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Mexico demands inquiry into U.S. border killing

By Ruth Vela
San Diego

Twenty-two-year-old Oscar Abraham Garcia of Tijuana, Mexico, was shot and killed by two federal agents at the U.S.-Mexico border crossing in San Ysidro, Calif., on May 18. The shooting took place after Border Patrol and U.S. customs agents surrounded his black sport utility vehicle, which police claim was under surveillance on suspicion of immigrant smuggling.

This tragedy took place a few days after Bush gave a May 15 talk to announce plans to further militarize the Mexican-U.S. border by stationing 12,000 Border Patrol agents and 6,000 National Guard troops to try to stop undocumented workers from coming to the U.S. to look for work and to be with their families.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents claim they began following the black SUV after someone reported seeing it pick up suspected undocumented immigrants near the U.S. side of the Otay Mesa border crossing, according to Lt. Kevin Rooney of the San Diego Police Department.

Border Patrol officers in an unmarked vehicle tracked the SUV as it drove a few

miles west and then south toward the San Ysidro border crossing between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico. Customs and Border Protection agents blocked all southbound lanes at the border, then surrounded Garcia's car as it was forced to a stop.

After being surrounded Garcia refused to identify himself or get out, and when agents smashed his vehicle's window with a baton, he accelerated. According to San Diego Police Lt. Jeff Sferra, it was the fact that Garcia moved in the direction of five U.S. agents blocking his path and "nearly pinned an agent standing next to the vehicle" that justified the shooting.

Still the fact remains that no agents or police were injured in the shooting. Garcia himself was not armed. Neither were any of his passengers. In addition, at the time of the shooting the vehicle was heading south on Interstate 5, thus going toward Mexico. However, investigators were able to offer no explanation for that, instead focusing on demonizing the surviving passengers.

Five male passengers were taken into custody. Reports from police indicated that all were undocumented. Later reports alleged that some of the passengers told investigators that Garcia and a

17-year-old boy in the vehicle were both immigrant smugglers. Authorities also identified one of the suspects arrested at the border as having "several" prior arrests for immigrant smuggling, but said he has never been formally charged with the alleged crime. They have detained the juvenile but his name has not been released. The remaining three people in the vehicle at the time of the shooting are being interviewed and could be held as "material witnesses" in the case against the two suspects.

According to Alberto Lozano, a spokesperson for the Mexican consulate in San Diego, the Mexican government has called for an investigation of its own into the shooting. "We asked for an official investigation of what happened," Lozano said. "We want to know why they shot this person."

Sadly, the question why and many other questions surrounding this unnecessary death continue to go unanswered while reports from the mainstream media focus on the "terrible" inconvenience faced by drivers who were stuck in traffic due to the nine-hour closure of what has been deemed the busiest border crossing in the world. □



Washington, DC, May 20; Los Angeles, May 20.

WW PHOTOS: B. PIETTE, BOB MCCUBBIN

From D.C. to Kazakhstan 'U.S. HANDS OFF CUBA, VENEZUELA!'





PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO
Banner bearing photos of Ho Chi Minh & Malcolm X at May 20 march supporting Cuba & Venezuela in Wash., DC.



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Legacies of Malcolm X & Ho Chi Minh live on today

By Larry Hales

May 19 was the birthday of two beloved internationalists and revolutionaries.

Ho Chi Minh was born in 1890. He was the founder, in 1941, of the Viet Minh independence movement, which eventually kicked the French out of Vietnam in 1954. He was also the leader of the National Liberation Front that led the fight against the U.S. colonizers who replaced the French. Ho had traveled extensively in Europe, the United States and Asia, and had assisted movements in those countries, even becoming a founding member of the French Communist Party. Ho Chi Minh did not live to see the liberation and unification of his country once the U.S. military was kicked out in 1976.

Malcolm X was born in Nebraska in 1925. He became one of the great Black leaders in this country, seeing far beyond the fight for civil rights and catapulting that movement onto the international stage. He inspired the militant Black liberation movements of the 1960s.

It was no cosmic feat, nor was it fate, that these two were born on the same day. But the conditions in both countries and the qualities of both made them great revolutionary leaders of their time. Both Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh are to be commemorated today because the struggles that they were part of and led are ongoing. They are the struggles of all workers and the oppressed.

Malcolm stated the above very clearly in 1965: "It is incorrect to classify the revolt of the Negro as simply a racial conflict of Black against White, or as a purely American problem. Rather, we are today seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the

exploited against the exploiter." An outspoken opponent of the U.S. intervention in Vietnam, Malcolm X asked why it was that Black people were expected to be violent toward the Vietnamese and at the same time, be passive against racist KKK terror in the South.

Ho Chi Minh wrote in a 1924 essay on the conditions of Black people in the United States. He exposed the ruse of so-called democracy in the United States. In the essay he states: "It is well known that the Black race is the most oppressed and most exploited of the human family. It is well known that the spread of capitalism and the discovery of the New World had as an immediate result the rebirth of slavery, which was, for centuries, a scourge for the Negroes and a bitter disgrace for humanity. What everyone does not perhaps know is that after 65 years of so-called emancipation, American Negroes still endure atrocious moral and material sufferings, of which the most cruel and horrible is the custom of lynching."

Both Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh saw the importance of the global class struggle, in whatever terms they placed it. As the fight against oppression becomes more radicalized, because of the increasing reactionary tendencies of the capitalist class and its governments, it is even more important that the movement remember the revolutionary leaders of the past and make the commemorations relevant to today. The struggle has not changed—just the urgency for greater internationalism, due to the voracious capitalist system, which is greatly expanding and thus radicalizing workers the world over.

The writer is a Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST) organizer in Denver.



WW PHOTO: LAL ROOHK
Larry Holmes

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Rennert suing WW

Pension issue pits billionaire vs. socialist newspaper

By Deirdre Griswold

The Renco Group, owned by multi-billionaire Ira Rennert, is moving ahead with a defamation lawsuit filed in New York State Supreme Court against Workers World newspaper and Workers World Party.

The legal action is based on an article about the plight of workers at a steel plant in Warren, Ohio ("WCI Steel bankruptcy robs workers' pensions"), which appeared in WW's print edition dated Feb. 23, 2006, and also on the Internet at www.workers.org.

At the time the article was written, Renco owned WCI Steel but had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. The bankruptcy court still had to rule on a reorganization plan Renco had submitted earlier. Renco was also trying to fight off a takeover bid by a group of noteholders who had loaned hundreds of millions of dollars to the steel company.

According to the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp., a quasi-governmental agency tasked with protecting workers' pensions, the pension fund under Renco's control was \$117 million short of what was needed to fulfill the company's obligations to the workers.

A release from the PBGC Public Affairs department, dated March 30, explained that "Under the proposed plan of reorganization filed in federal bankruptcy court, the pension plan would have been left behind by the reorganizing steelmaker."

Ira Rennert had made news headlines early in February when the PBGC went to court asking that it be appointed as the pension plan's trustee and be authorized to terminate the plan. According to a New York Times article ("Pension Battle May Entangle Mogul's Home," Feb. 3) the PBGC appeared "poised to lay claim to Mr. Rennert's 29-bedroom oceanfront estate, along with other assets, to make sure he delivers on hundreds of millions of dollars in pensions promised to a group of steelworkers in Ohio."

Rennert's Long Island mansion alone, described by Wikipedia as the largest home in the U.S., was worth more than the fund's shortfall. With 29 bedrooms, 39 bathrooms and a 200-car parking garage, it was valued at \$185 million.

Just to rent a house for the summer in the exclusive Hamptons area where Rennert built his mansion can cost more than \$600,000. (Bloomberg.com, May 10)

Talk about a David versus Goliath struggle! This modern-day robber baron has hired a powerful Wall Street law firm,

Arnold & Porter, to haul into court a socialist newspaper that depends on volunteer labor and many small contributions to reach its audience, primarily in the progressive and working class movements.

They are basing their argument on a very narrow definition of the article's use of the word "rob." They define robbery as "forcible stealing" accompanied by the use of or imminent threat of physical force. This is the legal basis for Rennert's charge that the article was "malicious, false and defamatory."

The Workers World article did not state that Renco had committed any criminal act, let alone conjure up the ludicrous image of a multi-billionaire, armed with a pistol or a knife, waylaying workers in order to relieve them of their wallets. It put the loss of pensions facing the WCI Steel workers in the context of the broad anti-labor assault by big business in the recent period.

Declaring bankruptcy has become a tactic of choice by the super-rich and their executives. Bankruptcy laws allow them to rip up union contracts and shed contractual obligations they agreed to long ago. This trend threatens millions of workers with severe poverty and/or lack of adequate health care in their old age, even after a lifetime of hard and often dangerous work.

Workers in many industries are holding their breath these days. As the WW article pointed out, "This is an episode in a bigger story about the widespread campaign of corporations like United Air Lines, Delphi Automotive Systems and Bethlehem Steel to use bankruptcy to steal workers' pensions."

Evidently, the WW article came at a very crucial moment for the steel workers.

At the end of March, the struggle over control of WCI Steel was resolved in an agreement between the noteholders and Renco, in which Renco relinquished its ownership of the company and—faced with the PBGC lawsuit—committed to adding the money necessary to secure the existing pension fund. The PBGC claims credit for this deal, arrived at in bankruptcy court, and has withdrawn its suit against Renco. It said in its press release of March 30, "Because the PBGC acted ... Renco remained responsible for WCI's pension obligations."

This was not just altruism on the part of the PBGC, which itself is overextended by billions of dollars. If Renco's original reorganization plan had been confirmed by the court, the PBGC under law would have had to come up with most of the \$117 million

missing from WCI Steel's pension fund.

The workers involved, who are organized into the United Steel Workers, have now voted for a contract, although considerable opposition was expressed to cuts in workforce and benefits demanded by the new owners.

Is this the end of the matter? Will the retirees really get the pensions owed to them? We shall see.

In the meantime, Renco's suit against this newspaper is proceeding.

He has taken legal action against progressives before.

In 1998, he initiated a lawsuit for trespassing and secured a restraining order against filmmaker Michael Moore, who had gone to Rennert's home and office to present him with a "Man of the Year" award for being a top toxic polluter. It was later reported that "The EPA ranks the group of companies controlled by Renco as the nation's 10th-largest polluter." (Business Week, Feb. 17, 2003) The lawsuit was eventually dropped and the restraint lifted.

Rennert also is the major owner of AM

General Corp., which makes the gas-guzzling, polluting Hummer for General Motors.

Billionaires like Rennert may not always win in court, but they know that forcing their opponents to mount a defense in a defamation case can cost them a great deal of money, regardless of the outcome. Fortunately, Workers World will be defended pro bono by attorneys—from the respected firm of Davis Wright Tremaine—who specialize in media and First Amendment law. While this relieves WW of having to pay lawyers' fees, the newspaper and party will still be responsible for court costs, which can add up.

