

# WORKERS WORLD

workers.org

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

AUGUST 17, 2006

VOL. 48, NO. 32

50¢

# Lebanese fight on amid hail of bombs

## World opinion turns against U.S.-Israeli aggression

By Sara Flounders

Aug. 9—Israel's war cabinet overwhelmingly decided today to send its troops deeper into Lebanon. This decision is a major expansion of the ground war. It is an attempt to destroy the resistance movement led by Hezbollah before any kind of cease-fire is agreed on by the imperialist powers in collusion with Israel.

It is important to look at what Israel's U.S.-supplied jet aircraft, attack helicopters, tanks, armored earth movers, laser-guided bunker busters and cluster bombs have already done to a country less than half the size and less than half the population of the state of New Jersey.

Israeli planes—more than 60 at a time—circle off the coast of Lebanon waiting their turn to drop bombs on a country that has no defense system against aerial assaults

Whole sections of Beirut, Tyre and Sidon have been leveled. More than 75 percent of the southern part of Beirut is destroyed. The south of Lebanon has been depopulated. Villages and towns smashed. The infrastructure—including airports, ports, highways, major bridges, electric generating plants and oil refineries—was destroyed in the first days of the Israeli attack.

Casualties are far higher than the 1,000

*Continued on page 12*

**SPECIAL MIDEAST COVERAGE 7-12**

- **Aug. 4-5 protests across U.S.**
- **World condemns U.S.-Israeli wars**
- **MIDEAST UNITY: 'We are all Hezbollah now!'**
- **Bush sinks deeper in his quagmire**
- **Islam, Malcolm X & self-determination**



**WORKERS WORLD PARTY STATEMENT**

### Stop U.S.-Israeli terror! Long live the resistance!

Workers World Party joins with all anti-imperialist and anti-war forces in condemning U.S.-backed Israeli aggression, which is bringing increasing death and destruction to the people of Lebanon just as it has brought similar suffering and oppression to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories in this most recent phase of the struggle. We would also like to extend our heartfelt sympathies to the people of Lebanon, who are being victimized by this savagery.

Likewise, we hail the resistance led by Hezbollah and Hamas and call on all anti-imperialist and anti-war forces to join together to mobilize to stop this criminal war and end the occupation of Palestine.

The Bush administration is working overtime to see to it that its Zionist client regime in Tel Aviv expands its brutal and indiscriminate aggression against Lebanon. After almost

*Continued on page 14*



**NEW YORK**  
Demonstrators demand 'Stop U.S./Israeli war on Lebanon and Palestine' on Aug. 5.

## Subscribe to Workers World

Special Trial subscription: 4 Free issues

One year subscription: \$25

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Workers World Newspaper**  
55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011  
212-627-2994  
[www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)



## A report and a cover-up

# It's official: Chicago police tortured Black prisoners

By Eric Struch  
Chicago

As in so many other cities, police brutality is institutionalized in Chicago—a simple fact of life seldom acknowledged in the capitalist media.

Many people were expecting a crack in the wall of official silence when, on July 19, a 292-page report on the notorious “Beast of Area 2,” Commander Jon Burge of the Chicago Police Department, was issued by special investigators Edward Egan and Robert Boyle.

Costing \$7 million over four years, the investigation was intended to close the book on a 33-year period of violent impunity by Burge and his cronies. Instead, the report has raised tempers in the African-American community to the boiling point.

It implicates everyone—from the current mayor and state's attorney to every single CPD superintendent over the past 23 years—in a massive conspiracy to cover up the institutional nature of police torture and cop terrorism.

But the report is also an attack on the credibility of several torture survivors, including current political prisoner Aaron Patterson, Minister of Defense of the Prisoners of Conscience Committee (POCC). And it is an attack on former Gov. George Ryan, a Republican who commuted the sentences of everyone on Illinois death row in 2003. As retribution from pro-death penalty, pro-cop Cook County Democrats, Ryan was later convicted in an alleged corruption scandal.

Mayor Richard M. Daley and the CPD have attempted to avoid prosecution for this ongoing conspiracy to cover up acts of terrorism against the African-American community by dragging out the investigative process long enough to invoke statute of limitation laws.

The bulk of the report deals with the CPD's Commander Burge and his Area 2 terror squad, in which officers John Byrne, Peter Dignan and Michael Hoke were his closest collaborators.

### Torture started in Vietnam

Burge himself grew up on Chicago's South Side and was stationed in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. Evidence suggests he learned his torture techniques there. Members of his company state that Burge used electricity from hand-cranked field phones to torture suspected Vietnamese liberation fighters—the same sort of equipment and techniques he would use later at Area 2.

Burge became a cop on his return to the U.S. in 1970 and was promoted to detective in 1972, at the age of 24. The first complaint of torture at Area 2 dates from 1973. After serving at two other locations, he returned to Area 2 in 1981 as commanding officer of the Violent Crimes Unit.

According to the report, Burge tortured Andrew Wilson in 1982 to extract a confession in the shooting deaths of two cops. A medical report authored by Dr. John Raba, medical director of Cermack Hospital, said stitches and burns on Wilson's body were evidence of torture. Raba's report also cited evidence of Burge's signature, electrical torture, in the form of alligator-clip wounds. Raba sent the report to then Police Superintendent Richard Brzeczek, requesting an investigation of Wilson's allegations of torture by Burge. The report was forwarded by Brzeczek to then State's Attorney Richard M. Daley, asking how to

proceed. Daley, now the mayor, sat on the report and did nothing.

More than 50 African-American men reported being tortured by Burge or his cronies during Daley's reign as state's attorney, from 1981 to 1989. Daley never investigated a single one of these allegations.

Wilson was convicted of murder on the basis of his coerced testimony. In 1987, after the Illinois Supreme Court granted him a new trial, he was convicted again. In 1989, after Wilson's lawyers filed a federal civil suit against Burge and the City of Chicago, the People's Law Office (PLO) received anonymous letters telling of 105 cases of African-American men who had been tortured at Area 2.

The methods included electrical shock, suffocation with plastic bags and typewriter covers, and burns inflicted through being cuffed to radiators. The letters also described the use of Vietnam-style hand-cranked shockers, cattle prods, and a violet ray machine—also known as a shock wand.

### Where they are now

Fired by the Police Board in 1993, Burge still collects a \$3,403.71 per month city pension while living in comfortable retirement in Florida, despite refusing to cooperate in investigations and repeatedly refusing to answer questions on the grounds of self-incrimination. He still maintains his innocence, despite the report.

Burge continues to enjoy the full backing of the so-called “police union,” the Fraternal Order of Police. In fact, the FOP planned to honor him with a float in the 1993 South Side Irish Parade until outrage in the African-American community stopped them. Burge's lawyer, Richard Sikes Jr., said his client was quite happy overall with the report, saying, “He's pleased with what we thought all along—that the torture claims were unfounded.”

John Byrne, by his own admission, was Burge's right-hand man. Byrne later became a lawyer, but was disbarred for stealing from clients, including other cops. Now a private investigator, he collects a Chicago Police Department pension. Byrne also took the Fifth Amendment under questioning about his role in the conspiracy.

Peter Dignan was mentioned in 17 of the PLO's 105 cases, often working alongside Burge and Byrne, participating in beatings of suspects with flashlights and phone books, mock executions, suffocation and electrical torture. Even after being cited in a CPD torture probe in 1990, Dignan was promoted to lieutenant in 1998. Retired with a pension, he now works for the Cook County Sheriff's Department. Dignan also took the Fifth under questioning.

Michael Hoke's involvement with Burge dates back to the very first cases in 1973. Hoke was an Internal Affairs commander when a database tracking cops accused of brutality was mysteriously erased. This most likely pleased the right people. Hoke was then promoted to assistant deputy superintendent. Now retired, he was granted immunity by special prosecutor Egan and took the Fifth under questioning.

Chairman Fred Hampton Jr. of the POCC, whose father was a Black Panther Party leader killed by Chicago police, said, “The actual criminals have been rewarded, they have been elevated.”

*Next: The political cover-up.*

*This week ...*



### ★ In the U.S.

- Chicago police tortured Black prisoners . . . . . 2
- Abolition movement grows in Texas . . . . . 3
- Angola 3 hearing . . . . . 3
- What can be learned from PATCO strike? . . . . . 4
- On the picket line . . . . . 4
- 'Charles Barron is a fighter'. . . . . 5
- Oakland police spied on anti-war, labor groups. . . . . 5
- Immigrant gets meds after protest . . . . . 5
- Six gay men attacked after Pride festival . . . . . 6
- Lavender and red, Part 70 . . . . . 6
- National days of protest . . . . . 7
- Islam, Malcolm X & the right to self-determination . . . . . 8
- Mumia on No more Middle East wars . . . . . 9
- How a failed policy led to even greater failure . . . . . 11
- Cuban Five still in jail, one year after court ruling. . . . . 13
- Gil Banks, Harlem labor leader . . . . . 14

### ★ Around the world

- Lebanese fight on amid hail of bombs . . . . . 1
- World protests condemn U.S.-Israeli aggression . . . . . 8
- New Mideast unity backs Lebanon's fighters . . . . . 10
- The health of Fidel and Cuba . . . . . 13
- Cuban in U.S. jail says, 'Millions love Fidel'. . . . . 13
- Mexican sit-ins demand vote recount. . . . . 15

### ★ Editorials

- Stop U.S.-Israeli aggression! . . . . . 1

### ★ Noticias En Español

- Declaración del Partido Mundo Obrero/Workers World . . . . . 16
- El Partido Comunista del Líbano . . . . . 16

### Workers World

55 West 17 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10011  
Phone: (212) 627-2994  
Fax: (212) 675-7869  
E-mail: editor@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org  
Vol. 48, No. 32 • Aug. 17, 2006  
Closing date: Aug. 9, 2006

Editor: Deirdre Griswold  
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk  
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson  
West Coast Editor: John Parker  
Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt  
Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Maggie Vascassenno  
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas  
Internet: Janet Mayes  
Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

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

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

JOIN US. Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latino, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.  
If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.  
National Office  
55 W. 17 St.,  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 627-2994;  
Fax (212) 675-7869  
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta  
P.O. Box 424,  
Atlanta, GA 30301  
(404) 627-0185  
atlanta@workers.org  
Baltimore  
426 E. 31 St.,  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(410) 235-7040  
baltimore@workers.org  
Boston  
284 Armory St.,  
Boston, MA 02130  
(617) 983-3835  
Fax (617) 983-3836  
boston@workers.org  
Buffalo, N.Y.  
367 Delaware Ave.,  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
(716) 566-1115  
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago  
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138  
Chicago, IL 60606  
(773) 381-5839  
Fax (773) 761-9330  
chicago@workers.org  
Cleveland  
P.O. Box 5963  
Cleveland, OH 44101  
phone (216) 531-4004  
cleveland@workers.org  
Denver  
denver@workers.org  
Detroit  
5920 Second Ave.,  
Detroit, MI 48202  
(313) 831-0750  
detroit@workers.org  
Houston  
P.O. Box 130322,  
Houston, TX 77219  
(713) 861-5965  
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles  
5274 West Pico Blvd.,  
Suite 203  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
(323) 936-1416  
la@workers.org  
Philadelphia  
P.O. Box 9202,  
Philadelphia, PA 19139  
(610) 453-0490  
phila@workers.org  
Richmond, Va.  
P.O. Box 14602,  
Richmond, VA 23221  
richmond@workers.org  
Rochester, N.Y.  
(585) 436-6458  
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.  
3930 Oregon St.,  
Suite 230  
San Diego, CA 92104  
(619) 692-4496  
San Francisco  
2940 16th St., #207  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103  
(415) 561-9752  
sf@workers.org  
State College, Pa.  
100 Grandview Rd.,  
State College,  
PA 16801  
(814) 237-8695  
Washington, D.C.  
P.O. Box 57300,  
Washington, DC 20037,  
dc@workers.org



## Hope on death row

# Abolition movement grows in Texas

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Texas death-penalty abolitionists are organizing whirlwinds of activity to stop the use of this racist weapon of class terror. Information surfacing about the many people on death row who were unjustly convicted is helping build the movement to stop executions. Yet Texas—the state that leads all others in the U.S. in executions—is continuing to execute prisoners, with 16 legal lynchings already this year and 12 more scheduled.

