.

For those seeking information about this period, particularly as it played out in New York City, "The Devil's Own Work" provides both historical accuracy and a good entertaining overview, two attributes most non-fiction writers strive for. \Box



of workers and quite a few middle class

why not here? \Box

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a revolutionary party in a whole new light. Without a serious, thoughtful and disciplined revolutionary party to assist in the development of the class struggle—especially where the unity between nationalities is a decisive component—the struggle will fall short and ultimately not be able to progress.

The task of building a genuine multinational working-class party that is capable of helping to guide and synthesize the dayto-day struggle for the immediate needs and demands of workers with the struggle against imperialism and for socialism is not determined by which group shouts socialism the loudest or proclaims most adamantly that it is the answer.

The struggle to build such a party will be a long and difficult one, especially in this country, but it is a necessity that cannot be put off by serious people.

Imperialism and underfed children UNICEF report: They go together

By Ellen Catalinotto

In the developing world, one in four children aged from birth to five years old is undernourished. Lack of enough healthy food "is an underlying cause" of 53 percent of all deaths of children under the age of five—about 5.6 million a year according to a UNICEF report released May 2.

It also shows that countries able to resist imperialist economic domination have done much better in feeding their children.

Undernourishment stunts mental and physical capacities. It makes children unable to resist disease and recover from it. Underfed girls later become mothers with reduced chances of healthy pregnancies and successful breastfeeding.

Throughout the developing world children living in rural areas—where the food is grown—are almost twice as likely to be underweight as urban children. This underscores the social nature of child malnutrition. Food is treated as just another commodity on the capitalist market, and the most vulnerable—women, children, the poor—lack access to the most basic necessities of life.

Where developing countries are under the control of global capital, efforts to improve the nutritional status of the population through measures such as food subsidies can be subject to the veto of the World Trade Organization or investor nations that control their economies.

The head of UNICEF is Ann M. Veneman. She was appointed a year ago by President George W. Bush, for whom she served as agriculture secretary from 2001 to 2004. She has close connections with agribusiness and was on the board of directors of Calgene, the first company to market genetically engineered food. In the Bush cabinet, she worked to promote globalization and expand export markets for U.S. corporate farms. The facts in this report contradict her political leanings.

Impact of colonialism, imperialism

"Progress for Children, a Report Card on Nutrition," states that 146 million children under five are underweight. The majority of these children live in South Asia. India, with 57 million underweight children, and Pakistan and Bangladesh, with 8 million each, account for half the world's total. This is the only part of the world where girls are more likely to be underweight than boys: 47 percent versus 44 percent. Capitalist India has been going through rapid technological growth in some areas of its economy, but this has only widened the gap between rich and poor.

Sub-Saharan Africa, where 28 percent of under-fives are underweight, has more such children now than in 1990. Parts of West and Central Africa have done better, partly due to efforts to support exclusive breastfeeding for infants and communitybased health care.

The North Africa/Middle East region has growing rates of child malnourishment, led by Yemen (46 percent), Sudan (41 percent) and Iraq (16 percent). Prior to the 1991 Gulf War, United Nations sanctions and the current U.S.-led invasion, Iraq was among the most advanced countries in the region.

Panama, another country invaded by the U.S. in 1989, is the only country in the Americas where the rate of underweight children has increased since 1990.

Gains in Cuba, China, Vietnam

Socialist Cuba, by contrast, has made the most gains of any country in the world, reducing the rate of underweight children by over half between 1996 and 2000, to 4 percent, and under-five child mortality to seven per 1,000 live births.

The latter figure is comparable to developed nations and is better than the overall figure in the U.S., where racism and poverty pull down the average.

All this was accomplished in spite of the four-decades-long U.S. blockade and the loss of the Soviet bloc as its major trade partner.

The biggest decrease in underweight numbers has been in the 86 million children under five in China, going from 19 percent in 1990 to 8 percent in 2002. With its huge population and strides in improving child nutrition, China accounts for much of the worldwide progress in this area.

Vietnam also saw a sharp reduction in its malnutrition rate among children under five—from 51.5 percent in 1985 to 25.2 percent in 2005. \Box

French name street for Mumia Abu-Jamal

Special to Workers World St. Denis, France

A street in the Paris suburb of St. Denis has been named for U.S. political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. The April 29 ceremony was hosted by the city of St. Denis and its mayor, Didier Paillard.

Abu-Jamal has been in prison since 1981 and on death row since 1983 for allegedly killing a Philadelphia cop. A journalist, Black Panther, MOVE member, and outspoken critic of police brutality, racism and the death penalty, Mumia Abu-Jamal has repeatedly proclaimed his innocence.

Abu-Jamal is the most widely known U.S. political prisoner. His continued imprisonment has generated a worldwide movement supporting his freedom.

