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**WORKERS WORLD NEWSPAPER**  
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# With U.S. backing Israeli terrorists bomb Lebanon

## A clear-cut act of aggression, not defense

By Fred Goldstein

The racist Israeli settler regime, with the full support of the Bush administration, is raining death and destruction on the people of Lebanon in an attempt to wipe out the Lebanese national resistance movement—Hezbollah.

Hundreds of Lebanese have been killed, mainly civilians; over 1,000 have been wounded. Neighborhoods in cities throughout Lebanon—from north to south—have been destroyed, along with power plants, bridges, fuel tanks, roads, hospitals, a Red Crescent Society medical van and trucks along the roads.

The execution of this military plan by Tel Aviv was clearly years in the making. The expanded Israeli aggression in Lebanon against Hezbollah has been operating under the diplomatic and political protection of the Bush administration, and is being carried out with weapons supplied or paid for by the U.S. government.

Israel launched its offensive after Hezbollah carried out an attack on Israeli forces in which it captured two Israeli soldiers. Its object was to get a prisoner exchange. The Israelis are holding more than 9,000 Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian prisoners—men, women and children.

Hezbollah acted after the Israeli invasion of Gaza, during which many Palestinians were brutally killed and eight cabinet ministers of the elected Hamas government were kidnapped and imprisoned.

The Israeli government responded to Hezbollah's offer for a prisoner exchange with a massive air, land and sea attack that destroyed the Beirut airport and heavily targeted densely populated, poor Shiite neighborhoods in the south of Lebanon and southern suburbs of Beirut. Hezbollah then retaliated with rocket attacks on cities in northern Israel.

The day after Israel's massive attack, on July 12, the U.S. vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning the "disproportionate reaction" by Tel Aviv.

At a Group of Eight summit meeting of the imperialist powers held July 15-16, Bush made sure that there was no call for a cease-fire, even though the British and the French imperialists,

each for their own narrow interests, were trying to slow down the Israeli offensive.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice defended Israel's terror campaign as the "right to self-defense," and White House Press Secretary Tony Snow has been promoting what amounts to joint

## U.S. protests demand: 'Free Palestine, Lebanon' 6

U.S.-Israeli conditions that Hezbollah must meet before Israel ends its aggression—including the unconditional return of the two Israeli military prisoners and an end to Hezbollah attacks on Israel.

Bush, in a presentation to the media after a bipartisan meeting with Republican and Democratic Party leaders, openly declared that Syria and Hezbollah were "the root cause of the problem" and called for further efforts to "isolate Iran."

## Imperialism is the root cause

The "root cause of the problem" is 58 years of occupation of Palestinian land by the Zionist state in the service of U.S. imperialism—to be used as a weapon against any and all attempts by movements or governments in the oil-rich Persian Gulf to take control of their resources and their lands and exercise self-determination.

The Israeli state is basically a military base armed to the teeth by the Pentagon in the midst of hundreds of millions of oppressed peoples of the region—from Cairo to Tehran. Tel Aviv has made war and carried out military aggression numerous times and has created an apartheid regime for the Palestinians. It is universally hated by the masses throughout the Middle East.

Its degree of coordination with Washington was blurted out in a Washington Post article on July 16. "Israel, with U.S. support," writes the Post, "intends to resist calls for a cease-fire and continue punishing Hezbollah, which is likely to include several weeks of precision bombing in Lebanon, according to senior Israeli and U.S. officials."

"For Israel, the goal is to eliminate Hezbollah as a security threat."  
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## Mexico: Massive march demands vote recount 11



Marchers fill main square in capital city.

WW PHOTO: JOHN PARKER

## Big business and global warming

# Why the fox mustn't guard the henhouse

By Deirdre Griswold

Are exploitation and national oppression the major factors driving climate change?

Global warming is no longer a prediction. Its long-term effects are already unfolding across the planet. There are scads of scientific and news reports showing how serious it has already become for tens, if not hundreds, of millions of people.

In the literature dealing with this grave crisis, few if any references to the current social system can be found. Yet that doesn't mean it is not the basic issue that has to be addressed in order to find a solution.

Perhaps the reason the issues of class exploitation and national oppression are not discussed is because control over billions of people, their labor and resources by a few fabulously wealthy corporations and banks is taken for granted.

Since most of these mega-firms are rooted in highly developed capitalist countries and, in addition to exploiting workers at home, also super-exploit the rest of the world—creating the most malicious, self-serving and racist ideologies to justify their right to do so—the issue of social change really becomes one of overturning not just local class domination but the entire imperialist world order.

Most of the scientists and technical people dealing with the subject of global warming are looking for what they believe to be practical solutions, and the notion of changing social relations on a grand scale is not on their agenda. Even those sympathetic to various struggles of the workers and oppressed for improvements in their conditions of life are not at this time looking to a revolutionary restructuring of the world.

Yet their own predictions as to the gravity of what is to be expected unless human economic activity is profoundly altered should drive them to look beyond the very small steps that they themselves admit are mere band-aids. Certainly, any social movement around this issue must tackle the question of profits versus human needs and survival.

### Not a personal but a social problem

However well intentioned, appeals to people on an individual basis to change their habits—"Don't drive a car," "Turn off your electric lights," "Stop being a consumer"—bring results that are trivial when measured against the problem.

If there's no adequate public transportation, if there's no attractive and affordable city planning that lets workers live close to jobs, shopping and recreation, how can they stop driving cars?

Ever since the mass production of cars began, big corporations in auto, steel, rubber and oil have deliberately prevented the U.S. government from developing an adequate mass transit system, directly leading to this country being the world's worst in emissions of greenhouse gases.

People are not "consumers" by nature. A multi-billion-dollar capitalist industry called advertising constantly works on their minds to convince them that happiness comes only through buying more products. The industry itself creates enormous waste—only a fraction of a "newspaper" is news, for example. Whole forests are sacrificed every day to provide paper for advertising.

Furthermore, trees absorb carbon from the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide. Their loss accelerates global warming.

Another direct corollary of class and national oppression is war. Today, wars are raging in the Middle East because the U.S. oil industry, which more than any other sector of capital controls the Bush administration and its foreign and domestic policy, wants undisputed control over that petroleum-rich era.

What is more destructive to the environment than war? Not only do the planes, ships and tanks of this giant military power contribute to global pollution, but the trillions of dollars spent on past, present and future wars is robbed from funding social programs—like housing, transportation and alternative energy—that could drastically reduce the problem of greenhouse gas emissions.

The destruction and waste built into this militarized, oppressive capitalist society dwarfs whatever energy and resources may be wasted in individual consumption.

The main issue in reining in global warming is social and political, not personal: Will economic activity continue to be based on privately owned corporate entities whose survival in the struggle for markets depends on generating ever greater profits, measured in quarterly bottom lines? Or will it be based on social ownership of all productive wealth, which then allows for broad planning geared to satisfying the long-term needs of the masses of people?

This leads directly to the question of which class will lead society—the workers, in alliance with all the oppressed, or the capitalist exploiters of their labor?

Not to take up these questions is to ignore the elephant in the room. It leads to the unscientific view that greed and inertia are "human nature" and can't be changed. We are already hearing doomsday predictions from eminent scientists. The pessimism and despair of those who limit their outlook to a future constrained by capitalism can only grow more desperate.

### Profiteers lied to the public

The record of the U.S. capitalist class on global warming is undeniable.

As was pointed out in the first article in this series [www.workers.org/2006/us/warming-0720/], big business in the U.S., especially companies in the energy and automobile industries, for about two decades spent hundreds of millions of dollars to discredit the scientific view that human activity—especially the combustion of fossil fuels—had created a blanket of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere that was trapping the sun's heat. They created benign-sounding lobbying groups to disinform the public and make sure that the government didn't impose regulations on greenhouse gas emissions or ratify the Kyoto Protocol, the only worldwide agreement to limit these emissions—and a very weak one, at that.

A year ago, the Guardian newspaper in Britain reported that State Department documents showed the Bush



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## PENSION CRISIS

# Another corporate swindle rooted in capitalist downturn

By Milt Neidenberg

You walk into your bank to withdraw savings. The teller says: "You have nothing in your account." You thought you had money in there. But you don't. The bank took your money to invest or to pay debts. Or they just wanted it for themselves. That's what is happening to millions of workers who won pensions (deferred wages), sometimes in contract negotiations, many times through hard struggle on the picket lines and hard times on strikes.

Giant corporations—United Airlines, US Airways, Bethlehem Steel, North-west, Delta, Delphi—and hundreds of other companies have declared bankruptcy and defaulted on pension benefits won under legal and binding contracts. Millionaires who became billionaires—and of course enjoy fully funded pensions and health care in addition to their exorbitant salaries, obscene bonuses and stock options—are robbing the workers.

A headline on the cover of the Oct. 31, 2005, *Time* magazine read: "The Great Retirement Ripoff." Subheads said: "Millions of Americans who think they will retire with benefits are in for a nasty surprise. How corporations are picking people's pockets with the help of Congress."

The *Time* article was a major exposé that related heartbreaking stories of workers and retirees who lost their pensions. "From 2001 to 2004," it said, "nearly 200 corporations in the Fortune 1000 killed or froze their defined-benefit plans and since 1985 over 5 million workers are no longer covered in the private sector."

The pension crisis is crystallized in a graph—"Pensions in Peril"—showing that since 1985 the number of company-sponsored pension plans has dropped from 112,200 to 29,700. As of 2004



company plans were underfunded by a total of over \$450 billion, with the amount steadily climbing. When multi-employer pension funds are added, the figure rises to over \$600 billion. For the public sector, employee pension funds in the U.S. are short \$700 billion.

The capitalist government was supposed to guarantee these benefits, which were won by the blood and sweat of workers who created the value and profits of the giant corporations. In 1974, following corporate abuses of workers' pensions in the 1960s and 1970s, Congress passed the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA). Coupled with the formation of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. (PBGC), a quasi-governmental agency, ERISA was supposed to provide oversight as well as assurance to the millions of diverse workers here that their retirement pensions would be secure.

President Gerald Ford, who signed

the legislation on Labor Day 1974, promised, "This legislation will alleviate the fears and the anxiety of people who are on the production lines or in the mines or elsewhere, in that they now know that their investment in private pension funds will be better protected."

However, Congress wrote ERISA so broadly that, during the 1980s, top management was able to dip into pension funds and remove the equity set aside for the workers' retirement. This was a bonanza for corporate raiders, speculators and Wall Street conglomerates, which were able to skim millions and billions from pension funds to buy up distressed corporations. Even though Congress has imposed an excise tax on money removed from the pensions and rewritten some of the rules, this was a slap on the wrist. The ripoff goes on.

After three decades under ERISA, pension plans that companies are dumping are so short of assets that the financial status of the PBGC, the body responsible for protecting the pensions, is rapidly deteriorating. In 2000, the agency operated with a \$10 billion surplus. By 2004, this became a \$23 billion deficit. By the end of this year, the shortfall could top \$30 billion.