Abolitionists are organizing numerous activities in Texas for this fall, including the Seventh Annual March to Stop Executions to be held in Austin during the last weekend of October.

There are also plans to protest horrific conditions of isolation on death rows—both at the Polunsky Unit and at the prison in downtown Livingston, Texas.

Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement leader Njeri Shakur says: “Every major city in Texas has abolitionists who continue to organize, agitate and educate about the racist and unfair nature of the death penalty. Despite the assembly line of executions, we remain optimistic that even Texas will be forced to stop state killings. We are seeing light at the end of the tunnel. We just can’t get to that end fast enough.”

Shakur recently met in Austin with representatives of other Texas-based anti-death-penalty organizations who are working together to garner funds for a statewide speaking tour and efforts to bring about a moratorium on executions within the next few years.

### Three cases propel abolition demand

The death-penalty abolition movement has experienced momentum from exposures over the last 20 months in major newspapers of evidence that might have exonerated three prisoners already executed by the state.

“These three cases have shaken what was a once solid foundation of support for the death penalty in Texas. Now, many people express doubt that Texas has ‘never executed an innocent person,’ as the state claims,” said activist Joanne Gavin.

In December 2004, the Chicago Tribune published the results of its investigation of Cameron Todd Willingham, executed on Feb. 17 of that year. The article showed that Willingham had been sent to death row based primarily on arson theories later repudiated by improved scientific methods.

Eight months after Willingham was executed, the same scientific information helped exonerate another man, Ernest Willis, who had also been convicted of capital murder by arson. Willis became the eighth person exonerated while on Texas death row. He had spent 17 years awaiting execution.

In November 2005, a two-part investigative series in the Houston Chronicle cast serious doubt on the evidence used to convict Rubén Cantú, who was executed in 1993. Cantú, only 17 when he was charged with capital murder, had persistently proclaimed his innocence. A key eyewitness in the state’s case and a co-defendant both came forward to say that Rubén Cantú was innocent.

In June, the Chicago Tribune published an in-depth, three-part series on the 1989 execution of Carlos de Luna, who had given the police the name of the person he said he himself saw carry out the robbery

and murder for which he was convicted. As de Luna was being executed, he sent a message: “Tell everyone on death row to keep the faith and don’t give up.”

### Support gears up for death-row prisoners

On July 26, Howard Guidry won a new trial date, set for Jan. 29, 2007. A federal judge had ruled that the prisoner had to be either released from death row or retried by the state. Guidry, who has always proclaimed his innocence, is gaining wide support among the progressive community in Houston. Members of the Blackout Artists Collective are performing his poetry—poems written during his decade on death row that are heart-wrenching and acutely political. ([www.geocities.com/HowardGuidryJusticeComm](http://www.geocities.com/HowardGuidryJusticeComm))

A federal judge has also thrown out the case against death-row prisoner Martin Draughon—one of three men sent to death row because of the Houston Crime Lab’s inaccurate ballistics testimony. On July 28, Draughon was in a Houston court to accept a deal that could see him leaving death row as early as November. After the papers were signed, Draughon had a wide smile on his face as he turned to all his supporters in the courtroom to thank everyone for being there.

The family of Rodney Reed and the Campaign to End the Death Penalty held a spirited rally at the State Capitol on July

30, calling for a new trial for Reed—a Black man sent to death row for the death of a white woman with whom he had been having a secret affair. Her fiancé Jimmy Fennell, a white cop, was not charged with the murder despite his obvious motive. “Jimmy Fennell twice failed lie-detector tests while being questioned about the crime. That is, on each of those polygraph tests, Fennell had showed deception when asked whether or not he had strangled Stacey Stites,” wrote the Austin Chronicle on May 4, 2002, in an article questioning the verdict.

According to rally participant Barbara Timko, “You could feel the energy and enthusiasm of the rally. It is obvious that Rodney’s supporters will not stop until he receives true justice.” A new film about the case—“The State vs. Reed”—won the Lone Star State’s audience award this year at the 20th annual “South by Southwest” film festival in Austin.

Thomas Miller-El’s retrial will begin on Sept. 5. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 13, 2005, that Miller-El, who is Black, was entitled to a new trial due to evidence of racial bias during jury selection at his original trial. By phone, Miller-El asked Workers World to send greetings to all his supporters and also to his friends on death row. He said he is concerned that he has only seen his court-appointed attorneys three times since he got back to the Dallas County jail last summer.

Miller-El explained: “Within this system there’s no such thing as justice. What happened to being innocent until proven guilty? The district attorney has gone on television and been quoted in the paper many times saying I am guilty, and I haven’t even been retried yet. They use the media to demonize me and prejudice potential jurors. They wanted me to accept a plea bargain, but I refused.”

He can receive letters at: Thomas Miller-El #05069575, 500 Commerce St., North Tower 5-P-12, Dallas, TX 75202.

Njeri Shakur alerted everyone to the Aug. 31 scheduled execution of Hasan Shakur. She quoted death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who said of Shakur, “Prison—and worse, death row—was the place, not just of his nightmarish repression and possible death, but of his rebirth, his becoming a revolutionary, who looks at the collective interests of his people, and all oppressed peoples of the Earth.”

Shakur has joined the New African Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter and was named its Minister of Human Rights. In a recent publication, he concluded: “My legal appeals have taken turns for the worse, and yet, the path of liberation continues to be my vocation, carving out a path for future revolutionaries to follow and carry the torch. I despise the class oppression that is the basis of the capitalist system and the racist national oppression that goes with it.” □

## Angola 3 hearing

# Supporters mobilize, demand ‘Free Herman Wallace!’

By Leslie Feinberg

Supporters of the Angola 3 are traveling by buses and vans, trains and planes to hold a vigil outside the walls of the Louisiana State Penitentiary on Aug. 15, during prisoner Herman Wallace’s evidentiary hearing inside.

Buses are already slated to leave from Austin, Houston and Dallas, Texas; Lawrence, Kan.; Oakland, Calif.; Tucson, Ariz.; Chicago, Philadelphia and New York.

Common Ground and other community-based organizations have scheduled buses from New Orleans.

The Angola 3—Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox and Robert King Wilkerson—were sentenced to life without parole after their conviction for the 1972 killing of a prison guard. Wilkerson proved his innocence and won release in 2001.

Organizations all over the world, including Amnesty International, have demanded freedom for the Angola 3. The parliaments of Indonesia, Portugal, Belgium and Netherlands, and the African National Congress in South Africa, have all denounced the decades of solitary imprisonment the men have endured as “cruel and unusual punishment” and have recognized the Angola 3 as “political prisoners.”

A recent BBC investigative segment on the Angola 3, broadcast to some 25 million viewers, reported that “there is powerful evidence that they were framed.”

### Spirit of Nat Turner

Supporters have long stressed that the three prisoners were targeted by the administration because they were courageous political activists inside the walls of



Herman Wallace, Robert King Wilkerson and Albert Woodfox.

prisoners against systematic rape and violence.

The three tried to mobilize a movement to win better living conditions. They provided their experience as “jail-house lawyers” to help other prisoners. They set up political education programs for

prisoners. And they organized work stoppages and dining hall strikes.

After a guard’s death in 1972, the administration unleashed a wave of terror against Black prisoners: beatings, forcibly shaving the heads of African American prisoners who grew Afros, and mass solitary confinement.

Few prisoners in world history have been held in solitary as long as the Angola 3. Robert Wilkerson spent 29 years before his release. Wallace and Woodfox have spent 34 years locked up in solitary, 23 hours a day, in 6-by-9 foot cells—sweltering without air conditioning in Louisiana summers.

prisoners. And they organized work stoppages and dining hall strikes.

After a guard’s death in 1972, the administration unleashed a wave of terror against Black prisoners: beatings, forcibly shaving the heads of African American prisoners who grew Afros, and mass solitary confinement.

Few prisoners in world history have been held in solitary as long as the Angola 3. Robert Wilkerson spent 29 years before his release. Wallace and Woodfox have spent 34 years locked up in solitary, 23 hours a day, in 6-by-9 foot cells—sweltering without air conditioning in Louisiana summers.

### This is a critical moment

The two men charge that state witnesses against them were prison “snitches,” bribed with favors in return for their testimony.

Three prosecution witnesses have since confessed that they lied on the stand and

*Continued on page 15*



## 25 years later

# What can be learned from PATCO strike?

By Milt Neidenberg

Twenty five years ago — on Aug. 3, 1981—workers in the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) walked off the job. Seeking a shorter work week, pay increases, improved working conditions and better safety for air travelers, the union defied an ultimatum by newly elected President Ronald Reagan to return to work.

Forty-eight hours later, Reagan fired 11,359 striking air traffic controllers.

Union leaders and members were arrested, jailed and fined. PATCO's \$3.5 million strike fund was frozen, the strike was broken and eventually the government decertified the union.

Reagan finished what President Jimmy Carter had begun in February 1981, before leaving office.

A month before contract negotiations had begun, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA)—PATCO's employer—and the Justice Department compiled a list of union leaders and members to be arrested if the workers went out on strike. Both capitalist parties, Republicans and Democrats, were responsible for the PATCO debacle—although Reagan was the more treacherous, venomous and fork-tongued.

Just weeks before the presidential election, on Oct. 20, 1980, candidate Reagan wrote a reassuring letter to PATCO President Robert Poli, vowing to cooperate with the union.

Reagan wrote, "I have been briefed by members of my staff ... that too few people [are] working unreasonable hours with obsolete equipment. ... You can rest assured that if I am elected president, I will take whatever steps are necessary ... I pledge to you that my administration will work very closely with you to bring about a spirit of cooperation between the president and the air traffic controllers."

Reagan boasted he was a lifetime, paid-up member of the AFL-CIO. In his Hollywood days, he had been president of the Screen Actors Guild.

PATCO went all-out to get Reagan elected.

Once elected, Reagan double-crossed the union and declared the strike "a peril to national safety." He invoked the infamous, anti-union Taft Hartley Act, which had been legislated under President Harry Truman, a Democrat, in 1947. This law empowers presidents of either party to break strikes and it's still on the books.

For 25 years, in all that has been written about PATCO in the capitalist press, the lies, deceit and broken promises of both Republicans and Democrats in collusion with the repressive capitalist state have been covered up.