In 2003, Abu-Jamal was named an honorary citizen of Paris by Mayor Bertrand Delanoe, making him and Pablo Picasso the only ones to be so honored.

Mumia Abu-Jamal Street in St. Denis connects with Human Rights Square and is located in the Cristino Garcia neighborhood, named for an anti-fascist partisan killed during the civil war in Spain in the 1930s. The street is only a few steps away from Nelson Mandela Stadium.

The two days of events surrounding the street-naming ceremony were attended by city officials and local activists, including many from the

African communities in St. Denis as well as actor Samuel Légitimus of the James Baldwin Collective in Paris and singer Maggy Louis. Many international delegations attended the event, including representatives from Guadeloupe, Portugal, Spain, the United States and other countries.

Pam Africa and Leslie Jones of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ), as well as Ramona Africa of the MOVE organization, were among the speakers at the ceremony.

Julia Wright, an African American writer living in Paris as well as a member of ICFFMAJ, spoke and provided a French



Above, Pam Africa and Julia Wright speak into microphone. Mumia'a lawyer Robert Bryan on right. Maggy Louis sings after St. Denis Mayor Didier Paillard removed French flag to unveil the new Mumia Abu-Jamal street sign, right.

translation of a statement from Abu-Jamal. Also among the speakers was Abu-

Jamal's lead attorney, Robert Bryan. Other members of the U.S. delegation included Sundiata Sadiq, vice president of the Ossining, N.Y., NAACP; Suzanne Ross, Free Mumia Coalition of New York City; Arthemio Perez, Peoples Video Network; Lallan Schoenstein, Millions for Mumia/



International Action Center; and Gary Wilson, Workers World managing editor.

A PVN videocast of the event, including Mumia Abu-Jamal's statement thanking the people of St. Denis and France, can be found at www.peoplesvideo.tv. \Box

Day uprising of 2006

Continued from page 10

A prerequisite for those who are building the party is an understanding that the movement must return to the socialist road. The most consistent and revolutionary socialists, along with workers and oppressed of the world who have yet to read the first page of the Communist Manifesto, may not know everything. But they do know that the state of the world today and all that can be learned from history makes it more apparent that society cannot advance further in any meaningful way-and will instead be subject to even greater inequality, violence, reaction, instability, war and worse-until imperialism has been replaced with world socialism.

As long as the working-class organizations, and those who are trying to fight in the interests of the working class, are limited in consciousness and action to accommodating to the notion that the rule of imperialism and capitalism is unshakable, unalterable and permanent, they will find at some point that they can't pursue the struggle any further.

Guiding the movement in the U.S. back to the socialist road has already received some help from abroad. Indeed, the awakening of the Latin@ immigrant workers here is connected to the revival of militant struggle against U.S. imperialist rule in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Moreover, the revival of the struggle in Latin America—centered in Venezuela and Bolivia, as well as other places and with more rebellions to come—has come back on an advanced, avowedly prosocialist basis. This alone has worldwide repercussions. It amounts to the first triumph of socialist over bourgeois ideology and reaction since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In a way, the revival of May Day in the U.S. is part of the early fruit of

this phenomenon.

But we in the U.S. cannot depend on our revolution, our struggle and our party as a gift from fellow comrades and freedom fighters abroad. It is those on the front lines of the struggle against imperialism from Palestine, to Iraq and Iran, Haiti, Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia—who are depending on solidarity emanating from the development of the anti-imperialist, anti-war, working-class struggle here at the center of imperialism to help them break free of the empire.

Build a Workers World!

This brings us right back to the question of the revolutionary party. How activists view those who are working to build such a party, and whether or not they join in this endeavor, will no doubt be based on the history of how those revolutionaries conduct themselves in the course of the struggle. This is particularly true regarding how those trying to build the party conduct their relationships with important allies, especially amongst oppressed nationalities, and a million other variables both large and small, but all important.

Some good revolutionaries will wait to join such a party. Some will be ready to join now.

We in Workers World Party urge all who are ready to make the commitment and join now.

The more who join sooner, rather than later, the more likely it is that the struggle of immigrant workers—of all workers and the struggle for a world free of imperialism will reap the benefits of a stronger party dedicated to their interests.

With this in mind, Workers World Party announces the opening of a recruitment drive as an integral part of the preparation to take the struggles that have already begun to a higher level and pave

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La gran oportunidad para el movimiento sindical La solidaridad con l@s inmigrantes puede reavivar el fuego

Por Milt Neidenberg

El movimiento sindical organizado en los Estados Unidos está enfrentando un desafío colosal.