According to PBGC Executive Director Bradley D. Belt, who recently announced his resignation, "The agency has on record 350 active bankruptcy cases." Belt told Congress, which is currently discussing ERISA, "37 have underfunding claims of \$100 million or more, including six in excess of \$500 million."

In reality, the deficits are worse than the public data suggests. The Government Accountability Office stated earlier this year: "PBGC's accumulated deficit is too big, and plans simply do not have enough money in the system to back up the long-term promises many employers have made to their workers."

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial on June 27, headlined "Pension Crash Landing," criticized Congress, whose House and Senate conferees are "busy negotiating another pension fix." This mouthpiece of finance capital—no friend of labor—is warning the government: "On present trends, this could become a fiasco on the order of the savings and loans collapse."

They were referring to the bailout—which cost tens of billions in taxpayers' and workers' money—in the 1980s and 1990s when another government insurer, the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, went belly up during a real estate crisis. Whether the government will pick up the tab if the PBGC collapses remains to be seen. Without a broad-based struggle, pensions could go the way of the dinosaur.

## Whipsawing to break up unity

The center of a potential class struggle is emerging in the auto industry.

On Oct. 8, 1995, Delphi, the largest auto supplier in the U.S., filed for bankruptcy protection with an \$11-billion pension shortfall. In 1999, General Motors spun off Delphi, its main supplier. The shortage in GM's own pension fund is estimated by the PBGC at a whopping \$31 billion.

Ford Motor Co. has a \$12.3 billion pension deficit. Daimler-Chrysler is pitting local unions against each other to achieve deep concessions.

The Big Three and Delphi have plans to shut down or sell plants to restructure their corporations, lay off thousands of workers, downsize wages and benefits, and hire temporary workers. Delphi is demanding a wage cut from \$27 to \$12 an hour for the remaining unionized workers. These transnational corporations are whipsawing the union workforce and girding for a showdown in 2007 when the contract with the United Auto Workers, the primary union, expires.

Recently General Motors announced the results of a massive buyout plan that included Delphi. Of 131,000 workers at GM and Delphi who were offered them, approximately 35,000 accepted some sort of buyout. Of those, around two thirds were GM workers.

Corporate strategy was to divide the retirees from the active production-line workforce. The buyouts were a way to weaken the resolve expressed by the Delphi workers when they voted by over 95 percent to authorize a strike.

Divide to conquer will be met with resistance. Retirees have a major stake in the outcome of 2007 contract negotiations: enforcing the pension promises that GM made in the buyouts. They are rightfully concerned and they will join production line workers to turn the pension crisis into a general struggle.

There are rank and file groups coming together to take on these monumental challenges. Soldiers of Solidarity is one that has a splendid record in the formative stage of this epic crisis. Their name is an eloquent expression of what is needed: an army of workers prepared to do battle in independent, class-wide solidarity with workers, organized and unorganized, and their communities across the spectrum of the pension crisis, which at its roots is a capitalist crisis. The empire of high finance is counting on never-ending war to solve these problems, further aggravating, not alleviating, the many crises here.

It was rank and file auto workers who seized the General Motors empire in the late 1930s. The UAW was born out of the Flint sit-ins. The organized resistance began with the few and grew into an army of the many. Are we in for a rerun? □



WW PHOTOS

By Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row

## The war against the elders

From a July 5 audio column.



Something amazing has been happening lately, amazing, not only in what's happening, but the ease and quiet with which it is happening.

It's the recent announcement of GM (General Motors) that it intends to buy out (or should we say, "sell out"?) the contracts of its workers and retirees.

Even more amazing, it seems, is the recently broadcast announcement of UAW (United Auto Workers) head, Ron Gettelfinger that seemed to quietly acquiesce to the company's plans.

At the recent UAW Constitutional Convention in Las Vegas, Gettelfinger told attendees, "In the not so distant past, when the U.S. economy grew and productivity increased, we could expect wages to rise as well. That's no longer true." The UAW chief added, "The challenges we face aren't the kind that can be ridden out. They're structural challenges, and they require new and farsighted solutions."

It was stunning to hear a labor leader sound like a corporate honcho.

There was resignation, a quiet acceptance of the inevitable.

Those proposed "solutions" are little more than stop-gap measures, and hoping that the elections of more Democrats will result in changes for the lives of working people.

The essence of Anglo-American law is the right of contract.

In business law, there is no higher principle. And yet, when corporate CEOs are making 300 to 400 times what an average worker makes, how can there be serious rap about pending bankruptcies, failing markets, or threats from overseas competitors? The formerly "sacred" principle of contract that "a deal is a deal," passes into the mists of history.

From the top floors of the company suites, things are looking OK.

It's not like the UAW is a weak or small union. It has around 750,000 active members, with almost two-thirds as many retirees.

Now, with buyouts booming, the economic war shifts to pensions.

That's because GM's PR firms (otherwise known as the corporate press) have argued that "legacy costs" (newspeak for "pensions") have made the mega-billion dollar company falter. But according to none other than the *Wall Street Journal* (no friend of labor!), it's "executive benefits" that are "playing a large and hidden role in the health of America's pensions." Indeed, unlike many corporations, which have ignored or badly underfunded pension funds, GM's pension fund is "over"-funded, to the tune of \$9 billion more than necessary to service the needs of retirees for years to come. Moreover, assets in the fund have returned some \$10 billion in investments for GM in 2005 alone.

The "hole in the bucket" it seems, isn't the retirees, but the corporate tops, CEOs pulling in 300 to 400 times the average Joe or Josephine.

Givebacks, which have littered the labor movement since at least the nineties, have clearly not worked.

What we are seeing is the dark side of globalism, with the implicit threat of corporations to flee their home countries, to seek cheaper labor elsewhere—contracts be damned.

When it comes to capital, there is only one law they respect—the law of profits.

Globalism, as praised and passed by [former U.S. President] Bill Clinton and pushed by those who came after, has shattered a century of deals between labor and capital. For while labor's interests were national, capital's interests were global.

When workers join across the false borders of nations, workers everywhere will begin to fight back against the greed and gluttony of capital.

Source: "UAW leaders promise more of the same," *The Spark* (June 26-July 10, 2006), p. 8.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is a member of the National Writers Union, which is affiliated with the UAW. To hear Mumia's audio columns, go to [www.prisonradio.org](http://www.prisonradio.org).

# Immigrant rights coalition exposes Lou Dobbs' racism

By Heather Cottin  
New York

**"Hey, Lou, we don't support you! Stop immigrant bashing!"**

On July 14, during the evening rush hour outside CNN headquarters at the Time Warner building in Manhattan, this chant could be heard as over one hundred members and supporters of the May 1 Coalition held a spirited picket line against Lou Dobbs's relentless racist attacks on immigrants.

The protest was organized to denounce the bigoted diatribes of this right-wing talk show host, whose xenophobic "news" program poisons the political atmosphere against immigrants across the country.

Dobbs' "message of hatred is to divide the people," said Sharon Black of the coalition. "Dobbs speaks to the middle class in the United States saying that immigrants take away work and benefits from U.S. workers, and that is a lie."

Black's statements along with comments from coalition leader, Larry Holmes and Lenin Medina of El Poder Latino, an Ecuadorian group, were published in El Diario, a popular New York-based Spanish language newspaper. "We are tired of CNN and Lou Dobbs converting their programming to a racist campaign against immigrants," said Holmes.

Berna Ellorin from Bayan-USA spoke about the hundreds of thousands of Filipino workers who have fled poverty in their homeland and are working for starvation wages in the United States. Mexicans who have risked their lives to work here have been vilified by Dobbs, the representative from Asociacion Tepeyac noted.

May 1 Coalition leader, Chris Silvera, who is secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 808 and chair of the Teamsters National Black Caucus, denounced Dobbs as an agent of the corporations which have impoverished Third World nations, noting that "free trade" has "restructured" the world economy to make profits for big business. This capitalist restructuring has forced immigrants to leave home to seek work in the U.S. "Dobbs creates disunity among U.S. workers," Silvera said.

Charles Jenkins of Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union called for solidarity between Black and immigrant workers against corporate greed.

A speaker from Pakistan USA Freedom Forum described Lou Dobbs' role in gaining support for the U.S. government's deportation of tens of thousands of Pakistani immigrant workers whom the U.S. government called "terrorists."

Chuck Mohan, president of the Guyanese-American Workers United said, "CNN gives the world the incorrect



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

TWU Local 100's Charles Jenkins and AFSCME Local 375's Mike Gimbel show support of NYC labor for immigrant workers.

idea about immigrants in this country" as immigrants and U.S.-born workers walking by cheered.

Ignacio Jaureguilorda from Argentina

said, "Those who live in this country should support those who come to this country and who don't have rights to protect them."

Ecuadorian immigrant leader Lenin Medina added, "We are opposed to [Dobbs'] racist attacks. It is not the moment to speak of races in a country where we are all of mixed races."

A letter delivered to Dobbs by Teresa Gutiérrez of the May 1 Coalition said in part, "We stand in solidarity with all immigrants and demand full legalization and full rights for all. We believe that no worker is illegal. ... Immigrants do not close factories, lay off workers and send shops abroad in search of cheaper labor, deny health care to the people of this country [or] raise the cost of gas to exorbitant costs."

Dobbs responded to the protest on his July 14 show alleging that Venezuela and Cuba were "fueling this nation's illegal immigration crisis." He praised the mayor of Hazleton, Pa., who Dobbs claimed was, "leading the way ... with an ordinance with harsh penalties for hiring or renting property to illegal aliens."

Bayan-USA said, "No media personality has done more to generate an anti-immigrant climate than CNN's Lou Dobbs." □

## TWU Local 100 fights for jobs & riders' safety

By G. Dunkel  
New York

An arbitrator decided that the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) of New York could not impose "One Person Train Operation" (OPTO) beyond the very limited extent which is currently allowed. This was a big win for Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union (TWU).

While the MTA is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on cameras, cops and a high-tech anti-terrorist surveillance system, installed and configured by Lockheed Martin at a reported cost of \$212 million, it wants to do away with conductors on its trains.

The subways in New York City were designed for two-person operation: one person operates the train, the other person, called a conductor, opens and closes the doors, makes announcements and helps evacuate the train during emergencies. A full train can contain over 3,000 people.

In 1994, NYC Transit, the subsidiary of the MTA that operates the subways, came to an agreement with the TWU that OPTO could only be used during off-peak hours on trains less than 300 feet in length—about four cars.

The MTA was planning on introducing OPTO on the L line, which links Brooklyn with lower Manhattan and is generally crowded from 6 a.m. to midnight or later; the G line linking Brooklyn and Queens, where it is used on the weekends when service is reduced; and the N line.

While the TWU's contract expired in December of 2005, under New York State's Taylor Law its provisions are still in force until a new contract is reached. That was the legal basis for the arbitration.

Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign, which is a nonprofit transit watchdog, rejoiced at this victory at a time

when safety is such a concern. "It was lunacy for New York City Transit to try to remove conductors from subway cars. My hat's off to the TWU for putting up a terrific fight."