Writing on the 25th anniversary of the strike, an Aug. 5 opinion piece in the Washington Post—a "liberal" capitalist newspaper—ignored this despicable, double-dealing conduct that led to PATCO's downfall. The article, headlined "Echoes of a Broken Strike," focuses on the subsequent decline in strikes, union membership and organizing workers. It was written by Charles J. Whalen, senior political economist at the Institute for Industry Studies, Cornell University.

Whalen stated, "In the immediate aftermath of the PATCO strike, many observers reported that Reagan's action marked a turning point in U.S. labor relations. History has shown this assessment was right on the mark. If it is true that the strike is labor's 'only true weapon' as some unionists suggest, then practically the entire movement has been disarmed. This also indicates that the legal right of workers to organize and bargain collectively has little real meaning."

Whalen quoted data on strike-breaking by scabs. "In 2005 American labor disputes led to 22 major work stoppages, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. From the end of World War II until 1981, the annual number was about 10 times that—and sometimes much higher. A major reason for the sharp decline: Reagan's headline-grabbing dismissal of PATCO workers emboldened



Reagan deceived and then double-crossed the PATCO workers.

employers across the nation. Overnight, it became legitimate to threaten striking employees with permanent replacement."

### Recession impacts on PATCO strike

The PATCO workers faced unfavorable economic conditions. High unemployment enabled the government to quickly fill the jobs of the fired air traffic controllers. Pilots, machinists and flight attendants fearful of being replaced worked throughout the PATCO crisis.

PATCO lacked the support of a general strike, which the labor movement was ill-prepared to organize. Nor did the AFL-CIO bureaucracy led by Lane Kirkland—a cold-war patriot and class collaborator—have the stomach for widening the conflict. As a result, the PATCO strike was doomed to fail.

The capitalist recession was a tremendous obstacle for PATCO and its courageous, militant, striking members.

According to a January 2002 report by the Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, "The 1980-82 recession was quite severe, the worst since the Depression of the 1930s. This recession which followed the stagflation period of the 1970s, was known as the 'double dip' recession. ...

"The national unemployment rate climbed throughout 1980 and 1981 and hovered around 10 percent for most of 1982 and 1983. ...

"Poverty also increased substantially in large cities during the early 1980s, as it did in the rest of the nation. Between 1979 and 1983, the number of people living below the poverty line in U.S. central cities increased by over 3 million."

Although the report did not elaborate on the recession's disproportionate impact on the Black population and other oppressed nationalities, it is certain that unemployment and poverty sky-rocketed for those groups.

Reagan, the duly elected servant of the ruling class, was ruthless in his attack on the workers and the oppressed nationalities.

PATCO was an early casualty. Reagan couldn't permit a shutdown of the air transportation system—it was a \$30 billion industry, involving 14,000 flights and 10,000 tons of air cargo a day. An average of 800,000 passengers, 60 percent of whom were business executives, passed through U.S. terminals daily. Braniff, Eastern, TWA—now long gone—and American Airlines were losing \$30 million a day.

### Timing and strike strategy

The economic cycle of capitalist development is often decisive, affecting how successful the workers can be in winning gains and whether a strike is the appropriate form of the struggle.

Union leaders and members have a heavy responsibility to develop a winning strategy. PATCO was ill-prepared for the all-out assault by the Reagan administration.

Yet for 48 hours the strike created havoc for airline corporations and hurt their bottom line.

Today the air traffic controllers have reorganized. They are represented by the Professional Air Traffic

## ON THE PICKETLINE

By Sue Davis

### Flight attendants may strike

Flight attendants at Northwest Airlines overwhelmingly voted down a contract in June that included a 21-percent pay cut and major work-rule changes. NWA has demanded \$195 million in savings from attendants to bail it out of bankruptcy.

The 9,300 members switched unions on July 6, voting for the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA to represent them. But after the AFA sent the ranks a tweaked version of the contract, 55 percent of the attendants voted it down on July 31. In retaliation—and with the backing of a federal bankruptcy judge—NWA immediately reimposed the harsher contract terms rejected in June. The AFA figures the givebacks in health care and other benefits on top of the pay cut add up to a total income reduction of 40 percent.

The AFA announced on Aug. 1 that the attendants would conduct random, unannounced strikes beginning at 10:01 p.m. on Aug. 15 unless NWA rescinds the contract. NWA asked the bankruptcy court on Aug. 3 to block a possible strike, citing the Railway Labor Act, which forbids strikes that interfere with interstate commerce. Flight attendants in Detroit held an informational picket line on Aug. 4 in defense of their right to stage job actions.

The bankruptcy court has scheduled a hearing on the issues for Aug. 9. AFA general counsel David Borer told Reuters on Aug. 2, "We will aggressively defend our members' right to strike."

One of the bankruptcy court's stipulations is that previously negotiated give-back contracts with pilots and ground workers cannot take effect until there is one with the flight attendants—either approved by the workers or imposed by NWA.

Will the flight attendants stand up for their rights, and the rights of all workers, and defy the court? That is the critical question at this critical juncture for organized labor. Stay tuned.

### School bus drivers win contract

The 8,400 school bus drivers in New York City won a new contract July 18 that gives them pay hikes of 10.5 percent and increased contributions to their pension fund over the next three years.

The big issue at the negotiating table was that management wanted the drivers to pay 1.5 percent of their earnings toward health insurance premiums—the same issue that forced transit workers to strike last December. Amalgamated Transit Local 1181 threatened to strike over the issue as well.

Though the final contract does limit some health benefit reimbursements for the first time, the school bus drivers held the line and will not have to pay a penny toward their health insurance premiums.

### TWU charges sex discrimination

Darlyne Lawson, recording secretary of Transport Workers Local 100 in New York, filed a sexual discrimination suit against the Metropolitan Transit Authority in State Supreme Court on July 18.

The MTA does not cover birth control supplies for 6,496 women in its health plan for the workforce of 38,000. "I felt it was unconscionable that the MTA would help supply the men with Viagra but not support women's need of contraceptives to avoid unwanted pregnancies," Lawson said in the July 28 issue of The Chief-Leader, the weekly newspaper for civil service unions in New York State.

The MTA had agreed to provide coverage for contraceptives in the contract negotiated during the strike last December. Lawson filed the suit to make sure the issue received attention now that the contract is in binding arbitration. A parallel issue of maternity leave is also on the table.

Even though MTA statistics show women of child-bearing age are entering the transit ranks in larger numbers than other workers, the MTA offers no official leave, forcing women to use sick days. That procedure penalizes women when they are reviewed for promotions, noted Lawson. In the December contract, she negotiated a stipend of \$200 a week for a four-week leave under the Family Medical Leave Act, as well as paternity leave for new fathers.

### No minimum wage hike

The struggle to raise the minimum wage, which has been stuck at \$5.15 since 1997, received yet another setback on Aug. 3 when the Senate voted not to close debate on the issue. However, the bill itself was cynically manipulated.

In an opportunistic, welfare-for-the-already-wealthy maneuver, the \$2.10 hike in the minimum wage had been linked to two highly regressive measures. One slashed taxes on multi-million-dollar estates by 75 percent, and the other allowed employers in seven states to count tips toward increases in the minimum wage, which would have likely actually cut those wages.

While passage of the bill would have added a welcome average of \$1,200 a year to low-wage paychecks, that's petty cash to the heirs of huge estates who would have collected on average a whopping \$1.3 billion dividend from the bill, while stripping the treasury of \$750 billion in taxes.

The struggle of working and oppressed people continues. □

Continued on page 12

## Supporters of candidate say

# 'Charles Barron is a fighter'

By Monica Moorehead  
New York

Charles Barron has been a Black revolutionary and anti-imperialist fighter for many years. He was a member of the Black Panther Party and the Black United Front.

Barron is presently a New York City Council member. He held a media conference/rally Aug. 8 to announce that he will be running a grassroots campaign in hopes of being elected to the U.S. Congress to represent the 10th District in Brooklyn. The primary will take place on Sept. 12.

Barron made this announcement on the steps of City Hall, surrounded by a majority of Black political activists, family and friends. Paul Washington, a long-time friend and associate of Barron's, moderated the press conference.

Speaker after speaker talked about the radical positions that Barron has taken over the years, in many cases going against the tide of political reaction inside and outside City Hall. These positions include demanding freedom for political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal; reparations for the descendants of African slaves; low-cost affordable housing; immigrant rights; a living wage for all; affirmative action for firefighters of color and an end to police brutality and to the rampant unemployment gripping the oppressed communities.

Some of the speakers at the press conference included labor activist Brenda Stokely; Ron Daniels, Institute of the Black World; Panamá Alba, Laborers Local 108; Holly McQueen, advocate for the African Burial Grounds; Charles King, candidate for New York attorney general; artists Rosa Clemente and Tylibah; Queens City Council member James Sanders; Suzanne Ross, Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition; Larry Holmes, Troops Out Now Coalition; Omowale Clay, December 12th Movement; Martha Pérez, widow of Puerto Rican activist Richie Pérez; Herman Ferguson, Jericho Movement; Brooklyn activist Lucy Koteen and Rev. Mark Taylor.

Barron talked about how the Senate needs to be abolished because "white men have too much power." He mentioned that radical changes need to be made when a government spends \$374 billion on the Pentagon war budget and only \$50 billion for education. He slammed the U.S. government for not taking care of the Katrina survivors and added that Hurricane Katrina should be renamed "Hurricane FEMA/Bush."

Regarding the current crisis in the Middle East, Barron stated, "Free Palestine. Free Lebanon. Israel is dropping the bombs, but it is America's war." Larry Holmes stated that "Barron is a leader of the anti-war movement" and that the anti-war movement will be brought into the Barron campaign.

Barron remarked that Africa should be relieved of all foreign debt, saying, "It is the IMF and World Bank that owe Africa." He also talked about the war in Congo and noted that mass starvation and preventable diseases have taken the lives of millions in that mineral-rich but extremely underdeveloped country.

Barron concluded his remarks by reminding everyone why he is running for Congress: "We need to launch a movement for revolutionary change because the people need it."

Call 718-289-3173 or go to [www.barronforcongress.com](http://www.barronforcongress.com) for more information. □



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Larry Holmes speaks at City Hall Aug. 8 next to Charles Barron, in dark suit.

## Oakland police spied on anti-war, labor groups

By Joan Marquardt  
Oakland, Calif.

The Northern California office of the American Civil Liberties Union made public a report July 27 that exposed post-9/11 government surveillance by police, the military and a state security agency on individuals, labor unions and anti-war groups who opposed the U.S. war against Iraq.

It turns out that two Oakland police officers were assigned to infiltrate a local anti-war organization—Direct Action to Stop the War.

Established under the direction of the California attorney general's office, the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center issued a specific advisory five days before the anti-war organization's April 7, 2003, "National Day of Action" protest demonstration at the Port of Oakland.

Criminal intelligence specialist Mike Mendenhall, listed as the law enforcement contact, was well-informed about the details of the planned demonstration because the two undercover cops were reportedly functioning by then in leadership positions within the anti-war group,



WW PHOTO: JOAN MARQUARDT

San Francisco Aug. 5 protest demanding "U.S. out of the Middle East."

enabling them to provide details of the organization's plans.