More importantly, WW intends to carry out a vigorous political offensive around the issues in this case, both in court and in the media, continuing to speak out on the monumental rip-off of workers' pensions that began with corporate restructuring and continues unabated. Contributions to Workers World/Pension Defense Project, care of this newspaper, are welcomed and will put even greater muscle into this campaign.

Stay tuned. □

Don't separate the struggles

From a talk by Larry Hales—*Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) leader and Denver community organizer—at the May 13-14 "Preparing for the Rebirth of the Global Struggle for Socialism" conference in New York.*

Some in the movement separate anti-war work from anti-repression work, and concern themselves with appealing to moderates. They deem certain struggles as too controversial for the masses to support, such as solidarity with the Palestinian struggle in conjunction with mobilizing against the war in Iraq.

These are the same types that organized around "sanctions not war" and "let the UN finish its inspections." We know that the war in Iraq didn't start in 2003, but as far back as 1991, and that war was followed by genocidal sanctions which was war just the same.

We must reject any attempts of compromising the movement by attempting to make it more vapid, or by pandering to sectors of either ruling class parties. Whatever allies we win over, we win by being principled Marxists/Leninists and fighting oppression, repression, imperialism, showing solidarity with the most oppressed workers in their struggle for self-determination and, of course, fighting for socialism.

Our idea of broadening the struggle is to strengthen it and we do this by connecting the struggles, because ultimately we have to build unity in the working class to fight back against the capitalist rulers.

Recently, the struggle has been emboldened and given new life by the mobilization of millions of immigrant workers. We have seen the rebirth of International Workers Day, a commemoration started in this country around the fight for an eight-hour workday, but co-opted and long forgotten by many. An old struggle has been revived and a great giant mass of workers, who have long been regarded as invisibles, have thrown off any fears of the



WW PHOTO: LAL ROOHHK

Larry Hales

repressive state.

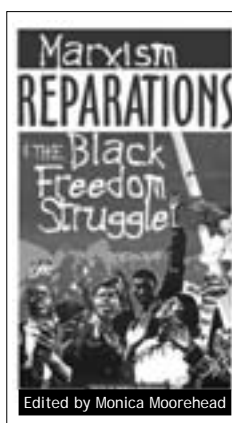
Many of the immigrants rights organizers in Denver have wondered where the anti-war folks were for May Day. Just as there has always been the wonder as to where anti-war movement has gone when Indigenous people organize around the racist Columbus Day celebration in October. For May Day, Denver had the third largest mobilization of that day.

There is a distrust in oppressed communities of some in the anti-war movement, which is justified, because of a history of racist patronizing and ignorance. One of the things that attracted me to Workers World is its history in supporting self-determination of the most oppressed communities.

The party would never be insensitive and thrust itself opportunistically at the forefront, but has shown the willingness to seek out the most determined fighters and show solidarity, with our socialist perspective. It would be unprincipled to force our will onto the struggle for immigrant rights or onto the fighters in the Black liberation struggle, or any struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor. □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

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- ◆ Harriet Tubman: woman warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal (Guest Commentary)
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From D.C. to Kazakhstan

'U.S. hands off Cuba, Venezuela!'

Demonstrators in cities in the U.S. and around the world rallied in defense of Cuba and Venezuela on May 19 and 20. Activists demanded an end to the threats and maneuvers by Washington, the Pentagon and Wall Street against socialist Cuba and the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

In the U.S., protests took place in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Miami.

The Washington and Los Angeles protests, which inspired organizing around the world, were organized by the May 20th Coalition, which included more than 200 national and local organizations and individuals who recognize that the Bush administration—with bipartisan support in Congress—has stepped up its hostile, interventionist policies against the governments and peoples of Cuba and Venezuela.

Solidarity actions also took place in Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, Moscow, Paris and Vienna; in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg, Canada; and in Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and Melbourne, Australia. Events were also organized in Colombia, Ecuador, Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan and the Republic of Chuvashia.

The Miami demonstration specifically defended the right of Cuban residents in the U.S. to travel to Cuba without restriction. More than 160 people demonstrated outside the Federal Building to protest the cruel separation of families enforced by the U.S. blockade. The U.S. government now arrogantly determines who in Cuba qualifies as an official family member and denies the right of spouses, children, grandparents or siblings to visit more than once in three years.

The Bolivarian Circle in Miami also sent representatives to the Washington protest. A solidarity message from the Miami demonstration was delivered in Lafayette Park.

—Leslie Feinberg

Washington, D.C.

Activists and revolutionaries of many nationalities, including many youths, descended on Malcolm X Park in Washington, D.C., on May 20.

Both the gathering rally at Malcolm X Park and the end rally at Lafayette Park in front of the White House reflected a growing unity in the progressive and socialist movement to defend Cuba, Venezuela, and now Bolivia.

African Liberation Day organizers played a leading role, and donated the stage, sound and permit for the gathering rally. A tribute to Malcolm X, Ho Chi Minh, Palestine Day and African Liberation Day followed the end of the Hands Off Cuba and Venezuela rally. The selection of



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Berta Joubert-Ceci

Malcolm X Park was significant because May 19 was the 81st anniversary of the birth of the assassinated Black liberationist.

As the May 20 event kicked off, the Malcolm X African Band provided cultural performances and representatives from dozens of organizations gave solidarity messages during the open-mike session. Lourdes Vela from the Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circle, Lee Robinson from African Awareness Association in Richmond, Va., Freddie from the FMLN in Maryland, and Christina from No War On Cuba chaired the opening rally.

Youths and children led the march, which stopped at the Cuban Interest Section to present the Cuban and Venezuelan ambassadors with flowers as a sign of appreciation for their countries' struggle against capitalism and imperialism around the world. Cuban and Venezuelan flags adorned the procession, along with placards with the image of Che Guevara which read "You can kill the revolutionary, but you can never kill the revolution."

The march was transformed into a militant street rally as it wound down the streets of Adams-Morgan and Columbia Heights—largely immigrant communities. Immigrant workers lined the street in front of their homes and shops waving and cheering. Black youths raised their fists in solidarity as marchers passed by.

The demonstration stopped in front of the Washington Post to protest corporate-media collusion to demonize the popular governments of Cuba and Venezuela. Activists also rallied in front of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to demand that the organization, which is responsible for channeling tax money to foster instability in Latin America and the Caribbean, be shut down.



WW PHOTO: B. PIETTE

Nellie Bailey, Pam Africa with Cuban ambassador, Dagoberto Rodriguez Barrera, outside of Cuban Interest Section, Washington, DC, May 20.

Berta Joubert-Ceci, a Latin American solidarity activist and a leader of the International Action Center, gave an account of Cuba and Venezuela's international solidarity. Along with Nalda Vigezzi from the National Network on Cuba, Joubert-Ceci co-chaired the first section of the final rally at Lafayette Park.

Several speakers spoke out in favor of the extradition of Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela, where he is wanted for the 1976 attack on a Cubana Airlines plane that resulted in the loss of 73 lives. Jose Pertierra, an attorney who represents Venezuela in its extradition request, vowed at the rally that his government would not rest until justice was served.

"A high-ranking United States government official told us last week that Venezuela should be content with the fact that Luis Posada Carriles has not been released and continues to be detained in an immigration holding facility," stated Pertierra.

He went on to say, "Well, President Bush, we don't want Posada detained for mere immigration infractions. We want him tried for 73 counts of first-degree murder. The families of the victims want to be sure that his crimes do not go unpunished."

Carlos Lazo, first secretary of the Venezuelan Mission to the United Nations, also made remarks.

Ignacio Meneses, a leader in the U.S. Cuba/Labor Exchange, criticized "Lou Dobbs and the Sensenbrenners who humiliate immigrant workers forced to come to this country because of U.S.-sponsored wars in Latin America."

Meneses, Lucius Walker from Pastors for Peace and Bonnie Massey from the Venceremos Brigade all asserted the right to travel to Cuba without U.S. government interference. Representatives from these organizations and the African Awareness Association will return to the U.S. from Cuba on July 17 via Buffalo, N.Y., and Texas.

Ricardo Alarcon, president of the

Cuban National Assembly, sent a special message that reaffirmed Cuba's strong belief "that free and universal health care and education are inalienable rights that should be available for everyone, including the millions denied them in the United States." [Go to workers.org to read Alarcon's full message.]

In the U.S., recent figures reveal that 43 million people have no health insurance and 36 million of the uninsured lack access to even basic health care. However, the Cuban Revolution provides free quality health care to all and has virtually stamped out illiteracy by guaranteeing education to children and adults.

Berta Silva, an activist with SEIU/1199—a union representing 275,000 health-care workers across the Northeast—avowed that her union "stands against any aggression against Venezuela and Cuba."

Messages were delivered from Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five, from his prison cell in Colorado, and from his attorney, Leonard Weinglass.

Cheryl LaBash, from the Michigan Campaign to Free the Cuban Five, speaking on behalf of Judge Claudia Morcom, brought news that the Detroit City Council has passed resolutions in support of freedom for the Cuban Five and the extradition of Posada Carriles. LaBash encouraged activists to mobilize their city councils to follow Detroit's example.

Pam Africa from the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and Bob Brown both reminded the crowd to unite the struggle to free the Cuban Five with the struggle to free Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners.

Ike Nahem, from Cuba Solidarity-N.Y., shouldered central organizing responsibility and closed the rally.

A tribute to the life of Black activist Damu Smith followed.

Others speakers and rally co-chairs included Juan Jose Gutierrez from Latino Movement USA; Ray LaForest, in solidarity with the struggle in Haiti; the Rev. Luis



Washington, D.C. May 20

PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO



Korean activists speak at May 20 rally in Los Angeles.

WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

Atenco's women political prisoners speak out

By Ruth Vela

On May 3 and 4 in San Salvador, Atenco, Mexico, flower vendors from People in Defense of the Land Front (Frente de Pueblos en Defensa de la Tierra) were attempting to use a space in the Texcoco market to sell their flowers when state police brutally attacked them. The space the vendors were attempting to occupy has been sold for the building of a new Wal-Mart. Nevertheless, in the early hours of the next morning, May 5, they moved to reoccupy their space.

For defending their space in the market, protesters were met with vicious police violence that left two young men dead and countless people injured. In addition, 217 prisoners have been detained since the incident.

These prisoners have begun a hunger strike to protest the conditions of their arrests and their inhumane treatment at the hands of local police.

On May 19, demonstrations in support of the Atenco uprising were held in

45 cities and 22 countries worldwide. These events were in response to the call made by the Intergalactic Commission of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation—EZLN—to organize an international day of mobilizations.

Another day of solidarity is planned for May 28 and is expected to draw even more supporters. Protesters are being encouraged to demonstrate in front of Wal-Mart stores and Mexican consulates. Go to chiapas.indymedia.org for information on the May 28 protests.

Following is a letter from the women detained in Atenco detailing their gruesome experiences:

We the women, workers in the countryside and the city, housewives, students, etc., political prisoners since May 3 and 4, are indignant over being sentenced to prison. We weren't just insulted, humiliated, beaten, tortured, sexually abused, and raped—now are also prisoners, criminals.