The general reaction among union members outside of transit was that the TWU had both protected jobs and riders' safety.

However, since the MTA has demanded and achieved binding arbitration on a new contract, it can try to get OPTO through this process.

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WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Transit workers rally during the Dec. 2005 transit strike.

### CLEVELAND

## U.S. poverty has many faces

By Martha Grevatt  
Cleveland

It was around the time of the 2004 presidential campaign that statistics came out pointing to Cleveland as the poorest big city in the U.S. Cleveland also had the third-highest child poverty rate and was the third most segregated urban community. While Cleveland does not currently hold that distinction, it is not because economic suffering here has decreased—other cities have gotten even poorer.

Thus Cleveland was a fitting location for the Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) to bring the "National Truth Commission," held here July 14-17. This powerful event drew hundreds from across the U.S. to hear and

give testimony about the denial of basic human rights to low-income people in this country. The rights violations covered included violations of the right to health care; the right to a living wage; the right to housing; the right to water, utilities, food and other basic necessities; the right to education; as well as unjust removal of children from their parents.

While a few speakers provided damning statistics, most spoke firsthand from their own experiences. "Commissioners" from the U.S., Latin America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East heard of evictions, utility shutoffs, poverty wages, mistreatment of deaf children in schools, children and parents burned in fires caused by portable heaters, and the continuing inhumanity visited upon Katrina survivors.

The all-day hearing was chaired by Cheri Honkala of the Philadelphia-based Kensington Welfare Rights Union and Marian Kramer, president of the National Welfare Rights Union, organizations that played a major role in putting on the commission. The following day the PPEHRC sponsored a "Vision and Resistance" art and culture day, followed on July 17 by a march to both the Democratic and Republican party headquarters to demand universal health care.

Speaking at the hearing as one of a busload of people from Detroit, Maureen Taylor of Detroit Welfare Rights Organization inspired the crowd when she proclaimed, "Soon the people will rise up in a tidal wave of rage and wipe out these killers of education!" □

## Supporters to protest brutal mistreatment

# Howard Guidry perseveres after legal setback

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

July 17—"Before I even got to the courtroom today, I was strip-searched twice in a matter of minutes, attacked by a four-man SWAT team who forced me onto the floor of my cell with knees in my back and on my neck and threatened to Taser me," an angry Howard Guidry told Workers World today.

"Because I was shackled with my legs twisted and handcuffed with my arms twisted behind my back, they had to dress me," he continued. "Then they told me to put on my shoes, but I couldn't move my feet as the shackles were too tight. I was told I didn't need shoes. I went to court barefooted, without my glasses, without my legal papers and wearing no underwear or undershirt—only the neon yellow shirt and pants.

"I couldn't even see my supporters in the courtroom."

Today was supposed to be a new beginning for Guidry in court. But after the degrading and brutal treatment, there was a legal setback in court. Both of the pre-trial motions his defense attorneys filed were denied.

To make matters worse, his lead attorney—Alvin Nunnery, who had been on the case for more than 10 years—had to withdraw as his lawyer in order to be able to testify about a conversation he had with a witness.

Death-penalty abolitionist Njeri Shakur announced today: "We are planning a demonstration outside the county jail to protest the racist treatment of Guidry. It is an outrage that this innocent brother was mistreated by the sick people running the jail. Then they take him to court barefooted and virtually blind. The Ken Lays and Jeff Skillings don't go to court without shoes and underwear. Neither should our sisters and brothers."

Guidry was arrested in 1995 when he was 18 years old. He reports that cops lied to him, telling him they were going to put him on the fast track for an execution if he didn't confess to a murder he knew nothing about.

### Racist injustice

After assaulting him with the white supremacist "n" word, explaining how lethal injections worked and berating Guidry for hours—all the while denying him his right to contact his attorney—the teenager was finally tricked into signing a confession. The police told him that his lawyer had told him to sign it.

Guidry was convicted of capital murder based on that coerced confession.

In 2003, a federal district judge threw out the confession and hearsay testimony that was used to convict Guidry. The judge ordered the Houston trial court to release Guidry or retry him within 180 days.

The state appealed the ruling, but the Fifth Circuit upheld the order to release or retry Guidry. And in March this year, after the Supreme Court refused to review the case—essentially allowing the original federal district judge's decision to stand—the Houston trial court had 180 days to release or retry the prisoner, and Guidry was moved off of death row.

Howard Guidry thought that finally his decade of racist injustice was coming to an end. Then he appeared in court today.

"Going into court I had little faith that justice would be served. I was cautiously optimistic, but knew our motions could be denied, even though there were no legal grounds for doing so," Guidry explained.

"I was already in a foul mood going into the courtroom after the degrading treatment this morning, so it wasn't such a shock when the judge denied both motions. Beyond that the only disappointing point for me was having lost my attorney, Alvin. He's been involved for ten



WW PHOTO: LUCHA RODRIGUEZ

From left, Sister Sandi, aka The Water Poet, and anti-death penalty activists Njeri Shakur, Regina Schmahl, Liz Lyon and Gloria Rubac gather in front of the Pyramid Shop in Houston as the Evening of Solidarity with Howard Guidry begins.

years. I got lucky when he was originally appointed for me," Guidry said.

"This battle is a small setback, but the war is just beginning. I appreciate all the support from the Houston community and know we will prevail," Guidry concluded.

### 'My struggle is far from over'

On the eve of his court appearance, July 16, an "Evening of Solidarity with Howard Guidry" brought out a crowd of activists and supporters to hear Guidry's death row poetry, meet his friends and get to know the person who had been railroaded to death row as a very young man.

Gathered on benches and chairs in the backyard oasis of The Pyramid Shop in the Third Ward of Houston, a multi-national crowd of activists listened to Njeri Shakur speak of Howard Guidry, her friend and comrade.

"Howard was so courageous on death row that he inspired many young men to study revolutionary politics and stand up for their rights," Shakur stressed. "He

helped form the group Panthers United for Revolutionary Education. He and Kamau Wilkerson took a guard hostage in 2000 to call attention to the horrific conditions in their new super-max prison that were driving the men to lose their minds. They did this not to hurt anyone, but because of their love for their fellow prisoners."

Liz Lyon, a young college student from New Jersey who came to Houston to work against the death penalty for the summer, has gotten to know Guidry through many visits to the county jail. She gave a run-down of Howard's legal situation, and her poem about her new friendship with Guidry touched everyone.

Abolitionist Regina Schmahl read Howard's own words of greetings to the crowd: "The struggle for my freedom is far from over. The stakes are high for the state of Texas. My release would be a glaring representation of a system long broke and irreparable. Too many people have

*Continued on page 10*

# Cop's racist frame-up unravels: Not guilty!

By Rachel Nasca  
and Stevan Kirschbaum  
Boston

As family, friends and supporters packed the courtroom of Roxbury District Court on July 13, a jury returned its verdict of "not guilty" on all counts against Rob Traynham Jr. The jury took only 15 minutes to confirm what supporters had known all along—that Traynham had been the victim of an ugly racist frame-up and that the charges were false and groundless.

Traynham is the son of Bob Traynham, an activist leader of the International Action Center, USW 8751 and the Boston Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee.

Rob Traynham had been the victim of the city's high profile, military style occupation of Boston's communities of color. Police programs such as "Operation Rolling Thunder" have targeted Boston's youth of color, in particular young men. On Dec. 3—just days after an historic demonstration in the spirit of Rosa Parks, and days after Boston officials unveiled their coordinated assault plans on Boston's youth—Traynham was ambushed on Blue Hill Avenue by undercover and uniformed cops. He was falsely charged with

"drug distribution" and "distribution near a public school," which carry serious mandatory jail time. The cops searched him in a brutal and humiliating fashion on this public street while his father witnessed, and they rifled through his father's car four times. No drugs, extraordinary money, or paraphernalia—nothing in the way of "evidence"—was found, yet the cops unjustly confiscated Rob's cell phone and other personal property.

For seven stressful months, Rob, his family and supporters fought for justice in this case.

### Sham court 'justice' system!

From the arraignment to the many court appearances in Roxbury Court, it was evident that Traynham was one of hundreds of African-American youth ensnared in the racist police web of racial profiling and police brutality.

It was also clear to any observer in the court that the overwhelming majority of these youth then become the victims of the criminal injustice system, where the so-called legal process becomes a cruel mockery of a fair judgment by one's peers. Even in Roxbury Court, in the center of Boston's African-American community, jury pools are predominantly white.

Court appointed "defense" attorneys spend little or no time with their clients, railroaded plea bargains are pushed down defendants' throats, and courtroom cops conspire with prosecutors and "defense" attorneys—literally in the court's hallways. These tactics are a routine component of what many have correctly referred to as "legal lynchings."

Testimony of the racist cops during the trial gave a window into the tactics brought down on Boston's African-American community of Roxbury. The state's key witness, Detective Quinn, admitted on the stand that he had observed no drug transaction and had found no evidence. Quinn has a notorious reputation in the community for his harassment of African-American youth. The state's entire case amounted to racist innuendo, false suppositions and appeals to the "common sense" of racism!

In this case the jury of four whites and two African Americans deliberated for only 15 minutes. Their "not guilty" verdicts sent the message that they refused to participate in a racist frame-up.

All too often this is not the case, as many juries render racist verdicts. Bob Traynham, upon hearing the jury's verdicts, commented, "The packed court-

room of family, friends and supporters was decisive in this case. It demonstrates the power of solidarity!"

### Racist injustice continues

On June 9, Rob and his brother Vance were yet again the victims of another groundless racist arrest. This current case also is a frame-up, with no evidence and no merit to the charges. The police department's apparent targeting of these young men is the tip of an ugly iceberg of false arrests during occupation—the occupation by cops of Boston's communities of color.

While Boston's mayor and city officials cut summer jobs and social programs, they are spending millions on the continued funding of the police occupation. The IAC and Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee are committed to fighting against this injustice. They are mobilizing for a Summer of Struggle with a Citywide Organizers' Summit, which will build for an August 29 rally under the slogan: "Katrina—one year later the war at home continues—stop poverty, racism, sexism and war!"

Rob and Vance Traynham's next court appearance is July 26. For more information, visit [www.iacboston.org](http://www.iacboston.org). □

# Across U.S. protests hit U.S.-Israeli terror attack

By John Catalinotto

The brutal U.S.-backed Israeli attacks on Gaza and Lebanon prompted a series of protest demonstrations around the world in mid-July, from Tehran to San Francisco. Inside the U.S., organizations from the Arab immigrant community and U.S. anti-imperialist groups called protests before Israeli consulates and similar symbolic buildings in cities across the country.

Workers World received reports from some of the many protests.

In San Francisco on July 13, reports Judy Greenspan, "Chants of "Free free Palestine" and "Bush/Olmert you can't hide, We charge you with Genocide," filled the street in front of the Israeli Consulate. Led by Palestinian activists from Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, over 700 demonstrators demanded an end to Israel's military attacks and bombing of Gaza and Lebanon.