The Oakland police had also monitored online postings by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union because of its anti-war stance. The long-standing progressive record of the ILWU

workers is well-known.

On the day of the Port of Oakland protest, hundreds of anti-war activists blocked gates at the docks to protest two shipping companies that they said were profiting off the war on Iraq. Eyewitnesses

*Continued on page 10*

## Immigrant gets meds after protest

By Cheryl LaBash  
Monroe, Mich.

A hot dusty road in rural southeastern Michigan leads to the Monroe County Jail dormitory. But on Sunday, July 30, when a dozen protesters walked down that road with signs in hand to see about Óscar Ramos Hernández, and entered a large, tent-like detention building, something changed. Not only did the delegation demand and win the right to see Ramos, but a few days later he was transferred to a facility in Detroit with improved conditions.

Latinos Unidos called together the delegation to confront the emergency health crisis caused when the wheelchair that Ramos depends on was taken away and his pain medication changed to a weaker dosage, leaving him in excruciating pain.

Ramos, an immigrant from Honduras, suffers from a spinal cord injury resulting from a fall off scaffolding at work four years ago.

From the time officials of so-called Homeland Security took him from his Detroit home on immigration charges in early June, his special needs were ignored. The result was torture—a violation of his human rights. Shifted from jail to jail, shackled in solitary detention and finally denied his mobility aid and appropriate medical care, Ramos was threatened with being returned to the "hole" if he didn't get up and walk to get his food.

In the mass dormitory, where 72 of the 80 detainees speak Spanish, there is only one Spanish-speaking guard. Last winter, the immigrants were forced to take showers in an unheated area. They were reportedly



Supporters get inside detention camp.

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

edly tear-gassed for protesting.

In an appeal for support, Latinos Unidos coordinator Rosendo Delgado stated, "Mr. Ramos is an extreme case of a pattern of widespread human rights violations of undocumented immigrants being held in federal detention centers and in contracted county jails in Michigan

and throughout the nation."

An article in the July 19 New York Times said private and county immigrant detention centers are raking in \$95 a night per detainee. Latinos Unidos is continuing to demand adequate medical attention for Óscar Ramos. For more information, contact [rosendo@luum.org](mailto:rosendo@luum.org). □

## Who's to blame?

# Six gay men attacked after Pride festival

By Bob McCubbin  
San Diego

There is a metal plaque in the sidewalk outside the Obelisk Bookstore in San Diego's Hillcrest community, commemorating the 1991 stabbing death of 17-year-old John Robert Wear at the hands of homophobes. Wear and some friends were walking in the early evening down University Avenue in Hillcrest—which has, for many years, been the center of San Diego's large lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities. Wear and his friends were confronted by three men who called them “faggots” and then attacked Wear, killing him.

Fast-forward 15 years to 2006. It's Sunday evening, July 30, in San Diego's Balboa Park. The previous day saw at least 150,000 people gather to witness and march in the annual Pride Parade, San Diego's largest yearly civic event. Now, following another full day of celebration at the Pride Festival, attendees are filtering out of the park on their way home. But for six unfortunate men, there are four homophobic/homophobic youth lying in wait in the bushes. They are armed with two baseball bats and a sharp object, perhaps a knife.

The six leaving the festival are set upon in separate attacks, four of them while walking alone. Four of the victims are able to escape with only bruises, one is stabbed in the back, and the sixth man, as of this writing, remains hospitalized with a fractured skull. He was hit 10 to 12 times on the head and upper body with a baseball bat, and reports indicate he will require reconstructive surgery. He has received a tracheotomy to help him breathe.

On Aug. 2 the San Diego Union-Tribune reports yet another anti-gay attack: “A group of [15] teenagers made anti-gay comments as they attacked a security guard last night in what San Diego police called a hate crime.”

In a much-needed response to these latest manifestations of homophobia/homophobia, more than 1,000 people gathered on the evening of Aug. 4 at the LGBT Community Center, marched to the

Obelisk Bookstore and held a street rally there.

The big-business media focus now is that the perpetrators have been caught, are being charged with hate crimes and will be punished.

The question that needs to be answered, however, is why, 37 years after the birth of the Gay Liberation movement—followed by countless struggles that have advanced the cause of LGBT liberation—do these violent attacks continue?

And it must be emphasized that, while these recent incidents in San Diego involved men whom their attackers presumed were gay, violent attacks against trans people are certainly even more frequent but receive much less publicity.

### Who's to blame

Let's start with the politicians. With a bare handful of exceptions—Harvey Milk, Bella Abzug—virtually no Democratic or Republican office holders or candidates could be found in the Gay Liberation marches of the early 1970s. But as the momentum and breadth of the movement for equal rights for LGBT people grew and grew, it gradually became more acceptable for liberal politicians to make appearances at “gay” events. And then, too, openly lesbian and gay people began running for public office.

But recently, the passage in state after state of laws prohibiting same-sex marriage sends a strong message—heard loudly and clearly by bigots and bashers—that the U.S. political establishment views lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people as less than equal.

And then there are the influential religious organizations. Some of them have openly embraced the call for equal rights and given sincere support to the struggle. Others have, over the years, moved from open prejudice to more accepting positions.

But the Vatican, to name one powerful and viciously homophobic institution, has made it clear, over and over again, that the only acceptable stance for lesbians and gay men is celibacy, silence and invisibility.

Much of the terror unleashed by the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages under the bloody banner of the Inquisition was directed against practitioners of pre-patriarchal belief systems that were fully accepting of homosexuality.

How little anything has changed. A 1961 Vatican document refers to “those who are afflicted with evil tendencies to homosexuality or pederasty.” In 1986, the present pope, Benedict XVI, wrote that homosexuality is an “intrinsic moral evil” and described it as “an objective disorder.” (www.RainbowNetwork.com)

More recently, he has approved a Vatican document proclaiming that “homosexual men should not be admitted to seminaries even if they are celibate, because their condition suggests a serious personality disorder which detracts from their ability to serve as ministers.” (www.ewtn.com)

In a highly publicized incident last year, San Diego's Bishop Robert Brom—one of many Catholic clergy who have been accused of sexual misconduct with children or youth—somewhat hypocritically denied a Catholic funeral service to the owner of a gay nightclub. Brom stated that none of the 98 Catholic churches in San Diego County or Imperial County would be allowed to provide services.

Following expressions of outrage by many community leaders, Brom reversed himself. But that wasn't the end of it. As reported in the San Diego Union-Tribune, “The morning after San Diego's Roman Catholic bishop apologized to a family after canceling their gay son's funeral mass, he left two voice-mail messages for an evangelical Christian activist who crusades against homosexuality. ‘James, please take my call,’ Bishop Robert Brom said Tuesday into the answering machine of James Hartline, a Hillcrest man who supported canceling the funeral. ‘I have to explain how it's all wrong and how I was done in.’ His Holiness Bishop Brom continues as the guiding shepherd of his flock to this day.”

The fundamentalist right-wing of the Protestant hierarchy, which ascended with the rise of capitalism over feudalism as a

world economic system, has been a hot-bed of homophobia reaction in the U.S.—from Jerry Falwell to Pat Robertson.

### Up against the brass

And finally, the influence of the most powerful military organization on the face of the planet should be considered.

In the face of who knows what Pentagon threats, Bill Clinton reversed his pre-election promise to end the ban on lesbians and gay men in the military and instead instituted the infamous “Don't ask, don't tell” policy under which the Pentagon witch-hunt against LGBT personnel has continued unabated.

In an essay she wrote for the anti-military booklet titled, “We Won't Go: A Guide to Resistance” (International Action Center, 2005), Rebeca Toledo states, “Ten thousand people have been discharged under [Don't ask, don't tell] since 1994.”

This policy by the brass legitimizes homophobia, encourages the acting out of homophobic impulses and declares war on LGBT people in the ranks of the military. Toledo documents a number of such violent incidents following the imposition of “Don't ask, don't tell.” She also relates how the Pentagon promotes hatred of LGBT people in other ways.

And finally comes the embarrassing discovery of a Pentagon document that, as of June, still classified homosexuality as a mental disorder. After the document was made public, Pentagon spokesperson Lt. Col. Jeremy Martin announced that this policy document is “under review.”

The physical assaults against trans people, gay men, lesbians and bisexuals must end. Unfortunately, this goal will be impossible to reach until the Democratic and Republican politicians, the Vatican, the fundamentalist right-wing Protestant hierarchy, the Pentagon and the other powerful bastions of homophobic/homophobic reaction stop promulgating bigotry against LGBT people and stop sending signals to the youth, in particular, that LGBT people are less than equal and deserving of scorn. □

## Stonewall, night 3: 'The battle was on'

By Leslie Feinberg

Sunday, June 29, saw a lull between battles, although many cops were patrolling the streets of the Village, hurling slurs at those milling on the corners and sidewalks, reportedly trying to egg on skirmishes.

As thousands of gays and lesbians—drawing to their leadership and ranks people of color, trans people, street youths—had waged pitched battles with the cops on Friday and Saturday during the early nights of the Stonewall Uprising, a fault line of political difference opened visibly wide between those who had the least to lose and the most to gain from fighting back, and those who favored not rocking the boat.

The tony crowd soaking up a little sun in the Hamptons and Fire Island Pines either ignored news of the rebellion or, as historian Martin Duberman noted, tended to condemn it as “regrettable.”

The Mattachine Society had posted a

sign on the Stonewall Inn reading, “We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the streets of the Village.” Mattachine-New York, according to historian David Carter, “after talking to the mayor's office and the police, joined police efforts to stop the protests. ... Mattachine officials came to the Stonewall Inn and talked to people who showed up in an attempt to discourage them from protesting.”

This was a far cry from the early days of the first Mattachine in California at the height of the Cold War 1950s, when communists and other revolutionaries led grassroots organizing to confront widespread police entrapment and brutality against gay men and the Chican@/Mexican@ communities.

However, a bodacious group of gay youths descended on the Sixth Precinct and plastered the police cruisers, a police arrest van, and the personal cars of police

officers with luminescent fuchsia and blue bumper stickers demanding “Equality for Homosexuals.”

Throughout the Village, teams made up of one male and one female passed out leaflets issued by the Homophile Youth Movement that demanded, “Get the Mafia and the Cops Out of Gay Bars.”

Assessments of the changed mood of the LGBT population on Christopher Street were voiced from two antithetical directions.

Deputy Inspector Pine, who led the initial raid on the Stonewall Inn, made a remark insulting those who showed individual courage, defiance and resistance in the face of police arrest and imprisonment, beatings and torture. Nevertheless, his words documented a dramatic overall shift in mass mood in the LGBT population: “For those of us in public morals [sic], things were completely changed ... suddenly they were not submissive any more.”

Gay male poet Allen Ginsberg visited the Stonewall Inn on Sunday night with Village Voice reporter Lucian Truscott. His later observation to Truscott contains a word that inflicts wounds when used by an anti-gay bigot. Yet speaking about his

own community with tender pride, he wrote about the sea change he witnessed. “You know, the guys there were so beautiful—they've lost that wounded look that fags all had 10 years ago.”

### Rage still smoldering

David Carter assembled the following firsthand accounts of incidents on Monday through Wednesday from participants.