We have lived through repression; not just as people in struggle, but also as

women, and in a very specific way. Because even if the men were beaten more, we were sexually attacked and raped. We were subjected to every kind of repression. During our arrest, it started with insults: "You're a whore! You damn whore! We are going to rape you like the whore that you are!" But it wasn't enough for them just to beat us; they threatened to kill some of us, or to disappear us. They even tortured us to get information about our families, threatening to kill them too.

Nothing will cleanse us of the sexual abuse and the rape. We were groped; had our hair pulled; were kicked; beaten with sticks, clubs, and shields on our breasts, our rear ends, our genitals. While they went on threatening us, we were bitten on our breasts, nipples, ears, lips, tongues, etc. We were penetrated with fingers and objects. Some were forced to perform oral sex, while they laughed at us for being women.

Despite all the abuses that we suffered, now we are also victims of medical negligence. Some of us should have been

bandaged and attended to since the day we arrived; some of us have vaginal infections and infected wounds; and some of us can't even sit down for the wounds we suffered.

Despite all that, we are still on a hunger strike, because we are not taking one step back in this struggle. Because we want justice for everyone! Because we should keep fighting, even from prison, so that's what we are going to do. We will have stayed, and will stay, on our feet in this struggle.

People, lift your voice! Whatever it takes to bring justice out of this deafness!

Lift up also your reason and your wisdom! If our hands can't do anything here, inside the prison, then our words will. Give us back our freedom! We will see justice done! For the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and for the rapes! No one should stay indifferent to the pain that all of us have had to endure! Freedom for Political Prisoners!

Sincerely,

The women political prisoners, from below and towards the left, in struggle

SAN FRANCISCO

Immigrant rights demo held

Demanding full rights for immigrants, a couple hundred immigrant workers, their families and supporters rallied and marched in San Francisco on May 17 to coincide with a national day of action taking place in Washington, D.C.

The rally was sponsored by the May 1 Coalition for Immigrants Rights. Speakers at U.N. Plaza objected to the Bush administration's plan to further militarize the Mexico-U.S. border with National Guard troops, and to the anti-immigrant legislation currently being debated in Congress.

Under a huge banner that read "AMNISTIA Ahora - Incondicional - Para Todos," the message was spoken in Spanish and translated into English: "Unconditional amnesty for all now."

After the rally the crowd marched behind an attractive Centro Azteca banner.

Most chants were in Spanish, joined by marchers and many onlookers. No matter what the language, there was no mistaking the message: "Immediate legalization for all undocumented workers; Amnesty - No criminalizing people; Demilitarization of the borders and civil rights and liberties for all."

The demonstrators marched all around the San Francisco Chronicle building, chanting, "Chronicle lies, people die"—taking issue with the newspaper's biased coverage of the huge May Day march and rally here.

As the marchers returned to UN Plaza it was announced that there would be more such actions until the demands are met, regardless of where immigrants and their families come from or how they get here.

—Joanie Marquardt



Immigrant rights march on May 20 in Manhattan organized by the New York Immigration Coalition.

'U.S. hands off Cuba, Venezuela!'

Continued from page 4

Barrios; Nellie Bailey from People of African Descent in Solidarity with Venezuela (PADS-V) and the Troops Out Now Coalition; Jeanette Caceres from ANSWER; Shirley Pate from the Venezuela Solidarity Network; Mara Verheyden-Hilliard from the National Lawyers Guild; Bob Brown representing Pan African Roots; Sobukwe Shakura from the All-African People's Revolutionary Party; a representative of the Colombian struggle; Ann Marie from Beacon School in New York; Sam Manuel from the Socialist Workers Party; Larry Holmes from the International Action Center and the Million Worker March Movement; and Julie Fry from the NY Committee to Free the Cuban Five and FIST.

Those invited but unable to attend included Elma Beatriz Rosada Barbosa, widow of Filiberto Ojeda Rios—the Puerto Rican freedom fighter murdered by the FBI on Sept. 23, 2005—and Javier Rodriguez, a leader of the March 25 Coalition in Los Angeles that initiated the Great American Boycott for Immigrant Rights on May 1.

—David Hoskins, FIST organizer

Los Angeles

Demonstrators took to the streets of Los Angeles to show solidarity with socialist Cuba and the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela on May 20. This important protest was held in response to a nuclear-powered U.S. war fleet and 6,500 Marines currently conducting maneuvers in the Caribbean that threaten Cuba and Venezuela. The event also denounced the threat by U.S. imperialism to many other countries around the world, as well as the growing demonization of immigrant workers in this country.

The demonstration called by the May 20th Coalition began with a rally in front of the Los Angeles Federal Building. There, speakers touched on many different topics, including the illegal occupation and ongoing war in Iraq, the lack of support from the city of Los Angeles to save the South Central farm, the blatant racism shown in the aftermath of Katrina and towards migrant workers, and also continued solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, and other countries that have been successful in removing some of the tentacles of U.S. imperialism.

Mzuri Pamela of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party discussed the need

for Black and Brown unity in this struggle. "The only way anything is going to get done is by getting over the hurdles placed in front of us in the forms of racism and other tactics set to keep us divided," she stated.

After the rally, protestors marched with signs that read "U.S. out of Cuba and Venezuela," "Stop the torture, Guantanamo belongs to Cuba" and "Defend Cuba, Venezuela and immigrant workers from U.S. imperialism."

Chants of "Que viva Cuba, que viva Venezuela," could be heard for blocks. You could feel the passion and energy in the air as protestors began to fill up the plaza at Olvera Street at the end of the march, where another rally was held.

Rallies were co-chaired by Maria Aguero, a Peruvian activist; Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party; Don White, CIS-PES-LA; and John Parker, International Action Center. Ruth Vela, of San Diego FIST and the IAC, stressed the importance of recognizing that all of our struggles have one common enemy: imperialism. She stated, "We must celebrate socialist Cuba and revolutionary Venezuela and be proud that they are able to provide everyone in their countries with the best of the most basic things like food, clothes, housing and

health care. Then they go further and offer that aid to others, including those people in the Gulf Coast who survived Hurricane Katrina only to face the racist neglect demonstrated by this government."

Other speakers talked about the ongoing problems in Puerto Rico and Korea due to capitalist greed. Jamie Kim of the Korean Americans for Peace and Hwa Young Lee of the Korea Truth Commission discussed the connections between the struggle against U.S. imperialism in Korea and the same struggles in Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Response to their message of resistance towards imperialism and solidarity with the accomplishments in Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia echoed amongst the crowd.

The message here in Los Angeles was clear: We must stand behind Cuba and Venezuela and let them be an example to the rest of us that our struggles are not in vain and we will continue to fight against the aggression of imperialism until it is stamped out completely.

End the blockade against Cuba! Long live the Cuban and Bolivarian revolutions! Hands off Cuba and Venezuela!

—Justino Jimenez, FIST organizer



Prisoners rebel against U.S. torture at Guantanamo

By Greg Butterfield

On May 19, just hours after prisoners fended off an attack by guards at the infamous U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the United Nations Committee on Torture issued a scathing report on Washington's abuse of so-called terrorism suspects and called for that facility's immediate closing.

According to U.S. military officials, 10-20 prisoners lured guards into an ambush on the night of May 18, using items from their common cell like surveillance cameras, fan blades and lighting tubes as weapons. The revolt was put down by troops from the "quick reaction force," firing rubber bullets and pepper spray.

However, several accounts, including an early report from NBC, conflicted with the official Pentagon story. These sources said the prisoners were responding to guards forcibly subduing one fellow prisoner who was trying to commit suicide. (Granma International, May 20)

Army Col. Michael Bumgarner even admitted to the Associated Press that detainees had the upper hand in the fight, while officials scrambled to muster 100 more guards to regain control. "Frankly, we were losing the fight at that point," Bumgarner said.

It was either the fourth or fifth attempted suicide at the Guantanamo facility that day. Prisoners reportedly used prescription anti-depressants they had saved up. Two men who overdosed earlier in the day remain in critical condition.

When word of the clash reached prisoners in another section of the camp, they staged a protest, which was also attacked by the "quick reaction force." An elder

prisoner was gassed, according to a May 21 report in the British newspaper *The Independent*. In all, at least six prisoners were injured.

British defense lawyers Clive Stafford Smith and Brent Mickum, who regularly visit clients held at Guantanamo, said the official U.S. account was "rubbish." Others charged that the unusually detailed, immediate accounts amounted to a public-relations offensive by Washington to justify the camp's existence on the eve of the UN report.

At least 460 prisoners are currently detained at Camp Delta in Guantanamo. Many have been held for over four years—since January 2002—without criminal charges or legal rights. Some have never seen a lawyer.

An unknown number have been extradited to their countries of origin—U.S. client states where, out of the spotlight, their fates are largely unknown.

Others, more fortunate, with legal representation, have successfully cleared their names and gone on to publicly denounce the trumped-up charges.

Fifteen detainees were transferred to Saudi Arabia on May 18. It is not clear if the suicide attempts that day were related.

There have been 41 reported suicide attempts since the facility opened, but this is widely believed to be the tip of the iceberg. Attorney Stafford Smith told AP that a client from Chad attempted suicide twice in January, but it was never officially reported.

When 23 detainees carried out a coordinated attempt to kill themselves in 2003, the U.S. military classified it as "injurious behavior" rather than suicide attempts. (The Guardian, May 20)

At least 460 prisoners are currently detained at Camp Delta in Guantanamo. Many have been held for over four years—since January 2002—without criminal charges or legal rights. Some have never seen a lawyer.

Last August, more than 120 prisoners staged a hunger strike to protest their indefinite imprisonment and the brutality of the "quick response force."

Of course, the very existence of the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay has been an illegal infringement on the sovereign territory of socialist Cuba for the last 47 years.

U.S. guilty of torture

The UN Committee on Torture, composed of 10 independent human-rights experts, oversees implementation of the International Convention Against Torture, which the United States signed in 1994.

The committee specified May 19 that it possesses reliable documents showing that illegal U.S. prisons exist throughout the world, and that U.S. soldiers carry out cruel and inhuman treatment in those prisons.

Among the forms of torture cited in the committee's 11-page preliminary report are: interrogation techniques such as the use of vicious dogs, sexual humiliation, a form of mock-drowning called "waterboarding," and "short shackling," which involves shackling a prisoner to a hook in the floor to limit movement. (IPS, May 19)

"After a lengthy review of U.S. policies, the panel dismissed several basic legal arguments the Bush administration had offered to justify such practices as the incommunicado detention of prisoners overseas and the secret transfer or 'rendition' of suspects for interrogation by the

security forces of other governments," reported the May 20 *New York Times*. The committee "also concluded that the CIA's widely reported practice of holding detainees in secret prisons abroad violates the convention.

"The committee's findings are not legally binding," noted the *Times*. "But they are likely to be more influential than previous international reviews, in part because the Bush administration took the process seriously, sending a delegation of more than two dozen officials to Geneva this month to present its legal case."