Speakers also called for immediate divestment of U.S. funds and an end to all U.S. support for Israel. This demonstration took place on the eve of the Fourth Annual Al-Awda International Convention organized by Al-Awda and the General Union of Palestinian Students at San Francisco State University.

Four days later on July 17, Jewish peace groups in the Bay Area, outraged by the Israeli attacks on Palestinians in Gaza and the bombing of Lebanon, held a large demonstration during the lunch hour in front of the Israeli consulate. The protest was organized by Jewish Voice for Peace and Jews for a Free Palestine, reports Greenspan.

Following a short rally which included a brass liberation band, 18 Jewish protesters were arrested in a civil disobedience action in the street in front of the consulate. The civil-disobedience action was orchestrated as part of the overall protest demanding an end to the Israeli government's "military attacks on Gaza and Lebanon," reports Greenspan, who was one of those arrested. The protesters were eventually herded into police vans, driven to the main jail, cited and released.

## Chicago, New York and Dearborn, Mich.

Lou Paulsen reports from Chicago that on the night of June 12, hours after the beginning of the Israeli assault on Lebanon, activists with the Chicago Coalition against War and Racism (CCAWR) unanimously voted to call an emergency demonstration. At 5 p.m. on July 14, protestors gathered at the Israeli consulate, carrying signs and banners denouncing the Israeli offensives in Lebanon and Gaza and the U.S. government's role, and calling for the freedom of the 9,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Speakers representing the Arab and Muslim communities and peace and justice organizations held a rally for 90 minutes, with over 200 attending it in the course of the evening, continuing to stream in until the last speech. Despite five years of vicious U.S. government repression, prosecutions, deportations, and threats, intended to terrorize them into silence, the Palestinian and Arab communities of Chicago were well represented.

The CCAWR went on to organize a counterdemonstration against a war rally at Federal Plaza at noon on June 17, organized by the Jewish United Fund and including politicians from both Republican and Democratic parties. Some 150 people protested, and toward the end of



WW PHOTOS: LOU PAULSEN, MONICA MOOREHEAD, JUDY GREENSPAN

Clockwise from top right New York, Chicago, Dearborn, Mich., San Francisco, New York, bottom left.

the rally, police under the Department of Homeland Security arrested veteran activist Betty Resnikoff, bringing a federal charge of trespassing against her, although she was on the sidewalk and in compliance with police orders.

From New York, Monica Moorehead reports that as many as 1,500 "predominantly Palestinian and Lebanese people along with North American activists rallied in front of the Israeli Mission to the United Nations in New York on July 18. The crowd, which included many young Arabs including children, chanted, 'Free, free Palestine! Free, free Lebanon!'"

Moorehead says that the crowd held high graphic signs showing Lebanese children killed by Israeli rockets. Following the rally, the protestors held a militant, spontaneous march going up the sidewalk of 42nd Street despite the police attempts to intimidate and break up the demonstration as passersby watched. Speakers at the

rally included representatives from the various Arab and Islamic communities, the Al-Awda Right to Return Coalition, the International Action Center, the ANSWER Coalition and the International Socialist Organization.

In Houston on July 17, over 300 demonstrated outside the Israeli consulate. One person, Herb Rothchild, was arrested, reports Gloria Rubac. The next protest in Houston, called by the Arab community, is scheduled for July 28 at the U.S. Federal Building.

In Philadelphia on July 14, demonstrators picketed in front of the Israeli Consulate.

Cheryl LaBash reports from Detroit that "in the biggest outpouring in the Metro-Detroit Arab community in many years, more than 10,000 people streamed into the streets of Dearborn, Mich., on July 18 to express their outrage at the terror bombing of Lebanon. Led by youth, the

march and rally put the responsibility for the death and destruction squarely on the United States and its client, Israel."

Many people in the Dearborn area have relatives who are students on holiday with family in Lebanon and who are now stranded in the bombing zone. Speakers condemned the lack of concern and poor treatment of Lebanese-American families by the U.S. government that has refused to evacuate their loved ones.

Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss of Jews United Against Zionism spoke at the rally. "We are here to show solidarity and support for the Palestinian people," he said.

On July 19 in Traverse City, Mich., a Code Pink action will demand, "From Iraq to Palestine to Lebanon, the U.S. must stop arming Israel!" and "The U.S. must pull out of Iraq now!" As early as July 8, a demonstration in Windsor, Canada across from Detroit demonstrated to support Palestinians under attack in Gaza. □



# Who's imprisoned in Israeli jails?

*"Today while we understand, appreciate and grasp the extreme pressures the resistance in Palestine is being subjected to, both externally and internally, we unite our voices and stand with theirs to say yes this issue is worth that level of sacrifice, confrontation and steadiness for it is a matter of principle and the issue of 10,000 detainees."*

—Hezbollah Secretary-General  
Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah (June 30)

By Michael Kramer

The extremely difficult situation of approximately 10,000 political prisoners held in a constellation of Zionist prisons is central for understanding the events unfolding in Occupied Palestine and Lebanon.

Most of the prisoners are Palestinian, while a smaller number are Lebanese and Jordanian. They include men, women and children, and also elected officials. Some have been jailed since the 1970s.

Their cause has resulted in numerous self-sacrificing actions by both Palestinian and Lebanese militants. Over the years the prisoners have taken their own actions to

defend their dignity and their internationally recognized human rights.

The Salem detention camp is located near the West Bank city of Jenin. A lawyer for the Palestinian Prisoners Society (PPS)—Mustafa Al Azmouty—reported on June 13 that conditions were deteriorating.

"The detainees said they are punished any time they complain of mistreatment and that soldiers have confined several detainees to solitary confinement without apparent reasons," he said, noting that, "The detainees also complained that there is a shortage of food and that the food provided is often not very good quality ... The detainees added that soldiers repeatedly broke into their rooms and attacked them without explanation." (International Middle East Media Center, June 14)

Mishkat Al Aseer is an organization that represents Palestinian prisoners and exposes human rights violations. A lawyer from the organization, Dirar Moneer Al Saady, was arrested in January and sent to Salem. He is still in prison. According to his lawyer, Fareed Hawwash, "He was tortured during interrogation and subjected to different sorts of humiliation and psychological pres-

ures." (IMEMC, June 15)

Hawwash appealed to humanitarian, governmental and non-governmental organizations to help get his client released. Hamas and Hezbollah responded to his call with their recent actions and demands that Israel free its political prisoners.

## Widespread prison abuse

Al Naqab prison is located in the southern Palestinian desert. According to PPS, conditions at the prison contravene the Fourth Geneva Convention which is concerned with the treatment of civilians in occupied lands and prohibits collective punishment.

Detainees there "complain of screams, beatings, insults and verbal abuse. Many prisoners are denied cigarettes and access to special diet foods, such as low-sodium foods for prisoners with health problems. Prisoners also face refusal to use the toilet." (Palestine News Network, June 22)

The notorious Al Moskobiyya interrogation facility in Jerusalem is well known to Palestinians. Jamil Hasan Mizhir, a 20-year-old from Ramallah, stated to PPS in June that he was kicked and punched dur-

ing interrogation and laser lights were pointed at his eyes.

Another detainee, Ra'ed Ayid Al Aroury, was tied to a chair from morning to night for 10 straight days.

News of the successful Hamas and Hezbollah military operations, which captured prisoners of war, reached jubilant prisoners in the Zionist dungeons. Punitive measures quickly followed.

At the Damoun and Shatta prisons, captors fired tear gas into the cells. In response, 2,320 prisoners at Al Naqab held a one-day hunger strike on July 14. (www.palestine-info.co.uk, July 14)

The prisoners at Shatta continued their hunger strike for four days.

Since 1948, tens of thousands of Palestinians have passed through Zionist prisons. The struggle to liberate them is a just struggle. Their incarceration has been a nightmare for their families and friends. Healthy young men and women have been permanently scarred and disabled—physically and psychologically.

And many others—too many others for the Zionists—have become even more committed to the struggle to liberate all of Palestine. □

## With U.S. backing Israeli terrorists bomb Lebanon

*Continued from page 1*

threat—or altogether, the sources said. ... For the United States, the broader goal is to strangle the axis of Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria and Iran," the Post article continued.

"Specifically, officials said, Israel and the United States are looking to create conditions for achieving one remaining goal of UN Resolution 1559," which would eliminate Hezbollah.

Resolution 1559, organized and pushed through by the Bush administration in 2004, was directed at driving Syrian troops out of Lebanon, a goal which it achieved with its so-called "cedar revolution" and the disarming of Hezbollah. This Washington-introduced resolution was supported by Israel as well as Saudi Arabia and other dependent Arab states.

The Post article explained that today, in order to accomplish this objective, Washington has no intention of halting the Israeli siege of Lebanon. "They do have space to operate for a period of time," a U.S. official said about Israel. "There's a natural dynamic to these things. When the military starts, it may be that it has to run its course."

### Massacre of Marwaheen

The "natural dynamic" of the state terrorist Israeli Defense Forces was described by journalist Dahr Jamail in a July 17 dispatch carried by Inter Press Service. He quoted a teacher from the United States who was on vacation in Beirut: "Everything is being bombed. It's terror. We've literally been terrorized."

Abud Aziz is a 31-year-old pastry chef from Beirut who crossed the border into Syria carrying his suitcase, in search of food and water. For three days there had been no water or electricity in Beirut. Aziz told IPS, "Yesterday I saw two hospitals bombed."

Hamed, a 25-year-old construction worker, also recounted, "I saw them bomb a hospital yesterday. I left just hours ago. They are bombing everything—houses, casinos, fuel stations and so many bridges."

Another eyewitness, Hasna, said, "The Israelis bombed a bridge to the airport near us and killed many people. When other people went on the bridge to help the

wounded, the planes bombed again."

Robert Fisk, writing in the July 16 Independent about an Israeli assault on a border village, declared, "It will be called the massacre of Marwaheen."

Fisk wrote, "All the civilians killed by the Israelis had been ordered to abandon their homes in the border village by the Israelis themselves a few hours earlier. Leave, they were told by loudspeaker; and leave they did, 20 of them in a convoy of civilian cars. That's when the Israeli jets arrived to bomb them, killing 20 Lebanese, at least nine of them children. The local fire brigade could not put out the fires as they all burned alive in the inferno. Another 'terrorist' target had been eliminated."

### Hezbollah: strong mass base

Washington is protecting the Israelis and allowing the military operation to "run its course," vainly hoping to eliminate the resistance. But Hezbollah's popularity as a national resistance movement extends throughout Lebanon and the entire Gulf region for its role in fighting the Israeli occupiers. It drove the Israelis out of Lebanon in 2000 after 18 years of occupation.

Hezbollah is not only a military movement, it is a social and political movement. It provides the poor Shia population—the downtrodden of Lebanon—with social services, farms and jobs. Its military wing consists of workers, students and the general population. In its first parliamentary participation, in 2005, Hezbollah won 14 seats.