Monday and Tuesday nights were mostly quiet in the Village, as rain soaked the streets.

Police who tried to pick fights, however, were met with bold responses.

When one arrogant cop at Christopher Street and Waverly twirled his nightstick and hurled insults in the direction of passersby, an individual described as a “wildly ‘fem’ queen” lit the fuse of a firecracker and detonated it under his feet. The cop landed on his ass on the sidewalk.

The cop shouted and flailed with his club. When the same militant individual tossed another firecracker at him, the crowd fought with the cop and was able to snatch his badge off his uniform.

On Wednesday night, widespread street fighting resumed.

*Continued on page 15*



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





LOS ANGELES

WW PHOTO: BOB MCCUBBIN

## National days of protest demand

# 'U.S. OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!'

By Monica Moorehead  
New York

The numbers varied from town to town and city to city, but the main message was very loud and politically clear. Progressive and anti-imperialist forces came out into the streets over the Aug. 4-6 weekend to demand "No justice, no peace—U.S. out of the Middle East"—not tomorrow or next week, but right now.

The national days of protest were called in response to the inhumane war that the U.S.-backed Israeli regime has unleashed upon the people of Lebanon since July 12. More than 1,000 Lebanese—overwhelmingly civilians—have been slaughtered as the terrorist Israeli Defense Forces continue to carry out deadly air strikes against cities and towns throughout Lebanon.

At the same time, the IDF continues to kill Palestinians in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank. Elected Hamas officials are being detained by the Zionist state.

### DETROIT

More than 2,000 people marched through downtown Detroit Aug. 4 in solidarity with the peoples of Lebanon and Palestine and against Israeli military aggression. The Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice (MECAWI) organized the march, with the support of the Lebanese and Palestinian communities of metro Detroit.

It was the first demonstration on Lebanon held outside

the Arab-American community, which is located in Dearborn, a suburb of Detroit. MECAWI organizers felt it was important to march through downtown Detroit to illustrate the widespread sentiment in the region for ending Israeli aggression and giving support to the liberation of Palestine and the sovereignty of Lebanon.

### NEW YORK

Engulfed within a sea of Lebanese and Palestinian flags, more than 5,000 people rallied in Times Square on Aug. 5 and then marched to the General Electric headquarters in Manhattan. GE is a major producer of war munitions being used by the IDF to attack Lebanon. The protest, initiated by the Troops Out Now Coalition and the International Action Center, attracted a significant number of young militants from the Palestinian, Lebanese and other Arab communities, along with other oppressed and working class communities. The speakers represented many struggles in the U.S., including the continuing plight of Katrina evacuees, as well as more than a dozen countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. All connected their issues to the Middle East crisis. Admiration for the courage of Hezbollah and Hamas was expressed in many languages, including Arabic.

### LOS ANGELES

On Aug. 5 more than 1,000 people gathered at the Westwood Federal Building. Their tone was militant, with Palestinian women expressing their anger and outrage by leading the crowd with defiant chants against Israel. Some young Lebanese women had painted their faces like the flag of Lebanon.

Police at first tried to deny the protesters the right to march on the street. But rally organizers, backed up by the crowd, forced the police to open up the entire street for a march to the offices of Occidental Petroleum.

Javier Rodriguez, representing the March 25th Coalition, spoke on the connections between supporting the immigrant rights movement and the struggle

against U.S. imperialism and Israeli apartheid. Jefferson Azevedo of the IAC urged all participants to attend the Aug. 12th demonstration initiated by the National Council of Arab Americans, ANSWER-LA and other organizations.

### PHILADELPHIA

A march of 200 Muslims, Jews, Lebanese, Palestinians and U.S. anti-war activists calling for an end to U.S. funding and support for Israel's war on Lebanon and Palestine gathered at the Federal Building Aug. 4 and then wound through Old City, stopping outside the right-wing Fox News station.

Speakers denounced corporations, including Lockheed Martin and Boeing, that profit from war as well as the media that demonizes the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance and hides the full extent of U.S. involvement in the war. Signs called for an immediate cease fire and pointed out that while Israelis may pull the triggers, it's the U.S. that pulls the strings.

The protest was organized by a coalition that included the Philadelphia IAC, Sustain, Jewish Voices for Peace, Socialist Action, Suburban Greens, the Greater Camden Unity Coalition and CAIR-Philly.

### BOSTON

More than 300 marched through the heart of the Boston shopping district Aug. 5 to demand an immediate cease fire to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and to proclaim support for the heroic resistance of Hezbollah.

Ahmad Kawash of the Palestine American Congress stated: "Hamas and Hezbollah have brought dignity and valor in fighting back against the fourth-biggest army in the world. Israel calls the murder of 1,000 in Lebanon and 300 in Gaza 'self-defense.' Israeli aggression shows how desperate the Zionist entity is. It must be eliminated." The protest began with a rally at the Israeli Consulate in Boston, and was called by IAC Boston.

### Other cities

In CLEVELAND, the People's Fightback Center held a noon protest outside a busy open-air market. Activists from the Cleveland Nonviolence Network and World Can't Wait participated. A PFC spokesperson told the press that funds being used to arm Israel "should be used for good paying jobs, for health care, and to help those in Lake County who lost everything in the recent floods."

In ROCHESTER, N.Y., a regional demonstration at the Federal Building was sponsored by the Buffalo and Rochester chapters of the International Action Center, Rochester Committee for Peace and the Rochester International

*Continued on page 9*



DETROIT

WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH



RALEIGH



ROCHESTER



CHARLOTTE

PHOTO, LEFT: RALEIGH FIST; WW PHOTO, ABOVE: ELLIE DORRITTE; PHOTO, RIGHT: OSSAMA-BIANOUNI





# World protests condemn U.S.-Israeli aggression

## Widespread solidarity with Lebanese resistance

By John Catalinotto

Somewhere between 1 and 2 million people protested on six continents on Aug. 4-6 in what became an international solidarity weekend to end U.S.-Israeli aggression against Lebanon and Gaza.

The demonstrations reflected the growing awareness of the U.S.-Israeli role in planning the war and showed that the success of the heroic resistance in Lebanon in stopping the formerly "invincible" Israeli Army has brought a major change to the region.

Some of the largest and most militant demonstrations took place in the region between **Indonesia** and **Morocco**, where the majority of the world's Muslims live. Many, but not all, were called by Muslim organizations. Protests were reported in the Indonesian cities of **Jakarta, Surabaya** and **Yogyakarta**, as well as in **Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt** and **Tanzania**. The Lebanese diaspora in Ghana and Togo in sub-Saharan Africa also came out.

Leftist and nationalist parties organized protests in **Turkey, Tunisia** and in **Morocco**, where hundreds of thousands marched in Casablanca under Hezbollah banners waving Lebanese and Palestinian flags.

Major protests were also held in **Capetown**, South Africa.

In Western Europe, 100,000 marched in **London** and 10,000 in **Brussels**, where NATO has its headquarters. There were also protests in **Madrid** and **Barcelona** in the Spanish state, some French cities, **Heidelberg** and **Berlin** in Germany, and **Vienna**, Austria.

In Latin America, about 4,000 marched in both **São Paulo**, Brazil, and in **Mexico City, Puerto Rico, Colombia** and **Argentina** also had demonstrations. Some 60,000, including many from the Lebanese diaspora, marched in **Montreal, Québec**, and thousands more in **Ottawa**, Canada's capital.

Demonstrations took place in cities across the U.S. (see accompanying article) and in **Australia**. These were supported by left-wing political parties, trade unions, the anti-war movements and the Lebanese and Arab diasporas.



### 'March of a million' in Baghdad

Most protests numbered in the thousands or tens of thousands. But in **Baghdad**, a giant crowd came out, called by the Mahdi Army, a Shi'ite organization that is part of the puppet government but has been a target of U.S. hostility. "Today, a million people joined together to support the resistance in Lebanon, which the Israelis have been unable to succeed in invading for the last 22 days," said Hazem al-Aarji, representing Moqtada al-Sadr, leader of the Mahdi Army.

The demonstrations throughout the mostly Muslim region, or where the Arab diaspora played the leading role, showed the following political characteristics:

- Complete solidarity with the resistance in Lebanon and Palestine and especially identification with Hezbollah after it was able to stop the Israeli advance and inflict casualties on the Israeli military.

- Recognition of the leading colonialist role of the U.S. government in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan. Some protests even targeted the U.S. as the main enemy and Israel as its agent.

- Mass anger at governments of Arab countries—like the Gulf states, Jordan, Egypt and Pakistan—that are closely identified with U.S. policies. These governments' betrayals raise the possibility of struggles inside some of these countries against U.S. client regimes.

- An attempt to join different elements of the struggle for national liberation in the common struggle. This meant a conscious effort to unite Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims. There was also a sign of cooperation in some of the countries of the Islamic forces with secular nationalist groups and communists at the protests in solidarity with the Lebanese resistance.

### Message from Bahrain

A report in Arab News on the protest in **Bahrain** on Aug. 5 gave a sense of some of these political developments:

"Hundreds of Sunnis and Shiites marched in **Muharraq**, the northernmost island of the Bahrain archipelago that served as the capital until 1923, chanting 'Death to Israel, Death to America' as they waved Lebanese, Palestinian, Iraqi and Bahraini flags.

"The protesters also carried pictures of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and the late founder and spiritual leader of [the mostly Sunni] Hamas, Sheik Ahmad Yassin, in a sign of unity of support for all resistance groups.

"It was the

first time that protesters came out in support of Hezbollah in Muharraq, which in recent months has witnessed demonstrations in support of Sunni resistance groups in Iraq and Palestine. [This] was a clear indication of the unity of the people in facing the aggression directed at the Islamic nation."

A spokesperson for the demonstration said: "Hezbollah is leading the resistance in Lebanon, but there are other Lebanese groups involved in the fight. In Palestine Hamas is leading the resistance but other groups are involved because this is an issue that concerns all the people." He also said that Arab governments were "no longer influential in determining the outcome or end of this ongoing conflict."

Another speaker said that fatwas—statements from religious leaders—intended to divide Sunni and Shia forces are "daggers in the back of the nation," and that the U.S. and Israel "had dug their own grave by picking this fight."

The protests in Europe, North America and Australia emphasized the massacres

of Lebanese civilians, especially the children, and demanded an immediate end to the Israeli invasion and its bombing and shelling of Lebanon, naming both Washington and Tel Aviv as the criminals.

George W. Bush is trying to demonize Hezbollah, slandering them as "Islamofascists" in an Aug. 7 news conference. And the German city of Berlin has outlawed carrying a poster of Nasrallah or Hezbollah flags at anti-war demonstrations. This makes it all the more important for anti-imperialists in these countries to urge solidarity with the national liberation movements in the Middle East, whether they are represented by religious, secular nationalist, or pro-socialist forces.

Within the Zionist state itself, between 5,000 and 10,000 people, from both the Arab and Jewish communities, demonstrated in **Tel Aviv**, showing a significant break in the alleged 95-percent support for the aggression. Already some Israeli military reservists have refused callups. One of the slogans shouted was, "We shall not die nor kill in the service of the USA!" □

# Islam, Malcolm X and right to self-determination

By Larry Hales

Hezbollah and Hamas, both Islamic organizations, play leading roles in the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance movements, respectively. The Israeli settler government has tried to break both organizations, as they have increasingly taken up the mantle of the resistance to U.S. imperialism.