Después de décadas de reveses, concesiones y de una división en la organización laboral del AFL-CIO, un movimiento extraordinario de inmigrantes ha estallado y se está esparciendo como fuego en todo el país. Este movimiento está compuesto de inmigrantes documentad@s e indocumentad@s de muchos países; su gran mayoría es de inmigrantes que hablan español. Ell@s, abrumadoramente de la clase obrera, se han tomado las calles por millones para demandar derechos sociales plenos, incluyendo legalización y salarios decentes, beneficios y mejores condiciones de trabaio.

Ell@s se merecen el apoyo total e incondicional de la AFL-CIO y de Cambiar para Vencer (Change to Win). Esto todavía no ha ocurrido, aunque muchos sindicatos locales que tienen trabajador@s inmigrantes se han unido a las marchas y protestas con sus pancartas. Las dos federaciones laborales han respondido con un apoyo discreto a las protestas explosivas en contra del proyecto de ley Sensenbrenner-King HR-4437, el cual impondría multas criminales contra l@s indocumentad@s y sus partidari@s.

En una carta el 11 de enero para Arlen Specter, presidente republicano del Comité Judicial del Senado, la federación AFL-CIO dijo que "fuertemente se opone al Acta de Control de la Frontera e Inmigración del 2005 (HR-4437)" La carta concluyó diciendo que "la actual población de obreros indocumentados que han pagado sus impuestos y hecho contribuciones positivas a sus comunidades debe tener un paso hacia la legalización" Sin embargo, la carta le faltó pedir el fin a todo tipo de represión en contra de l@s inmigrantes.

Tampoco Anna Burger, presidenta de la federación sindical Cambiar para Vencer logra dar el apoyo necesario. Durante una reunión de protesta el 7 de marzo en Washington, Burger dijo, "Nuestro sindicato fue fundado por obreros inmigrantes...desafortunadamente...algunos políticos están tratando de convertirnos en criminales. Ellos están tratando de dividirnos, de atemorizarnos-e incluso de malgastar miles de millones de dólares en la construcción de una pared de 700 millas. ... Nosotros aplaudimos a los senadores McCain y Kennedy por introducir una reforma completa. Es hora de que el Senado les siga sus pasos." Sin embargo, este proyecto de ley titulado McCain-Kennedy, es esencialmente un proyecto de ley de "trabajadores invitados" diseñado para enviar a l@s inmigrantes a sus países después de seis años o antes, si pierden sus empleos. Los líderes de ambas federaciones parecen no haber reconocido el significado excepcional del espíritu de lucha que tienen l@s millones de inmigrantes que son un sector integral del movimiento

sindical organizado, ni tampoco instan a las filas obreras nacidas en los Estados Unidos a que unan sus fuerzas con l@s inmigrantes. El movimiento sindical organizado necesita proveer recursos que potencien la lucha y marchar hombro con hombro con l@s inmigrantes, quienes enfrentan grandes riesgos para ell@s y para sus familiares. Tal respuesta ayudaría grandemente a impedir que aquellos dentro y fuera del gobierno sigan movilizando y financiando a la chusma racista antiinmigrante.

Las dos federaciones están ubicándose para las elecciones de término medio con la esperanza de que gane una mayoría del partido Demócrata en el Congreso. Están conservando sus recursos y preparando a sus miembr@s para hacer que el electorado salga a votar en noviembre. Su estrategia es canalizar el poder de millones de l@s inmigrantes que ahora están marchando, hacia las elecciones de otoño.

Las cuestiones que afectan la lucha inmigrante no van a disiparse, ni tampoco su movimiento va a abandonar las calles. Estas cuestiones son integrales a toda la clase trabajadora y a las nacionalidades oprimidas, que han sufrido traiciones económicas, políticas y sociales bajo los dos partidos capitalistas. Más temprano que tarde, la base multinacional del movimiento sindical organizado tendrá que unirse a esta lucha y desarrollar una perspectiva de clase amplia e independiente.

El TLC y el movimiento sindical

La entrada en vigor del Tratado de Libre Comercio para América del Norte (TLC) y la destrucción y caos que ocasionó en México, ha causado un incremento en el flujo de inmigrantes a través de la frontera del sur. Al mismo tiempo, los patronos de los Estados Unidos cerraron las fábricas y se trasladaron al exterior, eliminando así trabajos bien pagados a tiempo completo y amenazando el poder negociador del movimiento sindical. Esta tendencia ha ido exacerbándose durante los últimos 14 años.

Hace 14 años, el primer presidente

convirtió en el nuevo presidente. Su prioridad principal fue la de que el Congreso aprobara el TLC. El empleó todos los trucos políticos y legislativos, incluyendo el engaño, la demagogia y los sobornos, para que fuera aprobado por ambas cámaras del Congreso.