Bush has attempted to deflect criticism of the Guantanamo prison camp by saying he is waiting for the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on the prisoners' legal standing. The White House wants to try detainees before secret military tribunals. A ruling is expected this summer.

U.S. officials said they were "disappointed" by the UN committee's findings and denied that Camp Delta is illegal. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice asked, "If we do close down Guantanamo, what becomes of the hundreds of dangerous people who were picked up on the battlefields of Afghanistan?" (AFP, May 22)

As if to answer Rice's overheated rhetoric, on May 21 five ex-Guantanamo detainees were cleared of all charges in a Kuwaiti criminal court. They had been arrested immediately after being returned to Kuwait last November, charged with raising funds for a charity that Washington alleges has links to al-Qaeda. (AP, May 21) □

Marines massacred civilians in Haditha, Iraq

By John Catalinotto

In the first year of the U.S. occupation of Iraq some voices, even within the U.S. anti-war movement, argued that a hasty withdrawal of U.S. troops would leave Iraq victim of civil war, general chaos and random murders. Some presented this as an argument that U.S. military forces should stay.

Now, after more than three years of continuous U.S. military occupation, Iraq is plagued with general chaos, seemingly random murders and massacres, and something resembling civil war.

President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair are commending the new Iraqi government that finally formed after bickering for five months after the election. It would be ridiculous if it weren't such a crime.

The electricity still doesn't work. Oil is pumped at lower levels than before the war, with much of it sold illegally.

Iraqi police themselves carry out mass murders while serving narrow political parties or religious sects—or simply their own corrupt interests. And educated Iraqis who have the chance are trying to emigrate, according to reports both from Iraqis and in the May 21 and 22 *New York Times*.

On top of this, the U.S. military, supposedly the most disciplined force, carries out wanton slaughters of Iraqi civilians. According to the latest exposure, U.S.

Marines slaughtered at least 16 Iraqi civilians, including children, in the city of Haditha last November.

Iraqi sources consider the Haditha massacre a normal Pentagon operation. That's why so many Iraqis join the resistance. What makes it stand out, however, is that not only did Iraqis complain, but the U.S. media and U.S. Rep. Joseph Murtha, a retired Marine colonel and veteran of the Vietnam War, exposed this war crime.

The Marines who killed the civilians had claimed they were in the middle of a battle when it happened. Murtha, who has been briefed on an ongoing military investigation of the incident, said May 18: "There was no firefight. There was no IED [improvised explosive device] that killed those innocent people. Our troops overreacted because of the pressure on them and they killed innocent civilians in cold blood."

Time magazine had reported earlier that "eyewitnesses cast doubt on the military's claim, saying four of the Iraqis had been pushed into a closet, then shot."

Occupation troops commit war crimes

Murtha is a pro-military member of Congress who has begun to oppose the Iraq occupation for tactical reasons. Speaking for a section of the Pentagon officials, he states his fears that the military will self-destruct if the occupation continues.

Murtha understands the situation U.S. troops are in, based on his own experience in Vietnam. Where occupation troops face a popular resistance and fear everyone, they shoot quickly, in fear and anger. They commit war crimes.

Murtha wouldn't agree, but under those circumstances, the only honorable thing for U.S. troops to do in Iraq is to refuse to fight against the resistance. Otherwise these massacres of civilians will continue to take place, just as they did in Vietnam. Some will continue from the air, where bombing raids against suspected "insurgents" hit homes in villages.

Such a raid just happened in Afghanistan. Maj. Scott Lundy, speaking for the "coalition," reported a big success in killing "80 Taliban fighters" with a May 21-22 strike on the village of Azizi in Kandahar province. This claim was then cut to 20 fighters plus 16 civilian villagers, including children, and another 15 wounded.

Blair sneaks in

It was one sign of the new Iraqi government's weakness that Blair's trip to Iraq had to be carried out in secret. It was another that the three major ministries handling security—Interior, Defense and the National Security Council—had no appointments, as the new Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki couldn't find people acceptable to all the battling parties.

Al-Maliki had promised a month ago that the government would form in 24 hours. Now, after creating enough government ministries to give posts to every party with a few people elected, and proclaiming a new government, he had to appoint himself and two aides to the most important posts on a temporary basis.

He proposes to fill the rank and file of the security forces with the militias of the different parties and sects—that is, with those forces accused with good reason of being "death squads." Every post is carefully appointed with an eye on which party and sect people belong to.

Nevertheless both Blair and Bush extolled the new government as a victory for democracy in the Middle East and especially a victory for their unjustified and criminal invasion of Iraq.

Despite the two imperialist leaders' praise, they don't expect any quick results. According to an Associate Press report, the White House expects no quick troop withdrawals. "We're not going to sort of look at our watches and say, oop, time to go," White House Press Secretary Tony Snow said May 23.

Gen. Peter Pace, the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had put it even more succinctly a week earlier when a Senate committee asked him whether troops could withdraw completely from any of Iraq's 18 provinces within the next three months.

"No, sir," Pace replied. □

U.S. goal of regime change in Iran

Easier said than done

Following are excerpts from a talk by Ardeshir Ommani, co-founder of the American-Iranian Friendship Committee, at the May 13-14 "Preparing for the rebirth of the global struggle for socialism" conference.

As usual, the regime in Washington, with regard to its nuclear dispute with Iran, has not respected the laws governing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and has stubbornly resorted to deceitful procedural mechanisms that could be used to exert pressure on the members of the International Atomic Energy Agency board and that of the United Nations Security Council to consider approving a resolution that would help to isolate Iran internationally and impose economic, political and diplomatic sanctions against it.

After countless meetings of the IAEA and several referrals from the United Nations' nuclear monitoring agency to the UN Security Council and vice versa, the U.S. and its European Union partners aimed at framing Iran's nuclear dispute in the context of Chapter VII, meaning that the council's decision will carry the force of sanctions or even military intervention.

To accomplish their objectives, the U.S.-European Union unsuccessfully tried to either win over the active or tacit support of China and/or Russia for their sanctions policy or at least to neutralize their impact, through abstention, on the final decisions of the Security Council. In this regard the holy alliance of the imperialist powers has failed miserably, since China and Russia have repeatedly stated that Iran's engagement in the development of civilian nuclear energy is within the rights guaranteed by the NPT to the member states, and should not be regarded as a violation of the treaty.

It is crucial to highlight that this is not the first time Iran has been referred to the UN Security Council.

Almost 54 years ago, when the democratically elected prime minister of Iran, Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, with the approval of Iran's consultative assembly and the support of the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people, nationalized the Iranian oil industry, the British Labor government in alliance with the Eisenhower administration declared that nationalization threatened the security of the international community. Using their power of influence in the UN, they were able to impose an embargo on the export of Iranian oil.

The embargo weakened the economy and made Dr. Mossadegh's government vulnerable to political volatilities that paved the way for the U.S.-British coup of 1953, which made Iranian oil resources uncontrollably available to the U.S., British, French, and Dutch oil companies that also manipulated Iran's economic and political system through their agent on the Peacock Throne, the Shah.

The dream of "regime change"

Today, the U.S. administration is making every effort to repeat the scenario of 53 years ago.

To mobilize the forces of reaction inside and outside Iran against the government of Dr. Mossadegh, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower blamed Mossadegh for the successes of the working-class and communist movements in Iran, led by the Tudeh Party.

Today, similarly, Washington is pursuing a two-pronged tactic: internationally charging the government of Dr. Mohammed Ahmadinejad with violating the Non-



Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, with supporters in front of Iranian parliament, was elected as prime minister of Iran in 1951. On Aug. 19, 1953, the CIA and British intelligence agencies overthrew his government in an illegal, bloody coup, replacing him with the hated Shah of Iran. The 1979 Iranian revolution forced the Shah into exile in the U.S.

Proliferation Treaty, and domestically blaming him for all the alleged ills of Iranian society, namely lack of bourgeois democracy and mismanagement of the economy.

The U.S. plan is to use all external and internal forces to destabilize Iran economically and politically, and finally overthrow the current government and establish a puppet regime that would be at the service of the world's largest corporations.

New era

What makes Washington's plots against the Iranian people unrealizable is the new condition of the balance of forces, domestically and internationally, in favor of revolution and against counter-revolution.

First and foremost, the government of the Islamic Republic is a product of the 1979 Revolution, and the military force at its disposal is raised and trained from the bottom to the top. In contrast, the military and the police force under the government of Mossadegh primarily were trained by British and the U.S. military advisors, and their allegiance was to the king.

With regard to international conditions, the U.S. corporate government has picked challenges and confrontations with many independent states and progressive movements all at the same time. Right after Sept. 11, 2001, President George W. Bush said that "Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."

This policy of hostility toward many nations simultaneously has met with worldwide resistance. The animosity of the U.S. capitalist system toward Cuba, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Venezuela, Bolivia, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Armenia and even China, to name a few, has resulted in its inability to isolate Iran regionally and internationally.

Today, more than ever in the recent past, Iran has developed comprehensive ties with these countries, not to mention ami-

cable relations with revolutionary movements in Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon.

It is my strong conviction that in the current conflict, a relative victory of Iran over the United States and its partners is a serious step toward exhausting U.S. imperialism's resources and revitalizing the forces of socialism.

Shift in the world balance of forces

There are titanic shifts in the balance of power from West to East and from North to South. Is Washington losing Latin America? An article by Peter Hakim in Foreign Affairs magazine highlights that: "In the past decade, nearly a dozen elected Latin American presidents have been forced from office."

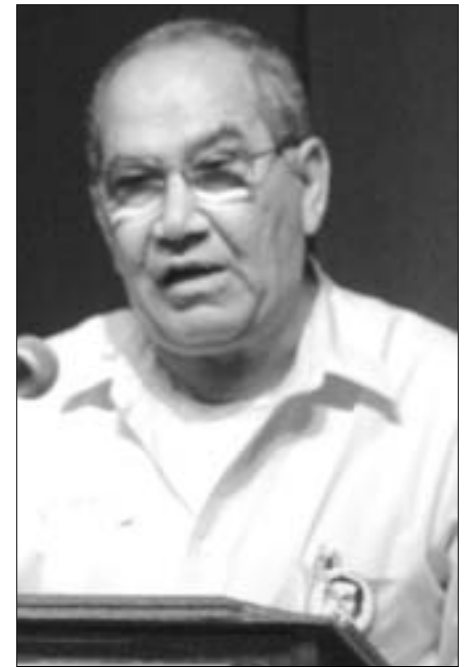
Hakim chose not to mention that these heads of states had climbed to power during the period in which Washington's neoliberal economic policies reigned supreme and the burden of colossal national debt condemned the masses of the continent to poverty, destitution and ever-increasing conflicts.

The plans of the IMF, the World Bank and U.S. regional pacts have subjected Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Mexico and Colombia, not to mention Chile and Argentina, to deep social, ethnic and regional divisions. The gaps between the haves and the have-nots have ever widened.