In the face of mounting aggression to attempt to stamp out the will and determination of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples, Hezbollah and Hamas have increasingly come under fire, including being labeled as "terrorists."

Unfortunately, the role of Islam in the struggle against imperialism confuses some in the progressive movement, but it shouldn't. The struggle of oppressed peoples for self-determination can and has emerged in different forms, including religious ones, and is best judged by the oppressed, not by ideologues from the oppressor nation.

If one would take, for example, the contributions of Malcolm X to the struggle of Black people in the U.S. for sovereignty and dignity, it would be difficult, perhaps contemptible and disingenuous, to leave out the fact that he was a Muslim and emerged from an Islamic movement.

Malcolm X did split from the Nation of Islam after being silenced by Elijah Muhammad. His main reason for leaving the NOI was because he was moving in another political direction. Malcolm began to develop a broader, internation-

alist view of seeing the worldwide struggle as one involving the oppressor against the oppressed.

This development does not negate the fact that he first became politicized through the Nation of Islam, which helped him and many others turn their lives around. The existence of the NOI cannot be divorced historically from the overall Black freedom struggle.

### Nation of Islam, then and now

The Nation of Islam grew substantially in size and influence after Malcolm became a minister and a national spokesperson. His brother recruited him while Malcolm was in prison. The Nation of Islam provided hope for many in the Black community, through providing assistance to people in prison, addicts and alcoholics and many who had been beaten down by the ravages of racism and capitalism. It also developed schools, provided jobs and defended its communities from racist attacks from the police and the government.

The Nation, before and during the height of the Black liberation movement, explicitly argued for a separate Black nation. Today, this demand has manifested itself with, for instance, Minister Louis Farrakhan stating at the Millions More March last October that Black people have the right to govern themselves and have their own secretaries of education, defense, health, etc.

The fact that the Nation of Islam has raised separatism shows that, ever since



## National days of protest demand

# 'U.S. OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST!'

Continued from page 7

Socialist Organization, along with other activists throughout western New York.

The youth group FIST—Fight Imperialism, Stand Together—organized a protest outside the State Capitol building in RALEIGH, N.C. The protest included members of the Muslim-American Public Affairs Committee, Triangle Lebanese Association and Jews for Just Peace.

Activists rallied at South Park in CHARLOTTE, N.C., and then marched to Congressperson Sue Myrick's office. The rally was sponsored by the Action Center for Justice, Al-Awda Charlotte, and the Islamic Political Party of America.

The SAN FRANCISCO chapter of the International Action Center held a speak-out/outreach day of protest at Federal Plaza. Leaflets explaining the root cause of the Middle East crisis were handed out while representatives of the IAC, World Can't Wait, Workers World Party, Freedom Socialist Party, Revolutionary Communist Party and others gave talks.

In CHICAGO, activists held a street meeting on State Street and passed out an educational leaflet to a mostly young crowd attending a concert in Grant Park. The Chicago Coalition against War and Racism has called for an emergency demonstration at the Israeli Consulate on Aug. 7.

Other actions were held in NEW HAVEN, Conn.; KINGSTON, N.Y.; MINNEAPOLIS and other cities. Many of the rallies organized support for the important national demonstrations happening Aug. 12 in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and San Francisco, initiated by the National Council of Arab Americans and ANSWER.



NEW YORK

Contributors to this round-up include Abayomi Azikiwe, editor, Pan-African News Wire; David Dixon, Ellie Dorritie, Martha Grevatt, Joan Marquardt, John Parker, Lou Paulsen, Betsey Piette, Gerry Scoppettuolo and Dante Strobino.



Katrina evacuees surround labor activist, Brenda Stokely, as she speaks at Times Square rally Aug. 5.

WW PHOTOS: MONICA MOOREHEAD

From death row, Mumia Abu-Jamal on

## No more Middle East wars

Following are excerpts from a taped message played at the Aug. 5 anti-war rally in New York and other cities.

What a joy to join the many forces saying, "No justice, no peace. U.S. out of the Middle East." It's refreshing to hear some sanity when we discuss this region and the bloodletting that we see every day there.

The U.S. has given its green light to Tel Aviv to let loose the dogs of war and let loose they have; not since the illegal, murderous U.S. bombing of Baghdad have we seen such tonnage unleashed upon a civilian population.

What's really amazing is that so soon after Americans awoke to the long train of lies that led to Iraq, they are again bombarded with lies to justify the disaster being unleashed upon Lebanon.

Once again, Americans have to catch up to the rest of the world, who recognize the cynical sham of the U.S. sending so-called peace envoys who oppose cease-fires. It is a sign of our degeneration that in 50 years, we've gone from Ralph Bunche to Condoleezza Rice.

Israel is fighting a proxy war on behalf of its U.S. paymasters to intimidate and cow Arab nations.

Once again, America is on the wrong side of history. The U.S. isn't on the side of democracy but the side of right-wing theocracies. Simple human justice should put us all on the side of the oppressed, the dispossessed, the wretched of this embattled earth. That means on the side of the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance. That means also calling for the end of the occupation of Palestine, Lebanon and yes, Iraq. I'm proud to endorse the International Action Center in their call. On the move. Long live John Africa. From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

To hear Mumia Abu-Jamal's audio columns, go to [www.prisonradio.org](http://www.prisonradio.org). □

## the nation

Malcolm X played a prominent role in the anti-racist, anti-imperialist movement.

the compromise after the Civil War between the Northern capitalists

and the Southern aristocratic former slave owners to end Reconstruction—thereby killing what had been the beginning of a bourgeois democratic revolution in the South after the Civil War—there is serious concern that Black people in the U.S. are still treated as second-class citizens.

One need only look at what happened during and after Hurricane Katrina to Black people on the Gulf Coast to understand that concern.



PHILADELPHIA

WW PHOTO, ABOVE: BERTA JOUBERT-CECI

If an oppressed nation decides to separate itself from its oppressor, then Marxists/Leninists must support in every way that form of self-determination. The era of Malcolm X when he was in the Nation, followed after his death by that of the Black Panthers, was second in this respect only to the time of Marcus Garvey, who advocated for the right to return to Africa.

The great Russian revolutionary, V.I. Lenin, said of self-determination, "Consequently, if we want to grasp the meaning of self-determination of nations, not by juggling with legal definitions, or 'inventing' abstract definitions, but by examining the historico-economic conditions of the national movements, we must inevitably reach the conclusion that the self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, and the formation of an independent national state."

No matter how self-determination is expressed by an oppressed nation—be it separation, federation, autonomy or integration—this is a right that should be supported by progressives and revolutionaries within the oppressor nations. To show this kind of concrete solidarity would be a qualitative leap forward in forging class unity.

To bring up Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam is important in relation to the situation developing in the Arab world because a sector of the Islamic movement is increasingly militant and anti-imperialist. □



BOSTON

WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN



## 'We are all Hezbollah now'

# New Mideast unity backs Lebanon's fighters

By Joyce Chediak

The U.S.-Israeli slaughter of Lebanese people and destruction of the Lebanese infrastructure has badly backfired for imperialism and all its agents in the Middle East. A new spirit of struggle is rising in the region, targeting all the oppressors in that area.

After decades of U.S., French and Israeli attempts to divide them, today the population of Lebanon stands united in a way not seen since the 1970s. From Christians to Sunnis to Shias, from urbane Beirut to rural farmers, "We are all Hezbollah now!" is the mood of the day.

"We are all Hezbollah" is also heard in the streets from Yemen to Saudi Arabia to Egypt. Support for the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance has turned to anger against Arab regimes that have stood by and let this happen.

The "wheels of change may already be churning in the Middle East as the rift between official government policies and popular sentiment on the 'Arab street' becomes increasingly evident," reported the Arab news service Al-Jazeera on Aug. 3. (english.aljazeera.net)

BBC correspondent Hugh Sykes wrote on Aug. 5 from Beirut that when Israel started bombing that city, people kept saying to him, "We are not Hezbollah—why are they bombing our homes?" But that has changed. Now people tell Sykes: "We were never Hezbollah. But we are all Hezbollah now. The Israeli response is completely unjustified."

Sykes continued: "I don't think 'But we are all Hezbollah now' is just talk. ... There is a sense that now is the time for unity in the face of Israel."

### Southern refugees embraced

According to Al-Jazeera of July 31, "Thousands of Lebanese have reached across the sectarian and religious divide to



Hezbollah recruits in Beirut.

WN/AHMED DEEB

help hundreds of thousands of mostly Shia refugees fleeing Israel's bombardment in the south."

In one East Beirut district, refugees found sanctuary in a school in an area dominated for decades by the Christian Lebanese Forces, an ultra-right wing group. "Locals from the area have accepted the presence of the newcomers and some have even embraced them," continued Al-Jazeera.

"We feel their reaction has been very positive. They have brought us things like milk for the children. I feel like I am home," said Ali Hassan, who fled the Haret Hreik area in the southern suburb of Beirut.

"We have been expecting something different because of the political differences in Lebanon. But here I found that we are all Lebanese and I found a spirit of humanity. If you leave the politicians out of this, then we are all unified," said Mohammad Kafani, a refugee at the school.

In West Beirut, Fatima Hachem, who works with the refugee help group Samidoun, said: "Everyone was expecting to have some problems between Sunni and Shia. But a lot of Sunni people have been cooking food and taking it to the refugees. We didn't expect this to happen."

Faced with widespread shortages of food, oil products and other necessities, many Lebanese are taking pride in helping each other.

Even the impoverished Rashidieh Palestinian refugee camp near the city of Tyre fed and sheltered 82 families who had fled villages near the Israeli border. Ghada Ajawi, a Palestinian refugee from Rashidieh, said, "You feel with them more than anybody because we understand what they have been through."

In further signs of unity, key Sunni religious figures have issued edicts, binding to the faithful, backing the mostly Shia-based Lebanese resistance. Qatar-based Sheik Youssef el-Qaradaawi, one of Sunni Islam's most prominent religious scholars, called support for Lebanon's fighters the "religious duty of every Moslem."

Defying his own government's position, Egyptian Gran Mufti Ali Gomaa's edict defended Hezbollah, calling its strikes on Israel "defense of its country and not terrorism."

### Anger turns against U.S.-client regimes

For decades, Israel has attacked neighboring countries at will. Now, from Tehran to Cairo, the oppressed watch, electrified and proud, as a small Lebanese people's militia inflicts more punishment on Israel in a month than hundreds of thousands of regular Arab troops have in over 50 years. In Cairo, protesters praised the Lebanese resistance leader with shouts of, "Tell Nasrallah we are all Hezbollah."

Regimes like those in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which originally condemned Hezbollah and were praised for it by the U.S. and Israel, are now isolated from

their people. Mustapha Bakri, a member of Egypt's People's Assembly, told Al-Jazeera, "The Arab regimes have been exposed to their populations as the epitome of subservience and followers to their American masters." He added that "relations between Arab leaders and their peoples now stand at the edge of total estrangement."

"Hezbollah's potency and their ability to bombard Israel's cities and their capacity to withstand Israel's onslaught for the first time in Arab-Israeli conflicts, led the Arab people rallying to their cause while divorcing their governments," political writer Mahmud Kalil told the Arab news service.