The U.S. and Israel were hoping that they could divide Hezbollah from the masses of Lebanon and cause a split in the Middle East in general. But Tel Aviv's aggression, aided and abetted by Washington, is only bringing greater unity throughout the region.

The imperialists think they have achieved something politically because for the first time Arab regimes like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan criticized a resistance movement that was under attack from the Israelis. But getting the support of the only two governments that signed peace treaties with Israel—Egypt and Jordan—and a bourgeois-feudal monarchy completely tied to the imperialist oil companies is a thin reed to lean on.

As Abdel-Menem Mustapha—Egypt bureau chief of the pan-Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat—noted in the July 18 Washington Post, "The reservations some governments have expressed about Hezbollah are not widely shared among the common people of the Middle East."

Mustapha said popular support for Hezbollah and its leader, Hasan Nasrallah, "is overwhelming throughout the Arab world and that the region's governments would be wise to take heed."

He concluded, "The Arab street feels strong sympathy with Hezbollah and with Nasrallah, because its pride has been battered, and it is weary of decades of concession made to Israel by Arab governments."

### 'Shock and awe' fails

The Bush administration, acting through the Israeli government, has expanded the adventure it began in Iraq into Lebanon. It is unlikely that this new offensive will conquer Lebanon and destroy the national resistance. Hezbollah is supported by the masses and is in alliance with Hamas, Syria and Iran. These plus the Iraqis fighting occupation make up the basic forces of resistance to imperialist domination in the Middle East. This is the "axis" that Bush wants to strangle—the axis of anti-imperialism.

"Shock and awe" bombing did not work in Iraq. Brutal military occupation is not working in Iraq. If the failures of Washington and Tel Aviv's adventures in Iraq and Palestine are any example, the Lebanon offensive will ultimately end up in a greater crisis for imperialism.

The developed resistance movement of Hezbollah has showered missiles down on northern Israeli cities and put up unprecedented resistance to Tel Aviv's bombardments. The U.S.-Israeli plan to eliminate Hezbollah may drive Tel Aviv to order a ground invasion. This can lead only to another quagmire.

The propagandists of Washington and Tel Aviv are trying to rally their populations at home by presenting this conflict as part of the so-called "war on terror" and as a war of "Islamic fundamentalism" against Western civilization and "democracy."

First of all, Islam—like most developed

religions—has varied interpretations and doctrinal emphases and practices. Only chauvinists would lump everyone who practices some form of Islam into one bag.

The Saudi monarchy is Islamic, as is the Kuwaiti monarchy and the Jordanian monarchy. The Shiite collaborators in the Iraqi puppet government are Islamic. They are all with imperialism.

But Islam also plays a role as the rallying cry for the masses of the Middle East and elsewhere to take up arms against Washington and its agents in the region. To that extent, it is the ideological form whose actual content is the struggle against imperialism. Hamas is Sunni and Hezbollah is Shiite—and these Islamic groups are fighting imperialism.

No one should be confused about the essence of the struggle: It boils down to who is against imperialism and who is collaborating with it. And in this world battle, those in the anti-war movement and the progressive movement as a whole must not be swayed by imperialist propaganda that is racist, chauvinist and anti-Islamic.

Nor should anyone attempt to separate the Zionist Israeli state and its aggression from the aims of its overlord in Washington, without whose billions in funding and military hardware the regime in Tel Aviv could not survive.

The present situation in the Middle East is fraught with the potential for a vast military expansion because of the tensions created by the Bush administration's present campaign to re-conquer territories that had broken away from imperialism during the period of anti-colonial uprisings after World War II. That is what is driving the imperialist occupation of Iraq and its campaign against Syria and Iran, as well as its attempts to crush the Palestinians and Hezbollah.

The situation is highly unstable. Even though the U.S. and Israeli governments may have limited aims in the present offensive, the potential for an expanded war—despite their intentions—is great. The anti-war movement must mobilize now to get the U.S. out of the Middle East and to end the Israeli occupation of Arab lands. This is the only road to stability and peace in the region. □

# Al-Awda calls for solidarity with Palestinian, Lebanese people

By Bill Cecil  
San Francisco

Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, held its fourth annual convention at San Francisco State University on July 14, 15 and 16. The conference was preceded by a rally of over 700 people at the Israeli consulate in San Francisco to protest the U.S.-funded Israeli terror campaign against Gaza and Lebanon.

The convention was hosted by the San Francisco State University chapter of the General Union of Palestinian Students. That Al-Awda held the conference was itself a political victory over rightwing, anti-free-speech forces in the administration who tried to block it.

Featured speakers included Prof. Rabab Abdul Hadi, Dr. Salman Abu Sitta, Los Angeles 8 defendant Michel Shehadeh and Dr. Hatem Bazian. Dr. Abdul Hadi put the Palestinian people's struggle in the context of the world struggle against racism and oppression. She said that the United States and Israel are both settler states founded on the genocide of Native people and that "we must never forget on whose land we are walking."

Dr. Abu Sitta debunked the myth that

the Right of Return is unrealistic. He pointed out that rural population density in the so-called state of Israel is less than six people per square mile while the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip are the most densely populated places on earth. Most of the more than 400 Palestinian Arab villages destroyed by the Israeli army in 1948 remain uninhabited, he said.

Michel Shehadeh, a target of state repression since the 1980s, spoke about the importance of Israel to U.S. oil corporations and the military-industrial complex. He pointed out that Lockheed Martin, the largest U.S. war contractor, spends 14 times more on lobbying than the American-Israeli Political Affairs Committee. "If Israel were really acting against U.S. corporate interests, they could not compete for a minute," he said.

The conference issued a statement condemning the U.S.-Israeli attack on Gaza and Lebanon:

"These assaults also aim to break the will of the Palestinian and Lebanese people, such that U.S. imperial and Zionist hegemonic interests can reign supreme throughout the region. This is consistent with U.S. policies in the Arab East, specifically with regards to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, which we likewise



Protest in San Francisco starts conference with a struggle.

WWW PHOTO: JUDY GREENSPAN

## Haitians want Aristide back

By G. Dunkel

The struggle in Haiti over the return of President Jean Bertrand Aristide continues, as 30,000 people gathered at his house in Taba at 8:30 am on July 15. This was the first big demonstration since the people came out to demand their choice of René Préal for president be respected last year.

There were chants of "Aristide or death!" and "Aristide's blood is our blood!"

Protesters supported demands to free all the political prisoners incarcerated under the previous regime, rehire all the government employees fired because they supported Aristide's Lavalas party and punish all the criminals who worked in the previous administration.

Protesters also wanted all foreign troops, who are with the UN's stabilization mission MINUSTAH, out of Haiti. A leaflet with the demands for the demonstration appeared in the July 12-18 *Haiti Progrès*.

When the marchers neared the presidential palace, the cops of the Haitian National Police (PNH) formed a line, backed up by contingents from MINUSTAH, and drew their weapons. Some of the protesters fled, because demonstrators in Haiti are often shot by the cops. According to the Associated Press, a man yelled at police, "If there's blood it will be on your hands!"



Haitians show support for Aristide at Port au Prince demonstration on July 15.

But 3,000 or so confronted the cops and managed to get through their lines to the wall around the Presidential Palace. There was no major confrontation but some scuffles did take place.

"We voted for Préal on the condition that he bring back Aristide. That's the will of the people," Bruce Pierre Richard, 21, told the AP.

"The international community doesn't want Aristide to come back, so they're pressuring Préal to keep him out," said another demonstrator, Harold Lafalièse, 40. The United States has warned that Aristide's return could destabilize the Caribbean country.

The protest was called by the Cell of National Reflection of the Popular Organization of the Base of Fanmi Lavalas and the National Popular Party (PPN).

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## HAITI A SLAVE REVOLUTION

The Haitian Revolution is a singular event in history. Never before or since has an enslaved people risen up, broken their chains, and established a new state. Haiti was a beacon of hope and inspiration to the enslaved Africans of the United States. Drawing from a wide range of authors, experts, and historical texts, this book challenges stereotypes and counters 200 years of cultural myths. It exposes disinformation about Haiti from the 18th century until

today. Above all, it reveals the intertwined relationship between the U.S. and Haiti, and the untold stories of the Haitian people's resistance to the U.S. aggressions and occupations.

Includes Ramsey Clark, Edwidge Danicats, Frederick Douglass, Ben Dupuy, Paul Laraque, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Pat Chin, Greg Dunkel, Sara Flounders, Stan Goff, Kim Ives, Fleurimond Kerns, Maude Le Blanc, Sam Marcy, Franz Mendes, Steve Gillis, Felix Morriseau-Leroy & Johnnie Stevens.

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continue to condemn in the strongest possible terms," it said.

The statement called for mass action in the U.S. in solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese people and supported the call for a march on Washington Aug. 12.

It concluded, "It is incumbent upon us to engage in an escalating campaign of protest and education which will be critical for building a movement that can challenge and ultimately bring an end to the brutality and injustice which is unfolding before us. It is long past due that progressive movements and forces in the U.S. unite and raise their voice in

condemning the U.S. government, Zionism and Zionist policies in the region, and demanding that our people's rights not be held hostage to the calculations of U.S. mid-term elections or any other secondary consideration. Now is the time for the anti-war movement to raise its voice in answer to the challenge that history has placed before us.

"We continue to affirm the inalienable right that all Palestinian refugees have to return to their homes, towns and villages. Our work in Al-Awda will continue to be dedicated to the achievement of this goal." □

## Protesters demand justice for sexually abused GI

By Jim McMahan  
Seattle

Women's, veteran, and anti-war groups demonstrated on July 15 to demand freedom and justice for Spec. Suzanne Swift. The demonstrators at the gates of Ft. Lewis also celebrated the 22nd birthday of Swift, who attended the protest.

Swift is the survivor of systematic sexual assault by five sergeants during her deployment to Iraq. She demanded these assaults stop in complaints she made through the chain of command. The army ignored her complaints. She has also been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome due to this constant sexual harassment.

Three days before her second deployment to Iraq, Swift left the military. She was unwilling to go through another round of sexual abuse. That was six months ago.

On June 11, police broke into her mother's house in Eugene, Ore., and

arrested Swift. The next day, Swift's mother, Sara Rich, led a vigil of 70 people at the Eugene jail supporting her daughter. Swift was then sent to Ft. Lewis, Wash., where she was restricted to the base.

Among the participants at the demonstration was the family of Lt. Ehren Watada, the first U.S. officer to refuse duty in Iraq.

At the rally/press conference, B.J. Stewert of Texas Women Veterans said that after spending 10 years in the military, "I got out because of the very same thing that has happened to Suzanne Swift."

Rich said that since she started organizing with a web site five weeks earlier, "hundreds of women have emailed and said the same thing happened to them in the military. We have dehumanized our military and we won't stand for war!" She especially denounced "command rape"—when an officer or non-commissioned officer in a combat zone has life or death power over a soldier. Rich vowed to have three commanders over Suzanne Swift brought to justice.