As far back as in July 2004, James Hoge Jr., in the article "Global Power Shift in the Making" that appeared in Foreign Affairs magazine, wrote: "Global power shifts happen rarely and are even less often peaceful. Washington must take heed. Asia is rising fast, with its growing economic power translating into political and military strength."

"The transfer of power from West to East is gathering pace and soon will dramatically change the context for dealing with international challenges. ... Many in the West are already aware of Asia's growing strength."

Since then, many changes have taken place, including Russia's decision to take control of its oil resources and strengthen



WW PHOTO: LAL ROOHIK

Ardeshir Ommani

its domestic security, and helping some of the countries in the Near East to ask the United States to close down its military bases.

It is in this international background that the Iranian government draws its strength to withstand the pressure by the United States and its European imperialist partners.

The possibility of sanctions and war

Should the U.S. ruling class be desperate and adventurous enough to impose illegal embargoes on Iran's import-export and foreign investment, what will be the depth and the extent of the damage to the Iranian society?

According to Abbas Milani, co-director of the Iran Democracy Project at Stanford University's Hoover Institute, "Any sanction that does not include oil will not have any serious effect."

But what if the sanctions go as far as including oil and gas?

According to Milani and other semi-official experts, such inclusions are highly improbable because having the oil prices at \$70 a barrel as a base makes the economy vulnerable to stagflation and much lower growth. A strict embargo on Iranian oil will easily send the price of oil well above \$100 per barrel, which could plunge the world capitalist economy into a deep and lasting recession.

Iran has been under a U.S.-limited sanction for more than two decades. This has prevented U.S. companies from purchasing oil or investing in the Iranian oil industry. It also prohibits the companies of other countries from investing in Iran's oil projects.

Since such an embargo does not have the UN's blessings, U.S. law enforcement agencies have been unable to stop other countries from investing in Iran's oil and gas industries.

Not a drop

Not too long ago, the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, stated that if Washington tries to carry out aggressive acts against Venezuela, he will not send even a drop of oil to the United States.

The same will be true with Iran's oil flowing to Europe and Japan. Iran's line of defense will rest on one basic tenet—not one drop—which means that Iran in the long run will disrupt the flow of oil by destroying American oil installations, pipelines, platforms and shipping facilities as much as possible.

Iran, with the support of the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and Azerbaijan, will cut the world oil supply by one-third, which will send the price of a barrel of the black gold to \$350.

George W. Bush said he wants a revolution. Well, here comes an earth-shattering one! □

NEPAL

Mass street actions win gains

By David Hoskins

Nepal's parliament—which was restored in April after massive street demonstrations and armed actions against the absolute rule of King Gyanendra—has now issued a number of declarations that dramatically curtail the power of the monarchy.

The restored House issued arrest orders for five high-ranking cabinet officials who served under Gyanendra. The new coalition government also formally declared Nepal a secular state instead of a Hindu kingdom, stripped the monarchy of its control over the armed forces, removed all references to the monarchy from the army and government, made the royal family's assets subject to taxation, and eliminated the royal advisory council known as Raj Parishad.

Many legal experts in Nepal have predicted that these measures will ultimately face legal challenges by royalist elements who contend that they violate the current constitution.

Many of the pronouncements are similar to the principal demands made by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) when it led the Nepali masses to launch a popular revolution in 1996. While welcoming the parliamentary declaration as a partial step toward progress, the CPN(M) has made clear its intention to stand firm in the push to eliminate the monarchy completely.

CPN(M) leader Prachanda said that "this declaration has not been able to fully address the needs and aspirations of Nepal and the Nepali people."

The CPN(M) and the coalition govern-

ment have agreed to a mutual ceasefire between revolutionary and state forces in preparation for peace negotiations.

Prachanda, who will head negotiations for the CPN(M), has outlined his party's core demands as a condition for a final peace settlement. The three primary demands are: unconditional elections to a constituent assembly with the power to rewrite the constitution and eliminate the monarchy, a federalist structure that

empowers ethnic minorities with greater self-determination, and revolutionary land reform based on the principle of land to the tiller.

While it is likely that all three demands will be met with unease from different quarters of the ruling class, the third demand in particular is likely to meet stiff resistance from the bourgeois and reformist parties that make up the coalition government. Many of these parties

represent large sections of the elite landowners and have little interest in any sort of meaningful reform that would threaten their economic interests.

The CPN(M) aims to use the process of negotiations to demonstrate that its program more fully represents the material needs and political aspirations of the downtrodden Nepali masses.

News sources for this article include the BBC, Nepal News & New York Times.

Imperialism, national liberation and socialism

Following are excerpts from an official BAYAN-USA statement presented by Berna Ellorin at the May 13-14 "Preparing for the Rebirth of the Global Struggle for Socialism" conference.

I am a representative of Bayan, the national alliance of people's organizations in the Philippines that serves as the political center for the national democratic movement for genuine freedom and sovereignty with a socialist perspective. Within the Bayan alliance, I am also a member of Migrante International, the largest alliance of overseas Filipino organizations that struggles for the rights and welfare of our overseas Filipino compatriots while fully integrated in the overall Philippine national democratic movement against imperialism, feudalism and

bureaucrat capitalism.

In over three decades of the Philippine government's relentless pursuit of the Labor Export Program, we now have over 8 million Filipinos toiling in 182 counties throughout the world. This is now equivalent to 10 percent of our entire population. Of these 8 million, approximately 4 million live and work in the United States.

An average of 60,000 Filipinos enter the U.S. every year, composing the third largest immigrant community in the U.S. after Mexicans and Chinese. Over 60 percent of migrant Filipinos are women. Most take up work as domestic workers, nannies, care givers, service workers, entertainers, nurses, teachers. Many women are trafficked in the sex trade, or migrate as mail-order brides.

In 2005, out of a total of 11 billion U.S. dollars in total remittances back to the Philippine economy, \$6 billion was generated from Filipinos in the U.S. The Philippines remains not only amongst the top three labor-sending countries in the world, but the most remittance-dependent economy in the world.

U.S.-led imperialist globalization, under the implementation of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, and the puppetry of virtually all Philippine presidents in history, imposed and facilitated "structural adjustment" on the economies of our so-called "developing nations."

In the Philippines, this has resulted in the development of the "export-oriented, import-dependent" economy, wherein the nation's export of cheap but vast raw materials to industrialized nations for processing is coupled with dependence on highly expensive, processed imported goods.

This "maldevelopment" rather than the misleading term "underdevelopment" results in chronic economic crisis characterized by chronic deficit, which leads to endless debt. While the billions raked in by the sweat of Overseas Filipino Workers—OFWs—keep the crippled Philippine economy afloat in the absence of industry, nearly 95 percent of remittance intake goes toward debt servicing to pay off the Philippine government's international loans.

The semi-feudal and semi-colonial conditions in the Philippines have kept the country's basic mode of production—agriculture—backward to the extent that cultivating land for today's farmers still bears striking resemblance to the cultivation of land in the 15th century under classical feudal times.

Hence it is this chronic semi-colonial and semi-feudal condition that has resulted in an average of 3,000 Filipinos leaving the Philippines every day, just to look for work—the phenomenon of forced, not chosen, migration.

The displacement of peoples from labor-sending neocolonies to fulfill the cheap



Berna Ellorin WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

labor demands of capitalist and imperialist nations such as the U.S. is principally an imperialist act of aggression and the height of class oppression within the borders of a monopoly capitalist country.

As progressives and class-conscious people, we integrate with what has proven itself to be the truly and deeply mass issue for a large portion of the democratic sectors in the U.S. But we must also recognize that the current momentum of the immigrant rights movement, which is not at all a new movement, against the current capitalist-serving U.S. immigration system, must not end with the struggle for immigration reforms.

The democratic sectors of the American people, particularly the most oppressed recipients of imperialist class oppression within the working class non-immigrant communities, must struggle alongside their new immigrant sisters and brothers.

To "contain" the struggle for immigrant rights within the immigrant community alone would be a mistake, and frankly, would serve the interest of the capitalist state that takes delight in and laughs at divisions sown amongst the ranks of the oppressed masses.

As the overwhelming majority of new immigrants in this country are low-wage to no-wage workers, solidarity within the immigrant, Black, and White working class positions us all for genuine advances in the class struggle in this country.

Whether you are an immigrant from Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe or elsewhere, I know the conditions that drove your exodus to the U.S. under the current world imperialist crisis are similar.

I would like to salute the framework under which this conference was conceived: preparing the world for the rebirth of the global struggle for socialism.

For the Philippine movement, the struggle for national democracy with a socialist perspective was born over 30 years ago.

We have always believed, even as overseas Filipinos, that our biggest contribution to the world struggle against imperialism is to win our national liberation struggle. At the same time, we build the highest unities with other peoples' movements through bilateral and multilateral relationships, seeking the most advanced elements against U.S. imperialism. □

Support Korean workers & peasants

From a talk given by John Choe of the Korea Truth Commission at the May 13-14 conference on "Preparing for the Rebirth of the Global Struggle for Socialism" in New York City.

A South Korean free-trade agreement (FTA) with the U.S. is now being negotiated. It got underway in February 2006 with a meeting between President Roh Moo-hyn of South Korea and President Bush. This trade agreement follows major defeats in establishing the next round of neoliberal interventions in the Third World.

Spectacular people's victories—from Seattle to Hong Kong, where thousands of Korean peasants and movement activists blocked the ministerial meetings, and 300 farmers swam in Victoria Bay to avoid police repression—have made a mark, and have forced these types of bilateral agreements to now be the norm. Next month, from June 4 to 9, Korean workers, peasants and activists are going to bring the war against imperialism to the belly of the beast, and stage protests in D.C.

The FTA would allow U.S. companies to dump imports like agribusiness-grown, U.S. taxpayer-subsidized rice in South Korea, sounding the death knell for 3.5 million Korean peasants. The FTA would also eliminate many of the worker rights achieved by decades of militant struggle and sacrifice.

Once the FTA is implemented, 15 million workers will overnight become a highly dispensable and exploitable contingent labor force. The FTA would also expand a growing militant labor force around the world, forcing families apart,



John Choe WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

dislocating people from traditional villages and communities, many of them later facing discrimination and criminalization here in New York City and abroad.

Finally, the FTA would also destroy the social fabric of South Korea, opening up Korean culture to the mercies of the monstrosity we call Hollywood. We will slowly see the Korean-owned, struggling artistic and film industry strangled to death.

As an immigrant and a byproduct of U.S. imperialism, I hope you can help me bring down imperialism through [the June 4-9] event and many other events in the future. □

As Préval becomes president

Haiti's crises persist

By G. Dunkel

René Préval was finally inaugurated as Haiti's president May 14, after being elected in February. The first step, getting the sash of office, took a little longer than expected because the electricity went out. Port-au-Prince had been suffering from outages all week.

Just before he spoke as the new president of Haiti, 800 prisoners, mostly political prisoners, held a protest in the National Penitentiary, within walking distance of the National Palace where Préval was inaugurated. Reporters heard firing during the night and morning. Prisoners said that 12 of them had been killed. The Haitian National Police admitted 11 prisoners had been seriously injured and a number of cops had been hurt, but not seriously.