Take Egypt, for instance, a nation of 70 million people, the lynchpin of U.S. policy in the area and the first regime to sign a separate peace with Israel. What did the Egyptians get out of it? Today 23 percent live below the poverty line, almost half cannot read and write, and infant mortality is 60.46 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to 6.3 in the U.S.

In the past, demonstrations against Israel aggression, when permitted at all, have served as a safety valve for the Egyptian government, taking attention away from conditions at home.

Today, however, demonstrations in Cairo supporting the Lebanese and Palestinians are not just chanting "Long live your struggle, Lebanon," but also, "Down, down with Mubarak!" referring to the Egyptian president. (New York Times, Aug. 6)

"The regular man on the street is beginning to connect everything together," said Kamal Khalil, director of the Center for Socialist Studies in Cairo. "The regime impairing his livelihood is the same regime that is oppressing his freedom and the same regime that is colluding with Zionism and American hegemony."

According to Gasser Abdel Razek, a board member of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, "Everything making people angry is coming out."

The New York Times report on the situation in Egypt concludes: "People look at Lebanon and complain about gas prices. They look at Lebanon and complain about government corruption. They even used Lebanon to attack the government's efforts to control the political message delivered by imams across the country." □

## Oakland police spied on anti-war, labor groups

Continued from page 5

reported that police shot at demonstrators and onlookers—including dockworkers—with wooden bullets, "beanbags" and concussion grenades. Scores were wounded, many in the back.

In response to the unprovoked police brutality, many angry longshore workers walked off the job.

At a demonstration the following month, on May 12, police violence against the protesters caused broken bones and other serious injuries. This is well-documented in eyewitness and photographic detail. A subsequent lawsuit brought against the City of Oakland by injured anti-war protesters and dockworkers on their way to their jobs was settled for about \$2 million.

Months after the demonstrations, to add further insult to these injuries, Oakland Deputy Police Chief Howard Jordan was quoted in a transcript from the city police review panel saying that "our ability to gather intelligence on these groups and this type of operation needs to be improved." And he added:

"I don't mean same-day intelligence. I'm talking about long-term intelligence gathering."

On the same day the ACLU report became public, ILWU member Jack

Heyman, a participant in the May 17, 2003, Port of Oakland anti-war protest, issued a statement that read in part: "The trade union movement, and particularly the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, has faced this kind of 'iron heel' policy from the government during the 1934 San Francisco General Strike and during witch hunts of the now-infamous McCarthy period.

"Since Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. government, under the rubric of fighting the 'war on terror,' has ratcheted up port security measures, threatening to occupy the docks with troops in all ports of the West Coast during 2002 longshore contract negotiations.

"In 2003, at the start of the Iraq war, anti-war protesters in the Port of Oakland and longshoremen going to work at marine terminals were shot with 'non-lethal' weapons.

"But it will take more than monetary settlements or new laws to defend our civil liberties during this climate of fear and pork-barrel funding for 'homeland security,'" Heyman concluded. "Defending our democratic rights means exercising those rights in mass demonstrations. That's how civil rights were won in this country and the Vietnam War was stopped." □



# How a failed policy led to even greater failure

By Fred Goldstein

The conventional wisdom in the capitalist media concerning the immediate origin of the conflict in Lebanon is that the Iranian government instigated military action by Hezbollah against the Israeli army in order to shift the focus of international attention away from Tehran's determination to develop nuclear power.

This interpretation of events by capitalist propagandists and politicians, seeking to set the stage for future aggression against Iran, actually turns reality into its mirror opposite.

The fact is that the immediate origin of the bloody assault on Lebanon is the U.S. government conspiracy with its Israeli clients to open a savage attack on Hezbollah in order to divert the focus of U.S. and world attention away from the descending fortunes of the Bush administration.

Bush hoped a quick and resounding victory by the U.S.-supplied Israeli military would reverse the sagging fortunes of the phony "war on terrorism." The Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld group is on the verge of being among the most discredited imperialist administrations in the past century.

Bush's poll numbers before the invasion of Lebanon were the lowest of any sitting president in many decades. His presidency has been defined by the U.S. quagmire in Iraq.

Bush is increasingly discredited within the ruling-class establishment for undermining the fortunes of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East and beyond. And he is discredited among the masses for dragging them into an unending war, costing hundreds of billions of dollars, in which unspeakable war crimes are coming to light day after day.

The Iraq debacle is the central disaster in what is a broader regional failure of the imperialist policy of conquest in the Middle East and Central Asia.

The Bush administration carried out its preemptive warfare against Iraq and Afghanistan under the twin slogans of the "war against terrorism" and the export of "democracy."

Here is a summary of the results of Bush's "accomplishments" in the region.

After 9/11, the Bush administration had given then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon full backing to destroy the Palestinian Authority. And Washington wanted to use an election to maneuver a more pliable Palestinian leadership into position. However, this backfired on the U.S. when instead Hamas was elected, winning a genuine democratic victory on the basis of being the party of resistance to the occupiers.

Washington also tried to isolate Hezbollah in Lebanon. But in its first parliamentary participation in 2005, the popular mass-based movement won 35 out of 128 seats in parliament and brought two of its ministers into the coalition government.

The Bush group has organized the European imperialists to try to intimidate the Iranian government and force it to abandon its sovereign right to develop nuclear power. However, each threat and act of intimidation so far has met with a rebuff from Tehran.

Washington has faced mass resistance on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan, Washington has just dragged NATO into taking over the defense of the puppet government in Kabul against a growing resistance. The

U.S. was losing soldiers there on an increasing basis and needs them for Iraq.

Just before the war on Lebanon was launched, the U.S. military was losing more and more control in Iraq. The Pentagon had to backtrack on earlier announcements of troop reductions and actually increase troop levels and shift more soldiers into Baghdad.

Washington failed to topple the Syrian government. It also failed to overturn the Iranian government, which Bush had branded as part of the "axis of evil," and which had been targeted by the U.S. for regime change. The Iranian government grew stronger among its population, based upon standing up for national sovereignty against U.S. government threats.

In each case, U.S. policy resulted in bringing about the opposite of its goals.

In short, just before the invasion of Lebanon, the broad strategic thrust upon which Bush based his presidency—the conquest of the Middle East, under the slogan of the "war against terrorism"—was collapsing on every front.

These failures are underneath the sudden unleashing of massive military violence against Hezbollah and Lebanon by the Israeli military. They also account for the coordinated, aggressive and stubborn campaign by the Bush administration to impose—on the entire imperialist camp and on the moderate Arab governments—an iron veto in the UN Security Council against a cease-fire or any political or military conditions unfavorable to Tel Aviv.

## This is Bush's war

This war is a Bush administration war. Bush is banking on Israeli forces being able to crush Hezbollah. He is demanding it. He is trying to openly take credit for it. This is a way of trying to recover from a continuous series of defeats at the hands of popular anti-imperialist resistance. The aggression against Lebanon is an extension of the war against Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. It is also meant as a threat to Iran and Syria.

The Israelis are willing executors in this scheme. They have long planned out the military side of the attack with the full, detailed knowledge of Washington. The July 21 San Francisco Chronicle quoted Gerald Steinberg, professor of political science at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, as saying, "Of all Israel's wars since 1948, this was the one for which Israel was most prepared."

Steinberg explained that, "By 2004, the military campaign scheduled to last about three weeks that we're seeing now had already been blocked out and, in the last year or two, it's been simulated and rehearsed across the board."

The Chronicle article reported: "More than a year ago, a senior Israeli army officer began giving PowerPoint presentations, on an off-the-record basis, to U.S. and other diplomats, journalists and think-tanks, setting out the plan for the current operation in revealing detail."

The "three-week campaign" was supposed to consist of two weeks of bombing and one week of ground forces to finish things off. Washington was fully apprised of the plan of attack in detail.

The planning of the attack coincided with the U.S. government campaign against Hezbollah—officially codified in United Nations resolution 1559 in September 2004. That resolution called for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the disarmament of

Hezbollah. Washington engineered the so-called "Cedar Revolution" to pressure Syrian troops to get out of Lebanon.

This was important, not just to reduce Syrian influence, but to get Syrian troops off Lebanese territory so that if war were to be unleashed against Hezbollah, it would not lead to immediate combat with Syrian troops and a possible full-scale war on two fronts.

The idea that Israel destroyed the infrastructure of Lebanon, killed and wounded thousands of civilians and displaced a million people—more than one-fourth of the Lebanese population—because Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers is preposterous on its face.

Since 2000, when the Israelis were driven out of Lebanon, the Israeli military has been provoking along that border and Hezbollah has been responding.

George Monbiot, writing in the Aug. 8 Guardian of Britain, cited reports from the United Nations Interim Force (Unifil) saying that before the war Israeli aircraft crossed into Lebanese airspace "persistently" and "caused great concern to the civilian population, particularly low-altitude flights that break the sound barrier over populated areas."

Monbiot cites numerous instances of border clashes between Israeli military and Hezbollah, including capturing and killing of soldiers on either side, shelling by the Israelis and the launching of rockets by Hezbollah.

As recently as May 26, two Islamic Jihad officials were killed by a car bomb in Sidon, Lebanon. The bomb was planted by the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad and Hezbollah launched rockets into Israel in response. There were clashes on the border but no major escalation.

What's clear is that the July 12 massive escalation against Lebanon by Tel Aviv was a premeditated, planned sneak attack. Furthermore, the Bush administration instantaneously came out backing Israel's "right to self-defense." Bush immediately declared the Israeli attack to be a necessary part of the "war on terrorism."

U.S. diplomats let it be known that they were going to give the Israelis four to six weeks to carry out their campaign of aggression. (Goldstein, "Israeli terrorists bomb Lebanon," Workers World, July 20)

## Shattered myth of Israeli invincibility

The current Iraq War is an historic turning point in that it reveals the vulnerability of U.S. imperialism when confronted by a popular resistance.

In the same way, the U.S.-backed Israeli assault is an historic turning point in the struggle in the Middle East because the resistance of Hezbollah and the Lebanese masses to its onslaught has shattered the myth of the invincibility of the Israeli state.

During the 24 years since the occupation of Lebanon by the Israelis in 1982, the Lebanese masses—spearheaded by Hezbollah—have perfected the methods of resistance. They have mastered the technical aspects of guerrilla warfare and have obtained arms for their struggle.

Now the Israeli military has to fight desperately for every hilltop, every village and every inch of its advance. In 1982, it took the Israelis just two days to arrive within 10 miles of Beirut. Now, after 24 days, they are still fighting desperate skirmishes with guerrilla fighters near the southern border.

And instead of the war in Lebanon res-

Bush hoped a quick and resounding victory by the U.S.-supplied Israeli military would reverse the sagging fortunes of the phony 'war on terrorism.' The Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld group is on the verge of being among the most discredited imperialist administrations in the past century.

cuing its failing policy, the Bush administration is facing another disaster.

Just as the Bush group followed the advice of those who said Iraq would be a "cakewalk," they listened to the Zionist generals who promised to dispatch Hezbollah in short order if given the go-ahead and the necessary political and diplomatic protection.