Suzanne Swift's courage in demanding a stop to her abuse has resonated among veterans and social justice groups worldwide. Over 4,000 people have signed a petition demanding justice for Suzanne Swift and an honorable discharge from the army. For more info, see [www.SuzanneSwift.org](http://www.SuzanneSwift.org). □



## STONEWALL 1969 – SECOND NIGHT:

# 'Liberate Christopher Street!'

By Leslie Feinberg

Thousands of gay men and lesbians—many of whom identified as queens and butches—returned to the West Village on Saturday evening, the night after battles with the police and tactical forces at the Stonewall Inn. It was the hottest June 28 on record in New York's history, in more ways than one.

Stonewall bar owners tried to lure many back inside the club. But the crowd outside shouted, "Gay power," "Equality for homosexuals" and "We want freedom now!" Demonstrators squared off with police outside the bar. Their chants, "Christopher Street belongs to the queens!" and "Liberate Christopher Street," made it clear that this was an offensive stage of the struggle—in the streets.

The night of protest drew street youth and some heterosexual activists from various left-wing political currents. Gay author Edmund White described how straight Black youth "put their arms around me and [said] we're comrades."

One middle-aged white woman, in the West Village with her husband, reportedly reprimanded a cop, shouting at him that he should be ashamed: "Don't you know that these people have no place to go, and need places like that bar?" She and her husband were later that night part of a crowd being chased by club wielding riot police.

Participant Craig Rodwell described how the thousands who were drawn to the Village filled the sidewalks from Christopher to 10th St. and all around the Sheridan Square park and Seventh Avenue. When the crowd overflowed the sidewalks and poured into the streets, the call went out to block traffic on Christopher at Greenwich Avenue.

When drivers disrespected the crowd, their cars got rocked back and forth and demonstrators laid siege to a bus whose driver angrily honked his horn at them. Activists formed a human chain across the busy street.

One cab driver turned into the crowd, apparently unintentionally, but those gathered did not realize at first that it was accidental. As they rocked the cab, the passengers looked so frightened and the driver seemed to be having a heart attack, so some activists joined arms to protect the taxi and helped it back out of the street.

The driver later died—the only fatal casualty of the Stonewall Rebellion.

On Gay St., demonstrators briefly stopped a procession of cars with a wedding party. "We have the right to marry, too!" activists shouted. Members of the wedding party angrily threatened to call the cops on protesters. "The police are already here!" activists laughed bitterly, before letting the wedding group proceed.

### Led by those with least to lose

Who led the battles? Who made up much of the ranks? The nationality, gender expression and economic class of combatants at that stage of the uprising were well described in an otherwise offensive description by Dr. Howard Brown. As chief health officer of New York City during the Lindsay administration, Brown—a rather closeted gay man—had described his horror when he had toured the Tombs, a city prison. "Almost all the men in the crowded cells were demonstrably effeminate. I could not identify with them." He doesn't say it, but of course many of the prisoners were Latin@ and Black, impoverished whites, and street youth.

Drawn to the June 28 protest by the roar he could hear from his apartment, he said he found that the Stonewall protesters "were like the homosexuals I had seen in the Tombs—most of them obviously poor, most of them the sort of limp-wristed, shabby or gaudy gays that send a shiver of dread down the spines of homosexuals who hope to pass as straight. I could not have felt more remote from them." He added that the composition of the crowd brought to mind "every civil rights struggle I had ever witnessed or participated in."

The women caged in the nearby House of Detention sure identified with those rebelling below. The women's "House of D" was, at that time, situated at the heart of Christopher St. and Greenwich Ave. When Stonewall ignited, prisoners—many of them Black and Latina, and many, many of them lesbian and transgender—set toilet paper on fire and dropped it from the turrets to support the uprising on the streets below.

Eyewitness Chris Babick described, "That whole week the women were screaming, cheering us on. ... The whole jail, it seemed like, was alive with people, with activity, because the streets were

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alive with activity. Everything vibrated."

### Fighting back!

On the streets, as police grew increasingly aggressive towards activists, one youth hurled garbage can lids like Frisbees at cops. Fires burned from trash containers up and down the blocks.

Marsha "Pay It No Mind" Johnson, a Black transgender gay street survivor who later co-founded STAR—Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries—reportedly climbed a lamppost in order to drop a heavy object that shattered a police car windshield.

At Waverly and Christopher, a crowd surrounded cops in a car and smashed its hood with a concrete block, pounded the car with their fists and climbed up on it.

A sack of garbage with coffee grounds thrown through the window of yet another police vehicle smacked an official in the face. The crowd knocked the red light off the roof of the car and rocked the vehicle, trying to overturn it.

The Sixth Precinct couldn't subdue the crowd, even with help from the Fourth, Fifth and Ninth. So for the second night, the feared Tactical Police Force (TPF) sent about 150 of its crack riot troops into the West Village at about 2:15 a.m. The crowd tossed beer cans at the TPF and cops in defiance.

Police rushed at demonstrators, viciously beating people at random. However, when two cops used their nightsticks on one youth's face, genitals and stomach, a high-pitched voice from the crowd shouted, "Save our sister!"

Then, Stonewall participant Dick Leitsch recalled, "Fifty or more homosexuals who would have to be described as 'nelly,' rushed the cops and took the boy back into the crowd." And, he added, they "formed a solid front and refused to let the cops into the crowd to regain their prisoner, letting the cops hit them with their sticks, rather than let them through."

For the second night in a row, TPF

troops formed solid phalanxes and moved slowly down the streets to break up the demonstration. At Christopher and Waverly, a group of gay men described as very, very feminine formed a defiant chorus line and mocked the riot cops with bawdy choruses of "We are the Stonewall Girls, we wear our hair in curls." As the TPF moved slowly towards them, the youth waited until the last possible moment to stop singing and disappear. Minutes later they appeared behind the TPF troops, taunting them with a new chorus line.

Leitsch remarked, in the language of the day, about the leadership, participation, and bravery of the feminine, male-bodied combatants. "It was an interesting sidelight on the demonstrations that those usually put down as 'sissies' or 'swishes' showed the most courage and sense during the action. ... The most striking feature of the rioting was that it was led, and featured as participants, 'queens.'"

"It was the 'queens' who scored the points and proved that they were not going to tolerate any more harassment or abuse. ... Their bravery and daring saved many people from being hurt," he noted.

Police continued to brutally battle to retake small areas of the West Village. But the crowd would not be subdued, sometimes turning the tables by chasing the cops down the block.

At 3 a.m., when all the gay bars emptied out, the protest swelled with fresh forces. Demonstrators were able to take over the IND subway station at Sixth Ave. and Waverly for about half an hour before cops retook the location.

By about 4 a.m., cops withdrew and the streets appeared quiet. But the uprising was still not over.

*Eyewitness quotes from sources compiled by David Carter ("Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution," St. Martin's Press) and Martin Duberman ("Stonewall," Dutton).*

Next: **Pride!**

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## Big business and global warming

# Why the fox mustn't guard the henhouse

Continued from page 2

administration "thanking Exxon executives for the company's 'active involvement' in helping to determine climate change policy, and also seeking its advice on what climate change policies the company might find acceptable." The documents were written shortly before President George W. Bush announced he would not sign the Kyoto Protocol. ("Revealed: how oil giant influenced Bush," Guardian, June 8, 2005)

Not surprising, of course. The only thing surprising is that Greenpeace was able to get a hold of the government documents to prove it.

But now industry-sponsored propaganda has been thoroughly disproved by the dramatic and tangible evidences of

global warming and climate change that are all around us. So some of the worst sources of disinformation—like the Global Climate Coalition, which got most of its funding from Exxon—have closed down.

In their place have come various well-funded NGOs that acknowledge global warming but promote "solutions" that will be profitable to big business. Last article, we mentioned the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Their funding comes from the Pew family fortune, which comes from Sun Oil. There is also the Reason Foundation—which talks about "unleashing market forces" to solve global warming.

Britain's first Special Representative on Climate Change, John Ashton, summed up the approach of these groups: "Climate change needs to be seen not as an economic

threat, but an economic opportunity."

Certainly there is much money to be made on selling autos, for example, that burn less gas. With oil prices high, more consumers want affordable hybrid cars. General Motors found out the hard way that its gas-guzzling SUVs and Hummers were losing out to lighter, more efficient vehicles.

Inventors hope to make money with new alternate-fuel devices and maybe even contraptions that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere—although they haven't figured out what to do with it once they have captured it.

The nuclear power industry hopes to make money by replacing coal-fired generating plants with nuclear.

In all of this, however, the main moti-

vation is to make money. Push your product to make money. Ridicule the competition, bribe and even lie to prevent others from getting the contract. That's how capitalism has always worked.

It should already be clear that, when discussing the future of the earth, decisions on how to allocate society's resources need much more objective criteria than these.

It is precisely the drive for money and private profit on a short-term basis that has gotten humanity into this mess. And it is the control by a privileged few, who dominate even the so-called democratic political process with their huge fortunes, that prevents capitalist governments from taking the sweeping measures needed to restructure society on a rational basis.

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# Why DPRK rejects UN resolution

*The capitulation of all the members of the UN Security Council to U.S. imperialism's arm-twisting for a resolution condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has led to a grave situation not only for the Korean peninsula but for all of Asia. It can only whet the appetites of the imperialists for further aggression. The Korean peninsula was invaded by both Japan and the U.S. The DPRK, which has the most valid security concerns, is systematically maligned in the imperialist media; its voice is rarely if ever heard in the United States. We have decided, therefore, to devote our editorial space this week to reprinting in full the following statement from the DPRK's Foreign Ministry issued July 16, the day after the Security Council vote.*

**T**he vicious hostile policy of the United States towards the DPRK and the irresponsibility of the UN Security Council have created an extremely dangerous situation on the Korean Peninsula where the sovereignty of the Korean nation and the security of the state have been seriously infringed.

The U.S. has recently kicked up much row after bringing the issue of the missile launches conducted by our army as part of the routine military training for self-defense to the UN under the motto of reacting to it in one voice. It was against this backdrop that the U.S. forced the UN to adopt a UN Security Council resolution taking a serious note of our exercise of its right to self-defense on July 15.

The U.S. sponsored "resolution" called for an international pressure for disarming the DPRK and stifling it, terming the missile launches pertaining to its right to self-defense "a threat to international peace and security."

By doing so the U.S. sought to describe the issue between the DPRK and the U.S. as an issue between the DPRK and the UN and form an international alliance against the DPRK.

This has brought such serious consequences as gravely violating the dignity and sovereignty of the DPRK and driving the situation to an extreme pitch of tension, thereby seriously disturbing peace and security on the peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

It was an entirely unreasonable and brigandish act that the U.S. brought to the UN the DPRK's missile launches—nothing contradictory to any international law—after branding them as a violation.

This time the U.S. attempted till the last moment to apply Chapter 7 of the UN Charter legalizing a military action against the DPRK. This indicates that the "resolution" constitutes a prelude to the provocation of the second Korean war.