Préval's speech was short. He emphasized peace and dialog. Speaking in Creole, he said: "Peace has already begun to establish itself. Peace is the key to open all the doors. To attract investment, to create jobs. Jobs combat unemployment. To bring more tourism to the country. To bring more schools, more hospitals."

The Haitian radio station Metropole broadcast interviews with people listening

to Préval's speech May 15, without asking people to identify themselves. The BBC's Worldwide Monitoring Service distributed a report in English on this broadcast a few days later.

The announcer began, "After the speech made by President Rene Préval, some people in the crowd that gathered in front of the National Palace say that Préval's speech was not very convincing, while others appreciate the straightforwardness that he expressed."

The first person interviewed commented, "He told us not to destroy the country and to stand united for the country's progress."

The second said: "I am a Lavalas [the party of U.S.-deposed Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide] partisan. I sincerely did not see anything serious in what he said. He did not give us hope. I did not see anything that would cause us to be hopeful."

The journalist asked interviewees, "What were you expecting him to say?"

The first person interviewed responded: "I was expecting him to speak to the people. It is the people who elected him. He should have talked to the people about what he is going to do for them and what

he can do for them. But Préval did not say anything worthwhile."

A third person responded to a question about solidarity: "Solidarity? With whom? If the people are not part of anything then there cannot be solidarity. He did not put the people first."

Another person said: "Actually, I am really pleased with what he said, especially concerning the military tanks of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti [Minustah]. He wants the military tanks to be replaced by bulldozers for the country's development."

Radio Metropole ended its broadcast with a long quote from a Lavalas organizer, who said in part: "If Préval is in power today it is because of Aristide. There are three questions that we asked him. First, we told him that in order for us to support him he would have to assure the immediate return of Aristide. Second, he would have to assure the release of all the political prisoners. And third, he would need to lower the high cost of living and make education available for all of us."

About 40 percent of school-age Haitians are in school. The rest can't afford the fees and supplies needed to go. Sixty percent of all Haitians, especially those in rural areas

where most Haitians still live, try to survive on less than \$1 a day.

The economy of Haiti depends on foreign aid and remittances. The government is so broke that it will have problems meeting its June payroll. It doesn't even have the money to finish the elections for the National Assembly.

Venezuela is offering solidarity. Through Petrocaribe, Venezuela is planning to supply Haiti's oil needs, about 11,000 barrels. The Venezuelan government said it will donate as much asphalt as Haiti can use for a year.

The first shipment of 100,000 barrels of oil products arrived in Port-au-Prince's harbor May 15, the day after Préval's inauguration.

The new Haitian government has inherited major problems, both political and economic. Political prisoners that the departing de facto regime threw in jail without charges are still there waiting to be released.

The medical aid that Cuba provides and the oil from Venezuela are sorely needed by the Haitian people. The White House will no doubt try to put pressure on President Préval to break ties with these two anti-imperialist governments. □

A fighting union for 30 years

From a talk given by Frantz Mendes, president, United Steel Workers Local 8751 in Boston, to May 13-14 "Preparing for the rebirth of the global struggle for socialism" conference in New York.

The Boston school bus drivers' union represents over 800 workers, 95 percent from Boston's communities of color. We are Haitian, Cape Verdean, African-American, Asian and white, the majority from Boston's immigrant communities.

For nearly 30 years we have built a proud record of struggle for justice. We are a rank-and-file-led union. We fight 100 percent for every grievance, every contract. We also believe that the union should be united as one with the communities in the struggle against poverty, racism and war.

The local was honored to serve as the New England regional office of the Million Worker March. We have supported Palestinian freedom, and had a Palestinian leader give an educational program to our stewards' council. We hosted a delegation of Korean Auto Workers Union representatives in their visit to Boston to build solidarity.

In February 2004, we helped found the New England Human Rights Organization for Haiti. Since that time we have participated in countless demonstrations and hosted many meetings for Haiti's freedom in our union hall. We went to my home in Haiti to give concrete solidarity to the struggle, and to give voice to those whom imperialism wants to silence. We went to the National Penitentiary and the Petionville prison in Port-au-Prince to meet with Lavalas political prisoners So Anne, Yvon Neptune, and [Jocelerme] Ivert.

We sent political, material and financial support to the Confederation of Haitian Workers. The CTH extended solidarity with the Million Worker March in the U.S.

In April 2005, we visited revolutionary Venezuela. We went to factories where the workers are building true workers' power every day. There is nothing that compares to witnessing firsthand their

heroic fight to build socialism.

We have traveled to Colombia to defend workers' rights, to say no to the U.S. dirty war, and to build support for the boycott of Killer Coke. When we returned to Boston, we made First Student Corp. throw Coca-Cola out of all four bus yards—making Local 8751 a Coke-free zone.

In Boston, we have been one of the founding and leading forces in the historic Rosa Parks coalition. Along with the leaders from Boston's communities of color, the youth, anti-racist, anti-war, women and LGBT activists, we have dramatically changed the political landscape in our city.

On Dec. 1, when 2,000 took to the streets in defiance of the mayor and the school superintendent, a contingent of over 40 officers, stewards and members of Local 8751 participated, providing mobile sound stage, security, and logistics.

On March 18, we brought the message of "No to Poverty, Racism and War" to the street. It was a first for Boston's

Frantz Mendes, president, United Steel Workers Local 8751

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL



Last month, our local held Executive Board elections. In many ways it was a referendum not just on our struggle approach to fighting against the boss but also on our program of taking our stand as part of the peoples' movement. I am pleased to report that in an historic 90-percent voter turnout, we won by a landslide!

anti-war movement. The march started in the Black community, and was led by youth of color. In the weeks prior, the union's sound truck brought Rosa Parks leaders door to door in Boston's communities of color, delivering our message in three languages.

The union, along with Rosa Parks Coalition and Workers World Party, led a spontaneous march of hundreds through the streets of Boston on May Day in support of immigrant rights, joining with thousands more on Boston Common.

We have been fighting as a union for 30 years, and for 30 years Workers World Party has been with us every step of the way, from our founding to today. I want to publicly give thanks for this solidarity, and to give a special thank-you to one of our founders, and a teacher to many of our local's leaders for years, Milt Neidenberg.

The workers are ready to build a better world. As was our theme in the past election, we say: "Forward ever! Backward never!" □



John Parker; Hwa Young Lee.

PHOTOS: MINJOK.COM



Recalling Gwangju uprising, massacre

Hwa Young Lee from the Korea Truth Commission, spoke at the 26th anniversary of the heroic Gwangju, South Korea people's uprising and its bloody suppression. John Parker of the International Action Center gave a solidarity statement and musical performance.

The Korea Truth Commission organized the May 18 event in Los Angeles to commemorate the 1980 national student-led uprising that swept South Korea in response to a right-wing military coup supported by the U.S. government under former

President Jimmy Carter. In response, more than 2,000 people, most of them young students, were killed by the South Korean military. Thousands more were injured, tortured and imprisoned.

The U.S., which had the ultimate authority over the South Korean military since the end of World War II, allowed a succession of military dictatorships to abuse the people while close to 40,000 U.S. troops occupied the country. Later proof revealed that U.S. orders allowed the Gwangju massacre to take place. □

A symbolic victory

Incumbent Mayor Ray Nagin, an African American, won a second term in office in New Orleans on May 20.

Nobody has illusions as to who Nagin is. Nagin was elected in 2002 with the blessings of some belonging to the local ruling class. He has worked with real-estate executive and Bush fund-raiser Joseph Canizaro to create redevelopment plans for the city that supposedly take into account the desires of its people, but actually exclude the poorest neighborhoods from participating by denying them funds and resources. (See *Workers World*, Apr. 27)

However, the reelection of the African American mayor should be seen as a statement by Black voters on how they would like their city to remain—a majority Black city—at a time when big business and real-estate developers are licking their chops at the prospect of gentrifying the area and keeping the mostly Black evacuees, a majority of them poor, from returning.

Nagin surely struck a chord with evacuees in Houston when he said at a campaign speech, “There’s a potential to be a major change in the political structure.... There are 23 candidates running for mayor. Very few of them look like us.”

(New Orleans Times Picayune, Mar. 8)

Had Nagin’s opponent, Mitch Landrieu, won, New Orleans would have had its first white mayor since 1978. Polling results show that 80 percent of Black voters chose Nagin, and significantly, 21 percent of white voters did the same. In addition, thousands of evacuees voted through absentee ballots and satellite polling places—although a study reveals that while satellite polling places were set up throughout Louisiana, where evacuees were more likely to be white, none were set up in cities like Houston where more Black evacuees are located. (New York Times, May 22)

While this victory is important, it is by no means a substitute for substance. At Nagin’s victory speech, he told a cheering crowd, “We have citizens around the country who want to come back to the city of New Orleans—and we’re going to bring them all back!” Whether or not this is empty rhetoric remains to be seen, and will depend largely on the mass struggle for justice, led by Katrina survivors, for not only the right to return, but the right to a safe living environment—including effective clean-up of the area and reconstruction of the levees—and a real people’s say in any redevelopment plans.

Montenegro: Balkanizing the Balkans

The first thing to make clear is that the referendum separating Montenegro from Serbia on May 21 had nothing to do with self-determination for the people in that republic. The second is to understand that the breakup of the Montenegro-Serbia union is just the latest step in the dismemberment of the former Yugoslavia so that each of the mini-states left can be more easily oppressed and exploited by U.S. and Western European imperialism.

In this case the bulk of the Montenegro residents, 30 percent of whom identify as Serbs, speak the same language and are members of the same church as the bulk of the population of Serbia.

Montenegro is more mountainous and has a seacoast, but a similar history. It also has a political leader under suspicion—and in Italy under investigation—of using Montenegro for a lucrative cigarette-smuggling racket. He and his party have been leading the drive for independence from Serbia for the past decade.

The referendum, which required 55 percent for victory—the Constitution requires two-thirds—got 55.4 percent. That 0.4 percent translates into 1,760 votes—a small part of the Montenegrin diaspora brought back to vote, many

coming from the New York area. It was an anti-Serbia vote, easier to find or buy after the U.S. and European Union propagandists made Serbs the pariahs of Europe for defending their own independence too well and made them a target of NATO bombs.

Berlin, Vienna and then Washington instigated the breakup of Yugoslavia, using lies, money, subversion, 78 days of bombing and more subversion to bring it about. Those defending real self-determination in the Balkans will defend the right of the peoples there also to join together to win and defend their independence from imperialism. □

Immigrant rights struggle heats up abroad

Nicolas Sarkozy, France’s minister of the interior, just took a short trip to Mali and Benin—two former French colonies in West Africa—at the same time that the French parliament was passing a law on “selective immigration.”

The trip was part of Sarkozy’s presidential campaign for the 2007 election. In both countries, he was met with bitter protests from a wide spectrum of groups.