Fue reportado por oponentes del TLC, incluyendo el AFL-CIO que estaba unido todavía, que la administración de Clinton había agregado a la ley algunos 37 tratos "quid pro quo" y otros proyectos locales no relacionados para ganar los votos de congresistas indecisos. Entre los banqueros y multimillonarios aliados de Clinton estaban David Rockefeller y su títere/mensajero, Henry Kissinger.

Los líderes del AFL-CIO lucharon en contra del TLC enfocando sus recursos y su membresía hacia el intento de influenciar el Congreso. Nunca consideraron organizar manifestaciones masivas y marchas con los aliados de los sindicatos para derrotar esta propuesta de ley imperialista, ni tampoco reconocieron las tribulaciones de l@s trabajador@s mexican@s. El TLC pasó con 234 votos a favor contra 200 en la Cámara de Representantes y 61 a 38 en el Senado. La victoria de la clase dominante expuso una vez más que el Partido Demócrata y Clinton no eran amigos de la clase obrera.

El TLC no era un acuerdo de "libre comercio". Fue una bonanza para el imperialismo estadounidense. Los banqueros de los EEUU inundaron México con capital excedente. Las corporaciones trasladaron sus fábricas al otro lado de la frontera. Establecieron zonas de "libre comercio", maquiladoras, en el lado mexicano de la frontera donde la mano de obra barata fue explotada en el ensamblaje de partes para crear productos finales. Los productos eran entonces enviados a través de la frontera. libre de aranceles y cuotas. Las corporaciones, bancos transnacionales e instituciones financieras se regocijaron como en una fiesta.

También compraron propiedades estatales a precios de ganga y terrenos donde much@s campesin@s habían vivido durante siglos. Hicieron de México una neocolonia y llamaron a este acuerdo el intercambio libre entre naciones sober-

anas. El TLC destruyó la estructura económica de México al integrarlo al coloso imperial.

Este tratado inundó a l@s trabajador@s mexican@s y a l@s campesin@s sin tierra en un mar de pobreza, miseria y desesperanza. Así empezó el éxodo explosivo de trabajador@s inmigrantes hacia el norte. Se enfrentaron con la muerte, la represión, el racismo y los perjuicios contra inmigrantes cuando trataban de buscar trabajo escapando de la calamidad ocasionada por el TLC.

Millones de inmigrantes han salido a las calles en el Primero de Mayo para reivindicar sus derechos, apoyad@s por trabajador@s de todas las partes del mundo que tradicionalmente han marchado el Primero de Mayo. Han echado al lado la retórica de los políticos, de los medios de comunicación masiva y de los académicos con su presencia masiva, sus consignas, y sus pies en marcha.

Dos días antes de la magnífica manifestación del Primero de Mayo, un editorial en el New York Times titulado "El gigante dormido" reveló el temor de este portavoz del liberalismo burgués frente al extraordinario movimiento de inmigrantes. Trató de socavar el apoyo creciente para quienes salieron de sus trabajos, de las escuelas y boicotearon las plazas comerciales. El editorial prevenía al movimiento evitar dañar su "causa digna" al declarar el Primero de Mayo como Un Día sin Inmigrantes.

A pesar de esto, la suspensión de la actividad económica el Primero de Mayo fue impresionante. Incluyó lavanderías, restaurantes, empresas pequeñas y lugares de construcción. Tyson, Perdue, Cargill y Armour, enormes empresas en la industria de la carne y avícola, tuvieron que cerrar muchas de sus instalaciones. Los puestos de mercados de alimentos v flores al por mayor estaban vacíos. Ese día setenta por ciento de los troqueros de la Costa Oeste dejaron de manejar.

Muchas de estas industrias están listas para ser organizadas por los sindicatos, si el movimiento sindicalista une su propia lucha al movimiento de inmigrantes. Los centros independientes de trabajador@s que han surgido en torno a la lucha de inmigración recibirán mucho aliento por el Primero de Mayo. El NY Times tenía razón sobre una cosa. El "gigante dormido" se ha despertado y ese día será histórico. Frederick Engels, colaborador de Karl Marx, escribió en un prólogo a la cuarta edición alemana del Manifiesto Comunista, sobre una muestra enorme del poder de la clase trabajadora el Primero de Mayo en 1890, hace ya más de un siglo: "Europa y América están revisando sus fuerzas. Ojalá Marx estuviera aquí conmigo para verlo con sus propios ojos." Todo cambio social, político y económico profundo es un fuego que se enciende desde abajo. El movimiento inmigrante encendió ese fuego en el Primero de Mayo. 🗆

George Bush firmó el TLC. Para las elecciones del 1992, todavía quedaba ser aprobado por el Congreso. Bill Clinton se

El 20 de mayo miles de personas en las calles responderán a estas políticas demandando: **¡MANOS FUERA DE VENEZUELA Y CUBA!** Marcha en Washington sábado 20 de Mayo www.may20coalition.org/spn

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