It is a brigandish logic to claim that missile launches conducted by the U.S. and Japan are legal while the training of missile launches conducted by the DPRK to defend itself is illegal.

Any missile fire or any nuclear test approved by the U.S. is connived at and they are not subject to discussion at the UN.

This is the reality today.

The U.S. has made mockery of the DPRK's true heart and sincere efforts to realize the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner through dialogue and negotiations. Yet the U.S. is now asserting that it will not punish the DPRK once it come out for the six-party talks but punish it if it fails to do so. This is sheer sophism which can never be justified.

Only the strong can defend justice in the world today where the jungle law prevails.

Neither the UN nor anyone else can protect us.

The past history and the present reality show that only a country with its powerful force can defend the national dignity and its sovereignty and independence.

It is a daydream to calculate that our principle will alter due to the change of the world.

We have already clarified that we will have no option but to take stronger physical actions should someone take issue with our army's training of missile launches for self-defense and put pressure on it.

The Foreign Ministry of the DPRK is authorized to clarify as follows in view of the grave situation prevailing on the peninsula:

First, our Republic vehemently denounces and roundly refutes the UNSC "resolution," a product of the U.S. hostile policy towards the DPRK, and will not be bound to it in the least.

Second, our Republic will bolster its war deterrent for self-defense in every way by all means and methods now that the situation has reached the worst phase due to the extremely hostile act of the U.S.

We will firmly defend our own way the ideology and system chosen by our people, true to the Songun policy, a treasured sword. □

# Behind the head-butt in the World Cup

By Larry Hales

The World Cup of soccer is over. Italy beat France in the final round, in a hotly contested game that was won after France lost its captain when he was ejected for a penalty in an overtime period. Zinedine Zidane, the 34-year-old captain who was competing in his last professional match, is the son of Algerian immigrants. He is known as an anti-racist and is one of the great players of the sport.

Zidane, known as Zissou, had head-butted Marco Materazzi of Italy's national team, knocking him on his seat.

The next morning, the more sensational capitalist press gave Zidane the nickname "Butt-head." Zidane was lambasted by much of the media all over the world, even when the nickname was not used. He was portrayed as a "sore loser," and of tarnishing the image of the sport with his act.

An Associated Press article suggested that the image of Zidane had lost its shine, writing, "The fallen 'Zizou' [sic] has been resurrected into a more unlikely kind of hero—flawed yet unrepentant, with an old-fashioned macho morality that has both captivated and appalled."

"An old-fashioned macho morality" insinuates that dignity and righteous anti-racist anger and action are no longer tolerated. Since the big business media are merely organs of the capitalist ruling class, in their eyes challenging racism and sexism has never been acceptable.

Again, someone from an oppressed group has been and is being reduced to the base level of a quick-tempered, unrefined beast, all while the real beasts drop bombs over Iraq, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, just to name a few wars being waged by U.S. imperialism and its Zionist junior partner in the Middle East.

What led Zidane to flatten Materazzi were the Italian player's racist and sexist comments. According to a FIFA employee who transcribed what was said during the match, Materazzi called Zidane an

"Algerian shit." According to a Brazilian television station that hired a lip-reader, Materazzi called Zidane's sister a "whore." Materazzi is also said to have called Zidane "a dirty terrorist."

While Zidane apologized to French children for an action that many, especially in oppressed nations, will see as justified, Materazzi has not apologized for his words. He has admitted only to making a reference to Zidane's wife, but has not even apologized for that.

This was not the first racist incident in soccer. Black players from Africa and the U.S. have long complained of racism from European players and fans, as have Asian players and those of North African and Middle Eastern descent. Right-wing fans of the Italian league team Lazio, of which there are many, once displayed a 50-foot banner that said another team was "a team of n—rs."

Fans in Italy and France especially are known to taunt Black players with monkey chants, and even throw bananas on the field. In an incident that displays at the very least Materazzi's insensitivity, Marc Zoro, an African player, picked up the ball in a match between Inter and Messina and walked off the field. Zoro walked off because of racist chants from Inter's supporters, who also threw bananas on the field. Inter's players supported Zoro, but Materazzi exclaimed, "Stop that, Zoro, you're just trying to make a name for yourself."

Zidane has his contradictions. That is to be expected; however, it is not his act in this case that highlights his flaws or any contradictions. Nor was his action of an old-fashioned macho sort, to use the AP writer's racist construction. Zidane's strike was for all the oppressed in France, the ones that rebelled a short time ago, and for players of color that are threatened and harassed by right wing players and fans.

The morality displayed by Zidane is the morality of workers and the oppressed. In the eyes of many Zidane was justified and history shall attest to that. □

# Guidry perseveres after legal setback

*Continued from page 5*

already been executed for crimes they did not commit. Other innocent people are sitting on death row awaiting execution right now.

"We are fathers and brothers and sons, mothers and sisters and daughters. Many are waiting, following cases like mine and praying for a victory. If I win, a moratorium for everyone gains a little more momentum. We are literally in a constant race with death," Guidry wrote to his supporters.

Texas has two executions scheduled this week, including Mauriceo Brown. "We must not stop our work," Angie Agapetus explained. She said Mauriceo Brown's mother "is devastated. The judge denied DNA testing. I have space in my car for two more people to go to Huntsville Wednesday to protest his execution," she said about her friend.

Brother Kenya Shabazz, from The Pyramid Shop, played revolutionary music and drums and provided background for the highlight of the evening—Guidry's poetry read by two popular Houston poets, Sister Sandria, aka The Water Poet, and Brother Zin.

People in the audience left for home with their spirits visibly lifted by the warmth and camaraderie of the evening and vowed to continue the struggle to free Guidry.

"By the time they finished with their dramatic interpretation and rendition, everyone present felt as if they knew a little of Howard's soul," said Lucha Rodríguez.

"I didn't know a lot about Howard when I got here tonight, but now I am ready to stand up for him," agreed Tony Evans.

"The same oppressors that brought citizens from Africa and sold them and lynched them are the same oppressors executing poor people today. Howard's poetry is beautiful. We need to get it published and distributed out here. People need to read it and see who is inside the walls," Lenwood Johnson, longtime activist, concluded.

Solidarity messages can be sent to: Howard Guidry SPN # 01446317, Harris County Jail, 701 N. San Jacinto St., Houston, TX 77002 or email to Howardguidryjusticecomm@yahoo.com. For more information see: www.geocities.com/howardguidryjusticecomm. □

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# 1.5 million protest vote fraud in Mexico capital

By John Parker  
Mexico City

Sunday, July 16, was not a day of rest in Mexico City. On the contrary, it was a day of mass action reflecting the determination of the Mexican people to demand a basic democratic right: to have their votes for a president counted honestly.

Some 1.5 million people marched and rallied in the large Zócalo square in the city's downtown in support of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, candidate of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), and protested what they call fraudulent presidential elections held on July 2.

The mobilization was so large that more than 10 video screens were placed along the wide Avenida Reforma, one of the most important of Mexico City, so that those unable to reach the Zócalo could see the event and hear Obrador, who announced that he would put together a citizens' committee to define the actions to be organized. One measure proposed by the politician was to reinforce the citizens' camps outside the country's 300 electoral districts, where the ballots are being safeguarded.

Four days after the election, the candidate of the ruling National Action Party (PAN), Felipe Calderón, had been declared the winner by a margin of less than 1 percent. It was a statistical miracle. Earlier, when over 70 percent of the vote had been counted, López Obrador had led with 36.86 percent against Calderón's 34.37 percent.

However, miraculously for Calderón, the 70 percent already counted somehow did not represent an established statistical trend. Another trend then began. What makes this new trend even odder is the fact that each percentage increase of votes for

Calderón mirrored a percentage decrease in votes for López Obrador, making this a unique and impossible statistical feat.

A representative of the PRD explained, "The vote was recalculated by the whole federal government—a technically assisted state election. That means the executive branch took control of the democratic process using all the resources, all the power, all the relationships and all the fear they inject to the people. They said that if they don't continue [to head] the government, everything will be lost for the people. You'll lose everything if you vote for López Obrador."

In addition to the electoral abnormalities, many López Obrador supporters also point to the amount of foreign corporate aid, particularly from the U.S., that Calderón received—which is a violation of Mexican law regarding election financing. Some of that aid came through support by multi-national corporations established with the pro-business, pro-rich media.

"About 80 percent of the media was for Calderón," said the PRD spokesperson.

An active campaign of mudslinging found fertile ground with some of these media outlets. To highlight this, some march participants carried mock televisions with a devil coming out of them. Flyers were also prevalent at the march announcing a recently begun international boycott. The boycott targets corporate sponsors of the television networks most biased against López Obrador. Brands included in the boycott are Dell, Coca-Cola, Nescafé and Colgate.

The struggle to keep the Mexican people from being disenfranchised has received support in the U.S. A delegation that included members of the March 25th Coalition, including the International

Action Center, traveled here for the march and rally.

At a press conference on July 18, delegation member Javier Rodríguez, one of the initiators of the May 1st boycott in Los Angeles that brought out 1 million people, said:

"I'm here because this is my country. I was born here and, although as a child I emigrated to the U.S., I was old enough to have formed my nationality. It is also a principle of international solidarity to give support to people fighting injustice. ...

"When we have a candidate, a Mexican leader, who speaks for justice for the majority and for the poor and whose landmark theme is 'The poor will be first,' the Mexican bourgeoisie, the ruling class in alliance with international capital, will not want to give up their privileges and the continued savage exploitation of the Mexican people, whose numbers living in poverty have reached an estimated 70 million."

In this regard, the movement for justice in Mexico, in anticipation of further attacks by the ruling class, is forming a national committee to resist if the votes are not recounted on a vote-for-vote basis. The committee is being coordinated by the PRD. The marches and rallies will also continue.

With an understanding that the mobilization of working and poor people is primary in this democratic struggle, López Obrador at Sunday's event announced another rally and march for July 30.

The Federal Electoral Tribunal, the highest electoral court in Mexico, has until September 6 to announce how it intends to respond to the fraud.

The U.S. corporate media has expressed the alarm the U.S. ruling class feels over López Obrador's growing movement.

"There are growing fears among conservative commentators that López Obrador's mass rallies and claims of voter fraud will lead to violence," wrote the Washington Post July 17.

The reality, however, is that the Mexican masses have carried out many forms of protest over the decades. Fewer and fewer alternatives to struggle remain in a country where imperialism does not even allow the basic democratic right to a fair election.

It remains to be seen how far this current phase in the struggle for change in Mexico will go. Should the electoral court rule in September or even earlier that Calderón won the election, will the movement subside or continue? Will a general strike be called shutting the country down? This would take the call for "a day without a Mexican" to a new level.

The countless U.S. corporations that operate and dominate in Mexico today would be dealt a tremendous blow if that happened.

The Washington Post also wrote that, "Juana Jiménez Torre, 63, who said she walked more than 80 miles over six days to attend the rally, thrust her arms in the air as López Obrador spoke. The mother of 11 said she makes less than \$4 a day in the bean fields outside her hometown of San Pablo Citaltepec, southeast of Mexico City. "We can't take this," she said before the rally began. "We have to fight."