In Mali, when he got off the plane from Paris, protesters greeted him with banners reading: “Sarkozy, xenophobic racist! No to scorn! Yes to respectful cooperation.”

African Solidarity for Democracy and Independence, which participates in the government’s coalition, issued a statement calling on all to join the protest. “This visit of Nicolas Sarkozy to Mali aims to legitimize the repressive policies of the French government against immigrant workers,” this party pointed out. “Selective immigration is fundamentally racist.”

Hundreds of local officials joined the protests in Kayes—a Malian city which is

JUNE 29, 1969:

Cops raid the Stonewall Inn

By Leslie Feinberg

After midnight on June 28, 1969, the police raided the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village. Undercover cops, male and female, were already inside. At 1:20 a.m., Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine led an assault group of four cops from the First Division “morals squad” in three-piece suits and ties, two patrol cops and detective Charles Smythe. The patrol cop with the radiotelephone remained outside the bar, as the rest of the cops entered the club shouting: “Police! We’re taking the place!”

Ironically, the cops would soon find themselves holed up in the bar, barricaded against an enraged crowd.

While details of the rebellion that broke out later that night outside the bar are familiar to many, historian David Carter offers the following detailed accounts from bar patrons about the struggle that began to build up inside the bar that night during the raid in his book “Stonewall: The riots that sparked the gay revolution” (St. Martin’s Press).

The Stonewall Inn attracted a mixed crowd, described by bargoer Philip Eagles: “There were some lesbians, hustlers, married people, single people, some transvestites, but not too many. It was the heart and soul of the Village because it had every kind of person there.” The bar drew some people of color, as well as whites.

That time of night, a peak Saturday night crowd of some 200 filled the club. David Carter noted, “Almost immediately after entering the Stonewall Inn, the police encountered resistance.”

The cops ordered grouped people in different rooms, then lined them up, demanding to see their identification papers, then letting some go.

Philip Eagles said he witnessed some customers “giving the cops lip,” shouting, “I’m not showing you my ID,” and, “We’re not taking this.” Eagles said he and some others also balked at producing ID, and

finally did so only with “a lot of attitude.” Another customer refused the police order to leave the club.

Those who had extra forms of identification without photographs reportedly shared them with those who did not have ID.

Carter added, “Whatever grumbling there may have been from the gay men, the police soon ran into more significant resistance from other patrons in each of the two rooms.”

Transgender and transsexual patrons who were considered “cross-dressed” were grouped near the bathroom, where female cops threatened to do strip searches to determine their birth sex.

According to Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine, “We had a couple of the transvestites who gave us a lot of flak.” Pine said: “We separated the few transvestites that we had, and they were very noisy that night. Usually they would just sit there and not say a word, but now they’re acting up: ‘Get your hands off me!’ ‘Don’t touch me!’ They wouldn’t go in, so it was a question of pushing them in, fighting them.”

Philip Eagles also described that some lesbians in the front room confronted police, arguing, “We have a right to be here” and, “What are you doing?”

Eagles recalled that cops were “feeling some of them up inappropriately or frisking them.” He said the lesbians “were being pushed around and bullied” and this, combined with the cops body-searching the women, made “everybody generally very uncomfortable.”

Patrol cars from the Sixth Precinct pulled up and parked in front of the Stonewall Inn as backup for the raid.

Inside the Stonewall, those held by police were angry and restive.

Raymond “Ray” Castro, a 27-year-old Puerto Rican bakery worker, recalled that the cops “kept us there for so long, it was almost like a hostage situation.”

Next: *Temperature rises.*
lfeinberg@workers.org



PART 63

Lavender & Red focuses on the relationship over more than a century between the liberation of oppressed sexualities, genders and sexes, and the communist movement. You can read the entire, ongoing *Workers World* newspaper series by Leslie Feinberg online at www.workers.org. Stop and get a subscription while you're there!



WW PHOTO: LAL ROOJK

the origin of many immigrants to France—as well as in Cotonou, Benin.

Spain and Morocco have closed off the straits of Gibraltar and Ceuta and Melilla, the two Spanish enclaves in Morocco, to workers looking to enter Spain and Europe from Africa.

But since May 18, more than 5,000 Africans from Senegal and Mauritania

have landed in the Spanish Canaries, islands that require a six-day trip from the African coast. Good weather made it possible for open boats to make the trip.

About 1 million undocumented workers are currently in Spain, many working in the greenhouses that supply fresh fruit and vegetables to Europe in the winter.

—By G. Dunkel

Correction

The article titled “Imperialism and underfed children/UNICEF report: They go together,” by Ellen Catalinotto, in the May 25 issue of *Workers World*, stated that Ann Veneman was appointed head of UNICEF by President George W. Bush. She was formally appointed head of UNICEF by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. Veneman was known to be favored by the Bush administration.

International Communist Seminar meets in Brussels

By Bill Cecil
Brussels, Belgium

Representatives of 60 revolutionary and progressive parties and organizations from five continents attended the 15th International Communist Seminar hosted by the Workers Party of Belgium in Brussels May 5-7. Sixty-three others submitted papers or sent solidarity messages. The themes of this year's seminar were the influence of the Communist International on the class struggle around the world, and organizing inside the working class today.

Forces in Latin America that directly confront imperialism stirred the meeting. A speaker from the Movement for Socialism (MAS) in Bolivia brought the audience to its feet when he described the new Morales government's nationalization of his country's gas and oil resources. He called it an answer to 500 years of plunder and genocide of the Native people of the Andes, first by Spanish conquistadores, then by U.S. and other imperialist corporations.

Before he spoke he displayed both the Bolivian flag and the multicolored Huipala flag, representing the Native majority of his country. He issued a ringing call for the people of the world, especially in imperialist countries, to stand in solidarity with the people of Bolivia, Venezuela, Cuba and all Latin America against the war plans and conspiracies of the Pentagon and the CIA.

Women from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) and the National Front of Struggle for

Socialism in Mexico also gave powerful talks. The Colombian speaker called for the freedom of FARC leader Simon Trinidad, who the Bush regime is holding incommunicado in Washington. "The Bolivarian struggle for second independence is inseparable from the struggle for socialism," she said.

Juan Piedra of the Communist Party of Venezuela described the impressive achievements of the Hugo Chávez government in bringing health care and housing to the poor, with the help of socialist Cuba. He announced that on May 25-27 a congress would be held to found a new National Union of Workers to support the revolutionary process.

A young representative of the Communist Party of Cuba filled the seminar with optimism when he gave a PowerPoint presentation on the achievements of Cuban youth in science, industry, art and sports despite the U.S.-imposed blockade. He said young people now make up 40 percent of the Cuban parliament and 60 percent of Communist Party cadres.

Speakers from the Communist Party of Ecuador-Marxist-Leninist, the Argentine Party of Liberation and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Argentina also gave important and informative presentations. The second day of the seminar ended with a night of solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia.

A representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine spoke of the need to defend the elected government of Palestine against the genocidal blockade imposed by the United States and Israel with Western European complicity. He

warned of U.S.-Israeli war plans against Lebanon, Syria and Iran. Representatives of the Palestinian and Syrian Communist Parties and of the Communist Party of Turkey also addressed the seminar.

Augusta Epanya of the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon told of her party's roots in the armed struggle against German and later French colonialism. And she reported the devastating social and environmental effects of neocolonialism on West Africa today. She called on revolutionaries in imperialist countries to show greater solidarity with the struggle in Africa, as did Workers Party of Belgium President Ludo Martens.

Representatives from Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine and the former Yugoslavia spoke of the devastating effects of capitalist restoration on the working class in East Europe and the former Soviet Union. Leonid Shkolnikov of the Belarus branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union described U.S. and Western European attempts to intervene in the Belarus elections. He called for critical defense of the Lukashenko government against Western imperialism.

A speaker from the Communist Party of the Philippines spoke of the working class's leading role in the struggle for national liberation. Mobinul Chowdhury of the Socialist Party of Bangladesh described the raging class struggle against transnational corporations in his country.

Representatives of the WPB presented a fascinating history of the Communist movement in Belgium, as well as an account of lessons gleaned from their participation in the Belgian workers' general strike last October. The WPB is also involved in the struggle of mostly African undocumented workers for the right to live and work without fear.

Bill Doares of Workers World Party brought news of the return of May Day to the United States in the mass demonstrations and general strike of immigrant workers. He also spoke of the strike of New York City transit workers and the fight of the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast to return to their homes as signs of a reviving class struggle. Doares described the racist dispossession of the people of the Gulf and the destruction of Iraq as twin symbols of the decay of U.S. capitalism.

Mick Kelly of the U.S.-based Freedom Road Socialist Organization gave a talk on the Communist International and the African-American struggle for self-determination.

The final resolution of the seminar called on Communists to work for an international united front against the U.S.-led imperialist war drive. It expressed solidarity with the struggles of oppressed people all over the world, including Black, Latin@, Native and other oppressed nationalities inside the United States. Many of the talks and the full text of the resolution can be found at www.wpb.be/icm.htm. □

Teaching young people solidarity

From a talk given at the May 13-14 "Preparing for the Rebirth of the Global Struggle for Socialism" conference.

My first year in college I decided to write a paper on my country, Guatemala. Guatemala went through a 30-year civil war in which about half of the Indigenous people were killed, and I had to learn all this through research on a project. Through this research I started to realize that this was going on all over the world and being financed by the U.S. government.

I wanted to do something about it. I decided to work with young people to get them to veer away from capitalist values and look toward supporting each other.

I started through social service agencies, [but] I would find they didn't want to me to teach the youth too much but instead get them jobs to make profits for companies. So I went to another agency that was for teaching different values, and they let me do a youth dance program. They didn't know I was going to do something that would really change their outlook.

We got involved in the Boston Rosa Parks [Human Rights Day Committee] and the Somerville 5 [case]. I began getting pressure from my agency, and right before the anti-war march they fired me. They cut me off from the youth I was working with, but they all left the agency, along with the music department, to work on this youth project. The Rosa Parks Committee backed us all the way.

We bring together all the different styles of music and we show that although we are different we also have a lot in common. We

Irish leader dies



Michéal O'Riordan funeral.

Michéal "Mick" O'Riordan, Spanish Civil War veteran and the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, died in Dublin on May 18 at age 88.

Born in west Cork in 1917, O'Riordan was a member of the Fianna, the Irish Republican Army, and joined the Communist Party of Ireland in 1935. The CP of Ireland later on took an erroneous position against the Irish anti-colonial struggle against the British Empire.

In 1936, he went to Spain with the XVth International Brigade and was wounded in the fight against the fascist dictator Francisco Franco. During the 1940s, he was picked up and imprisoned for four years.

O'Riordan worked as a bus driver and was an active trade unionist. He was

active in the Dublin Housing Action Committee in the 1960s, and later in the campaign to free the Irish political prisoners known as the Birmingham Six.