Teresa Gutierrez, national co-director of the International Action Center told Workers World that the IAC "will launch a major campaign to demand that the people's will be respected in Mexico and that the U.S. should get out of Mexico." She invited readers to visit [www.iacenter.org](http://www.iacenter.org) for more information. □



## Travel challengers return to U.S.

With banners in hand, the 37th Contingent of the Venceremos Brigade marched across the International Peace Bridge from Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada, into Buffalo, N.Y., on July 17. At the border, they proudly declared, "Yes! We defied the U.S. ban on travel! We went to see socialist Cuba for ourselves."

A crowd of supporters gathered from across New York State, Ontario and Michigan, and cheered and chanted to the accompaniment of a brass band.

The travel ban challengers, including a group from the César Chávez Labor Challenge of the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange, based in Detroit, could hardly wait to talk about Cuba.

Priscilla Bassett of New York City (second from right in photo) said, "I'm one of the youngest, and this was an experience young people need to have. It made me think about questions that most young people here never think about. It opened my eyes."

—Story and photo by Ellie Dorritie

## Chávez welcomed at African Union meeting

By G. Dunkel

The African Union meeting held in early July near Banjul, the capital of Gambia, had two significant guests as well as major leaders of Africa.

President Yahya Jammeh of Gambia and Kofi Annan, secretary general of the UN, invited both Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran. Some of the African leaders attending were Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Moammar Gaddafi of Libya, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Mwai Kibaki of Kenya.

Ahmadinejad got a warm welcome from Banjul's religious community, praying with them at the main mosque. He said Western greed was responsible for "poverty, backwardness, regional conflicts, corruption, illicit drugs."

Chávez has backed Iran's controversial nuclear program. "Doesn't Iran have the right to develop nuclear technology for peaceful means?" Chávez said. He added his nation was "tired of being exploited by the American empire."

Chávez's intervention was warmly received by Charles Onunaiju, a columnist for the Daily Trust in Abuja, Nigeria. (Abuja is the political capital of Nigeria, while Lagos is its economic capital.) Onunaiju's column begins with a long quote from Chávez: "Let's forge a vigorous cooperation in education, with the

University of the South, in communication, with Tele South and Radio South, in finances with the Bank of the South, in energy with Petro South, a beneficial cooperation for all our people that allow us to build another possible world, the one that has for North, the South."

Onunaiju writes, "However, the call of the leader of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela at the African Union Summit at Banjul, the Gambia, re-echoes the historic declaration ... to the effect that the destiny of South is tied to robust cooperation in [all] spheres of socioeconomic and political life."

"Since coming to office in 1999," Onunaiju continues, "President Chávez has set out an ambitious goal of putting the country's resources in the hands of the people. As the fifth world oil producing country, he has completely brought the proceeds of the huge oil revenue to the benefit of the people."

"In that respect, he has earned the enmity of the most powerful country in the world, the United States of America."

The conclusion of the column ties Chávez to the issues so pressing in Africa: "Hugo Chávez already represents a renewed hope for 21st century Africa which seeks to take its destiny in its own hands for the control of its resources, inalienable right to decide its path of development and even a free hand to choose its friends."

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# MUNDO OBRERO

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

## Los pobres de México votan con sus pies

Por Teresa Gutiérrez

Segunda de dos partes

### La historia de las elecciones en México

Las elecciones presidenciales del 2006 sólo se pueden entender poniéndolas en el contexto de la historia política de México.

Los medios de comunicación en los EEUU describen las elecciones de este año como un reflejo del progreso en el "sistema democrático" incipiente de México. Se referían al hecho de que las elecciones en México han sido históricamente menos que democráticas, incluso dentro del contexto de la democracia capitalista.

Por más de 70 años hasta el 2000, el PRI había alcanzado la presidencia y se había afianzado en ella por medios engañosos. La selección del presidente sucesivo se sabía comúnmente que ocurriría no por vía electoral sino por vía del "dedazo", proceso por el cual el presidente saliente del PRI señalaba al presidente siguiente del PRI.

Por más de 70 años, México fue gobernado por un solo partido que tenía intereses capitalistas.

En 1988, sin embargo, esto empezó a cambiar. México fue sacudido por un movimiento masivo que apoyó al candidato progresista Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas para la presidencia.

Cárdenas fue muy popular por varias razones. Primero, fue un líder de una facción que rompió con el PRI en una histórica defección, hecho que fue un cambio dramático que tuvo como resultado la formación del Partido Revolucionario Democrático, PRD.

Segundo, él era el hijo de Lázaro Cárdenas, que fue presidente durante los años 1930, muy querido y respetado en México. Las políticas de Lázaro Cárdenas incluían la defensa de los pobres al igual que la defensa de la soberanía mexicana; él expropió el petróleo mexicano sacándolo del dominio extranjero. Las masas mexicanas esperaban que Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas llevara a cabo políticas similares.

El día de las elecciones, las noticias reportaron que un número enorme de indígenas votó por primera vez. Muchos caminaron por horas e incluso por días para llegar a un lugar de votación.

Peró otro Cárdenas en la presidencia no podía suceder. A pesar de la evidencia abrumadora que mostraba que él ganó la elección, el voto fue manipulado a favor del PRI.

A las elecciones del 1988 a menudo se les refieren como el gran fraude electoral. La presidencia fue entregada a Carlos Salinas. Sin ninguna duda, Washington desempeñó un papel en tirarle un balde de agua fría al sentimiento de las masas que querían un cambio radical.

En 1994, en las elecciones presidenciales siguientes, el PRI mantuvo su débil asimiento en el poder. Entonces en el 2000 fue convenientemente sustituido por el partido más derechista y pro-negocio, el PAN.

Este revés para el PRI frecuente y erróneamente se describe como ejemplo de la democratización en México. Por ejemplo, en su reciente reportaje sobre la elección actual, el periódico Los Angeles Times escribió el 4 de julio que "la indignación popular sobre el voto [de Cárdenas], percibido extensamente como amañado, estimuló la formación de un movimiento pacífico que



Ciudad de México, 16 de julio.

FOTO: JOHN PARKER

derribó eventualmente... al PRI en 2000, después de décadas de régimen autocrático."

El derrocamiento del PRI no fue ninguna victoria verdadera para las masas. En realidad, el final de la dominación de PRI significó solamente que un partido más atrincherado en el capitalismo gobernaría a nombre de los intereses de los capitalistas mexicanos y estadounidenses. La victoria del PAN fue solamente un hueso lanzado al pueblo que había salido a las calles por Cárdenas.

Las relaciones capitalistas y la explotación de los trabajadores mexicanos y oprimidos quedaron firmes.

### Lecciones del 1988

Sin duda alguna, el pueblo mexicano tiene la necesidad de un cambio. Las cifras del desempleo y el subempleo están muy altas. En algunos barrios, para algunas comunidades, el desempleo está sobre el 50 por ciento.

La pobreza es horrible. El hambre y la desesperación son comunes.

La corrupción y la violencia están desenfrenadas - no porque la gente de América Latina sea más corrupta o violenta que sus homólogos estadounidenses, sino que la situación se publica más. La desesperación está muy alta, y muchos se ven forzados a participar en la economía subterránea que es a menudo violenta, tal como es el lucrativo negocio del tráfico de drogas que EEUU estimula.

López Obrador puede ser un candidato cuyos pies están en el campo de los pobres. Si él prevalece y es el vencedor en estas elecciones, esto podría ser buenas noticias para Cuba, la cual ha experimentado relaciones tensas y peligrosas como resultado del actual presidente mexicano Vicente Fox, quien era un alto ejecutivo de la Coca-Cola en México.

El año pasado, el establecimiento mexicano intentó prevenir que López Obrador se postulara para la presidencia fabricándole un ridículo caso para encarcelarlo. Pero las masas intervinieron. Más de millón y medio de mexicanos se concentraron en la famosa Plaza Zócalo en

defensa de López Obrador. La derecha fue forzada a retroceder y dejar que se postulara.

Pero la institución que controla las elecciones, el Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) según se reporta, tiene una alianza con el PRI, que quedó en un distante tercer lugar y fácilmente pudiera contribuir a una victoria del PAN.

El periodista y autor John Ross escribió el 3 de junio que el presidente del IFE, Luis Carlos Ugalde, es una figura con "intereses del partido en el poder". En otras palabras, tiene conexiones al PAN. Ross reportó que cuando Antonio Villaraigosa, el primer alcalde de descendencia mexicana de Los Angeles desde el 1842 invitó

a López Obrador a California para participar en la conmemoración del 16 de septiembre—Día de la Independencia de México—Ugalde le prohibió viajar, diciendo que esto violaría las leyes de campañas electorales.

Sin embargo, Ugalde le concedió permiso a la campaña electoral del PAN para viajar a California en busca de votos.

¿Qué pasará si hay otro fraude electoral y gana el PAN? ¿Qué harán López Obrador, el PRD y la izquierda? ¿Se repetirán los errores del 1988?

¿Se podrán movilizar las masas y transferir la lucha de las urnas electorales hacia las calles en una demostración de fuerza contundente a través del país? ¿Hará un llamado López Obrador u otros de la izquierda al pueblo para que defiendan sus derechos democráticos a elecciones justas y llevar la lucha más lejos, incluyendo en la agenda las cuestiones sociales urgentes y denunciando al imperialismo estadounidense, la fuente de todo el sufrimiento mexicano?

¿O esperarán seis años más hasta la próxima elección?

¿Qué papel va a jugar el Ejército Zapatista para la Liberación Nacional (EZLN) en este período que se aproxima?

Se debe recordar que el EZLN, durante el periodo antes de las elecciones, comenzó lo que ellos denominaron "la otra campaña". Los líderes del EZLN viajaron a través del país comunicándose directamente con las masas y hablando de la necesidad de un cambio fundamental. El vocero del EZLN, el Subcomandante Marcos, ha hecho comentarios elocuentes en contra del capitalismo y la necesidad de que los oprimidos y los trabajadores participen en la lucha.

Además, el EZLN ha hablado claramente en solidaridad con las luchas revolucionarias de Venezuela y Bolivia y ha condenado el bloqueo a Cuba.

Sea cual sea el resultado en México, en este momento el papel que debe jugar el movimiento popular en los Estados Unidos es de manifestar solidaridad incondicional con el pueblo mexicano. Debe extender solidaridad a los inmigrantes mexicanos en los EEUU y demandar derechos plenos para todos los inmigrantes.

Cuando el imperialismo robó la mitad de México y la transformó en California, Texas, y otros estados del suroeste de EEUU, la historia del pueblo estadounidense quedó unida para siempre con la del pueblo de México.

Es tiempo ya de revertir ese robo en un movimiento de gran fuerza antiimperialista en solidaridad absoluta con México. Es tiempo de abrir la frontera para que los trabajadores de ambos países declaren: "Son las corporaciones parásitas y el imperialismo que son ilegales y no los obreros". □

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