A statement from the Communist Party of Ireland said (in part): "Mick was a product of his time. Born in the year of the Russian revolution into a country controlled by the Catholic Church and 'gombeen' politicians, all rabidly anti-communist, he took the side of the downtrodden and chose to organize for a society that put people first. He organized the unemployed, solidarity with trade unionists particularly when they were on strike, was an internationalist in word and deed. He defended uncritically the attempts to develop communism in the USSR and other countries."

—Dustin Langley



WWW PHOTO: LAL ROOHIK

Cassandra Clark Mazariego

know that art and music is a tool for social change. We know MTV is using our youth to [sell] expensive sneakers and clothes. They've got our youth tied to these things, so we have to give them something just as good: solidarity.

—Cassandra Clark Mazariego,
Urban Essence Dance Performance Collaborative

Adquisición por Wal-Mart resulta en ataque de un pueblo mexicano

Por Ruth Vela

El 3 de mayo la policía mexicana atacó a vendedor@s de flores en San Salvador Atenco mientras trataban de vender sus productos en el sitio en que acostumbraban, el cual será ahora el lugar donde se establecerá un Wal-Mart.

El ataque iniciado por el gobierno contra el grupo de cultivador@s de flores y sus partidarios en realidad fue resultado de la extraña cooperación entre los tres partidos políticos principales de México—el PRI, PAN y el PRD—que apoyaron la opinión del presidente municipal de Texcoco que decía que l@s vendedor@s “se veían fe@s”.

La verdad, sin embargo, es que est@s pequeñ@s vendedor@s estaban obstaculizando los planes para que compañías grandes extranjeras tomaran este pueblo tal y como lo han hecho en tantos otros pueblos en México y en tantas otras partes del mundo.

L@s vendedor@s de flores se estaban

acomodando en el espacio del mercado de Texcoco cuando fueron atacados por la policía. Al día siguiente, antes del amanecer l@s vendedor@s regresaron con sus seguidores del pueblo de Atenco para enfrentarse con la policía y recuperar su sitio.

La policía respondió de nuevo con violencia, esta vez usando macanas y cartuchos de gas lacrimógeno.

Unos 3.000 policías federales rodearon el pueblo de Atenco. Más tarde la policía estatal y local se unió a los federales. Las tropas luego lanzaron tanto gas lacrimógeno que el pueblo quedó envuelto en una nube. Algun@s manifestantes fueron detenidos mientras que otros pudieron escapar y esconderse.

La policía entonces fue de casa en casa, haciendo añicos ventanas y puertas y deteniendo a más gente. Durante el enfrentamiento, un muchacho de 14 años fue matado a balazos por la policía, y Alexis Benhumea, un estudiante de economía de 20 años de la UNAM, la

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, fue golpeado por un cartucho de gas lacrimógeno que le pegó en la sien izquierda dejándolo en coma.

Desde entonces, líderes del Frente Popular en Defensa de la Tierra, o como está siendo llamado ahora, el movimiento de Atenco, han sido encarcelad@s al igual que a cientos de sus partidari@s los que se encuentran entre los que más brutalmente son torturad@s. Hay actualmente más de 200 pres@s polític@s en Atenco—mujeres, hombres y niñ@s. Han habido varios reportes diciendo que la policía ha violado mujeres. Además, el pueblo ha sido invadido y saqueado.

Para responder a los ataques, gentes por todo México y los Estados Unidos han montado protestas. El Centro de Chiapas para los Medios Independiente publicó un informe llamando a un boicot de Wal-Mart.

El CMI dice que Wal-Mart “es un huésped que no es bienvenido por much@s intelectuales, artistas, traba-

jador@s y activistas mexican@s. Ésta no es la primera vez que Wal-Mart ha encontrado problemas al entrar en un territorio nuevo. [Atenco] es reflejo de la rabia creciente ocasionada por su política de negocios poco ética, su política contra los sindicatos, y su total indiferencia hacia la gente afectada por su política.”

Lo mismo podría ser dicho en cuanto a todas las corporaciones extranjeras que mudan sus fábricas y tiendas libremente al otro lado de las fronteras mientras que miles de personas mueren cada año tratando de cruzar esas mismas fronteras. Ell@s están tratando de escaparse de las condiciones económicas creadas por el imperialismo. La gente de Atenco no está sola. Es inevitable que l@s trabajador@s continúen sus levantamientos y se defiendan. Tienen el derecho de hacerlo, y de usar cualquier medida necesaria mientras se enfrentan a un sistema en que las ganancias cuentan más que las personas. □

El plan de inmigración de Bush

Una lección de demagogia racista

Por Deirdre Griswold

Demagogia es lo que los políticos entregan cuando dicen lo que la gente quiere oír, a la misma vez que traicionan a la gente.

El discurso del Presidente George W. Bush sobre inmigración el 15 de mayo, estuvo lleno de demagogia.

Él dijo, “Estados Unidos no va a militarizar la frontera sureña.” Sin embargo, propuso un plan para enviar 6.000 soldados de la Guardia Nacional a la frontera de EEUU con México. El senador Richard J. Durban de Illinois calculó que el plan podría resultar en que más de 150.000 miembros de la guardia nacional sean desplegados en la frontera en los próximos dos años. (New York Times, 17 de mayo)

El despliegue de la guardia nacional es aparte del plan de Bush de aumentar el número de agentes de la Patrulla de la Frontera de 9.000 a 12.000 efectivos.

Con el tremendo despliegue de la Guardia Nacional a Irak y Afganistán, la mayoría de los estados ya están faltos de personal para bregar con desastres. En febrero, gobernadores de los partidos Demócrata y Republicano, se reunieron en Washington y concluyeron que las “políticas de la administración de Bush estaban sustrayendo el equipo y el personal de la Guardia Nacional necesario para responder en eventos de huracanes, inundaciones, tornados, fuegos forestales y en otras emergencias.”

Huracanes e inundaciones. Pensemos en Katrina y en las peticiones de ayuda de la gente que estaba a punto de ahogarse y que no recibieron respuesta. Pensemos sobre la lluvia de granizos del tamaño de una toronja que cayó en Tennessee hace un mes. Sobre las recientes inundaciones en New England.

Todos los científicos advierten que con el cambio extremo en el ambiente causado

por el calentamiento global, estos eventos son sólo el comienzo. Pero aún así, Bush no ha corrido frente a las cámaras con plan alguno para bregar con estas emergencias. De hecho, nada, absolutamente nada, están haciendo los colosales de la agencia de “seguridad de la patria”, para preparar para estos desastres, a pesar de tener inmensos presupuestos disponibles. Ellos están muy preocupados escuchando las conversaciones telefónicas de la gente y preparando jugosos contratos para el próximo nivel de vigilancia con la tecnología más sofisticada.

La vigilancia en la frontera. Bush dice: “Estamos lanzando la iniciativa más avanzada tecnológicamente en la frontera en toda la historia americana. Construiremos vallas de alta tecnología en los corredores urbanos, y construiremos nuevas vías de patrullaje y barreras en las áreas rurales. Usaremos sensores de movimiento, cámaras especiales y vehículos aéreos automáticos para prevenir el cruce ilegal.”

Y en las billeteras de la gente. Bush dice: “Habrá una nueva tarjeta de identificación para cada trabajador/a extranjero@ legal. Esta tarjeta usará tecnología biométrica, como las huellas digitales computerizadas...”

Todo esto costará miles de millones, que llenarán los bolsillos de los ya súper ricos. L@s trabajador@s en este país no ganarán nada de todo esto. Utilizando el presupuesto del gobierno que ha sido reservado para servicios sociales de gran necesidad, significará nuevos recortes en el sector público.

La solidaridad es lo que se necesita

Desde marzo, literalmente millones de inmigrantes han marchado para exigir sus derechos para vivir y trabajar en este país como cualquier trabajador/a. Este movimiento explotó después de que la Cámara

de Representantes votara a favor de la ley Sensenbrenner-King, la cual impondría fuertes multas a cualquiera que no tenga papeles y a aquell@s que les empleen o les ayuden. Bush intervino cuando estaba claro que esta ley no iría a ningún lado.

L@s inmigrantes indocumentad@s ya han sufrido bastante antes de este último asalto. Con la constante amenaza de deportación, no importa si han vivido aquí por años, han tenido que soportar trabajos a menos del salario mínimo, frecuentemente trabajando sin contratos ni beneficios.

Más y más, la derecha en este país está descubriendo que l@s trabajador@s están enojad@s. Están tratando de desviar esa ira hacia l@s inmigrantes. En el distorsionado mundo de Pat Buchanan, Lou Dobbs de la cadena CNN y otros demagogos, el problema no es el resultado del frenesí de despidos y recortes de salarios, pensiones y de cuidado de la salud; no es el producto del intento de forjar un imperio mundial—encabezado por las empresas petroleras gigantescas—que está drenando cientos de miles de millones de dólares que pagan por las escuelas, los hospitales y los servicios públicos.

La mentira que promueven es que la culpa es de “los inmigrantes ilegales robándoles sus trabajos y sin pagar impuestos”.

Ambas partes de esta declaración son totalmente falsas y calculadas para poner a l@s trabajador@s un@s contra otr@s. Son los patronos los que deciden a quién van a emplear o a despedir. Los empresarios capitalistas están buscando por el mundo dónde pueden pagar salarios más bajos. También estimulan a l@s inmigrantes a venir cuando necesitan la mano de obra acá, mientras que deliberadamente les roban sus derechos, para evitar que l@s inmigrantes ganen mejores condiciones de trabajo.

El plan de Bush de “trabajadores invitados” tiene la intención de hacer esto precisamente. Mantendría contentos a los empleadores de inmigrantes proporcionándoles mano de obra barata, pero enviaría a la mayoría de inmigrantes de vuelta a sus países de origen antes de que puedan recibir sus derechos como ciudadan@s.

Esa es la receta para salarios permanentemente de miseria. La única manera de superarla es forjando la solidaridad entre tod@s l@s trabajador@s, para que entonces puedan luchar conjuntamente en contra de aquellos que les roban cada día de pago.

Y hablando de impuestos, la ley actual está establecida para que dos terceras partes de aquell@s sin documentos, o 8 millones de los 12 millones que se estima están aquí, tienen los impuestos restados de sus salarios automáticamente.

Este es porque el Servicio de Rentas Internas (IRS), desde 1996, ha tenido una política de crear números de identificación para trabajador@s indocumentad@s. Est@s inmigrantes, que no pueden trabajar sin los números, “tienen los impuestos del Seguro Social y Medicare retenidos automáticamente de sus salarios. Dado que los trabajadores indocumentados sólo tienen números falsos, nunca pueden beneficiarse de éstos impuestos. El año pasado, las rentas recaudadas de éstos números falsos—que la administración del Seguro Social guarda en un escondrijo que se llama el “archivo de ingresos en suspenso” sumó un 10 por ciento del excedente del Seguro Social. El archivo está creciendo, en promedio, en más de \$50 mil millones al año”. (“Inmigrantes Ilegales están Pagando más Impuestos de lo que Crees”, Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service del 1ro de mayo)

Son l@s inmigrantes quienes están siendo robad@s por las empresas y por el gobierno capitalista, no al revés. □