Now U.S. imperialism has come out front and center on the world stage—not just as the passive supplier of weapons to Israel and a behind-the-scenes strategist, but as the open advocate and defender of the massacre in Lebanon by Tel Aviv. This is a new development.

Instead of hiding behind the scenes, the Bush group has openly run interference for the Israelis and championed their cause while the whole world watches aghast at the ruthless massacre of Lebanese civilians—in basements, cars, hospitals, farms, ambulances—wherever Israeli bombs can reach.

Yet after all this carnage—and being out front to enable it politically, military and diplomatically—the U.S. has still not achieved its only real objective: the destruction of Hezbollah. In fact, from a political point of view, Washington and Tel Aviv have defeated themselves. Hezbollah has gained widespread popularity in Lebanon, in the Arab world, throughout the Middle East and beyond. At the same time, the U.S. government has gained equally widespread hatred as the patron of the Israeli occupation government.

It is now clear to the world that the bombing of Lebanon is linked to the aggression in Gaza and the U.S. occupation and torture in Iraq and Afghanistan. And this linkage will further undermine the fortunes of Wall Street and Washington throughout the world. The U.S. is understood to be the architect of it all.

The united front of the entire U.S. capitalist establishment, in trying to justify and defend the Israeli aggression, can no longer cover up the crimes of Tel Aviv. They are there for everyone to see every day on the television screen.

For the first time in history, the Israeli client settler state has failed to fully accomplish the mission assigned to it by U.S. imperialism. When the smoke clears, Wall Street may have to reevaluate its relationship to a settler state that is becoming more and more historically nonviable.

Charles Krauthammer, a right-wing columnist, put things quite bluntly in the Aug. 4 Washington Post: "America's green light for Israel to defend itself is seen as a favor to Israel. But that is a tendentious, misleadingly partial analysis. The green light—indeed, the encouragement—is also an act of clear self-interest.

*Continued to page 14*

# Lebanese fight on amid hail of bombs

Continued from page 1

recorded deaths—a third of them children—because rescue workers are no longer able to reach most bombed sites. There is no count of the thousands of lives lost due to extreme stress, lack of needed medicines or unsanitary water.

On Aug. 6—the anniversary of the U.S. dropping an atomic weapon on Hiroshima—the independent Israeli Committee for a Middle East Free from Atomic, Biological & Chemical Weapons issued a report about the many bunker-busting bombs—GBU-28—Israel has received from the Pentagon. The report states that the bombs contain depleted uranium, which spreads toxic and radioactive dust.

Most of the population now lacks basic supplies. Fuel is so scarce that even generators rarely function. The bombing of oil storage tanks near the coast has created an environmental disaster—beaches, estuaries and the water supply are contaminated with oil. Electricity, sanitation and garbage pick-up have disappeared. Social service organizations, humanitarian organizations and hospitals are overwhelmed.

More than 25 percent of the population—a million people—is homeless. Refugees are packed into schools, mosques, city parks and along highways.

## Hezbollah unites national resistance

The national resistance led and organized by Hezbollah has dealt continuing blows to the Israeli army. The Israeli military, once considered invincible in its armored tanks, has been slowed, diverted and even held back by the anti-tank weapons of the resistance.

Even though Hezbollah lacks rockets with the precision or the enormous destructive power of U.S.-supplied Israeli bombs, it still has the capacity to fire more than a 100 a day, shutting down the northern third of Israel.

Hezbollah has spent years organizing and training many thousands of people in military tactics. It also paid great attention to the social and economic needs of the poorest segments of society.



The well-constructed maze of tunnels and bunkers has enabled the highly organized, small units of Hezbollah and other resistance groups to conduct numerous ambushes.

Every tank that is destroyed, every helicopter gunship that is shot down sends the message that Israel is not invincible.

In past invasions, Israel was able to draw support from the most conservative and privileged segments of Lebanese society—even establishing a fascist army of collaborators. French colonialism, U.S. and Israeli policies have all reinforced the centuries-old divisions of Lebanon into rigid religious, ethnic and political groups.

But this time, the massive destruction Israel has inflicted—and the organized military resistance and political mobilization to meet it—has united Lebanon against Israel and against the U.S.

As the Israeli military strategy has failed, Tel Aviv finds itself in a crisis similar to the U.S. quagmire in Iraq. The whole Middle East is electrified by seeing that a popular mobilization of the people is a powerful weapon. Throughout the entire region, Washington's full support for the war has overwhelmingly united and hardened popular opinion against

U.S. imperialism.

## Charges of war crimes

Three Jewish Moroccans have submitted to the High Court in Rabat a document charging Moroccan-born Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz with war crimes.

The leftist activist Abraham Tsarfati, author Amran al-Malich and human rights official Zion Asidon charge that Peretz should be tried in Morocco due to his dual Moroccan/Israeli citizenship. They explain, "Moroccan law allows the trial of any Moroccan national who has committed war crimes in or out of the country."

Defense Minister Peretz's role exposes the bankruptcy of liberal Zionists—in a crisis they are Zionists first. Peretz is a former Peace Now activist and head of the Zionist Trade Union Organization, Histadrut. His election as head of the Israeli Labor Party was heralded in Israel, and even by some progressives in the U.S., as a sign of big changes.

Yet the Labor Party has been part of the Israeli government, together with the Likud Party, for most of the six years of the Palestinian Intifada. The role of the Labor Party in Israel is similar to that of the Democratic Party in U.S. imperialist politics.

The massive proof of Israeli war crimes and the blatant U.S. support for these crimes has outraged even those who would usually remain silent.

Israel has targeted clearly marked Red Cross ambulances, refugee convoys, a bomb shelter in Qana, hospitals and the entire civilian infrastructure. UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon David Shearer warned that, "The deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure is a violation of international law."

The Guardian of Britain reported on Aug. 8 that Israel "has threatened to attack UN peacekeepers if they attempted to repair bomb-damaged bridges in Southern Lebanon."

## Planning & preparation for war

Israel's invasion and all-out assault on Lebanon and its massive attack on Palestinians in Gaza were not the result of the capture of a single Israeli soldier by Hamas in Gaza, nor of Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border.

These soldiers were captured to press for a prisoner exchange of the more than 10,000 prisoners held by Israel. There have been relentless Israeli attacks on both areas for years and there have been resistance actions by both organizations, and other Palestinian and Lebanese forces.

The July 21 San Francisco Chronicle explained: "Israel's military response by air, land and sea to what it considered a provocation last week by Hezbollah militants is unfolding according to a plan finalized more than a year ago."

A Washington Post article on July 16 was entitled, "Strikes Are Called Part of Broad Strategy: U.S., Israel Aim to Weaken Hezbollah, Region's Militants."

## UN resolutions for a cease-fire

After resisting calls for a cease-fire when Israel first started its bombing campaign, the U.S., together with France, has now put forward a "cease-fire resolution" in the UN Security Council that is in reality a plan to formalize the Israeli occupation and reinforce it with an international military force.

It calls for disarming Hezbollah but not the Israeli military. It does not even call for an Israeli troop withdrawal from Lebanon. Israeli forces would actually remain until a future resolution put an international force in their place.

The resolution allows Israel to continue its offensive military operations "for defensive purposes."

Jonathan Cooke, a journalist based in Nazareth, noted in an Aug. 7 Znet article that Hebrew Language media said the plan was drafted with "close Israeli involvement."

Washington, which is behind Israel all the way, has blocked all previous international calls for a cease-fire. The resolution is strictly a ploy by the imperialists to come up with a plan that Hezbollah cannot accept.

## Danger of wider war

As Israel expands the war, and moves deeper into Lebanon, the danger of wider war grows.

Israeli war planes bombed the Syrian border town of al-Qaa on Aug. 5, killing 33 Syrian farm workers and Lebanese civilians and wounding 14. In two letters to the UN, Syria demanded a full UN investigation of the massacres of civilians at al-Qaa and at the bomb shelter at Qana, in Lebanon.

The Israeli media is reporting that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told a meeting of 50 government spokespeople on Aug. 7, "Our enemy is not Hezbollah, but Iran, which employs Hezbollah as its agent."

With the U.S. war in Iraq more unwinnable with each passing day, and a powerful resistance in Lebanon, the threat grows that the Bush administration will push to widen the war. Large sections of the anti-war movement in the West have historically supported the state of Israel, which marches in lockstep with U.S. imperialism's aims in the Middle East. These latest assaults on the Lebanese and Palestinian people show that it is just not possible to be for Israel and still be anti-war.

The Arab and Muslim people of the entire region are under fierce and widening attack. They are waging a heroic resistance.

What is needed now is international solidarity that recognizes the justice of their cause. □

# PATCO

Continued from page 4

Controllers Organization Inc., affiliated with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO.

Strikes are schools of class war. They have to be planned carefully well in advance. As capitalism continues to rob workers of the value of their labor power, strikes can rise to the level of general strikes and sit-ins, as they did in the 1930s. Or they can fall, as they did in recent years, to a low level.

There are also many forms of struggle—economic and political—other than strikes.

The most favorable time for workers to prepare strike strategy is in a period of rapid capitalist accumulation and before the cycle of recession sets in. This current economic phase, which is producing unprecedented wealth for the few at the expense of the many, can provide the conditions for reviving the militancy of labor both at the bargaining table and on the picket lines.

Here is one perspective for a broad-based struggle—organized, independent, multi-national and class-wide—needed to reverse the 25-year decline that began with the PATCO defeat. □

**DEMAND**  
**Accountability**  
**for**  
**U.S. / ISRAELI**  
**WAR CRIMES**

**HEAR THE CHARGES**  
**AUGUST 30**  
**Wednesday 6–9 pm**  
United Nations Church Center  
777 UN Plaza · 44 St & 1st Ave

**in Lebanon**  
**and Palestine**

For more information contact the International Action Center, 55 W. 17th St, #5C, NY, NY 100 212-633-6646 [www.iaicenter.org](http://www.iaicenter.org) [www.PeopleJudgeBush.org](http://www.PeopleJudgeBush.org)



# The health of Fidel and Cuba

By Teresa Gutierrez

An aide to the president of Cuba addressed the Cuban people on national television July 31 to announce that President Fidel Castro had temporarily relinquished his government responsibilities.

Due to a severe intestinal problem that led to bleeding, Cuba's president had to undergo surgery. According to President Fidel Castro's statement, the surgery came on the heels of intense work and several trips—including one to Argentina—which brought on great stress.

For the first time since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, Fidel—as he is affectionately referred to in Cuba and around the world—had to hand over his responsibilities to the first vice president of the country, Raúl Castro. This is in accordance with Cuba's constitution.

All reports indicate that President Fidel is doing well. But he must take the time to rest and heal in order to carry out his work.

Fidel turns 80 on Aug. 13. The birthday celebrations planned by the Ecuadorian solidarity movement were rescheduled for Dec. 2, marking the 50th anniversary of the historic landing of the Granma ship in Cuba, which launched Fidel's guerrilla war against the U.S.-backed Batista regime.

As soon as the news of Fidel's illness was made public, the Bush administration issued hostile and dangerous statements in yet another example of U.S. imperialism's long-standing desire to overturn the Cuban Revolution. It is this desire matched with persistent deeds that lead to the danger for the Revolution from imperialism. This danger is not rhetoric or fantasy.

## U.S. presidents get boos, Fidel gets cheers

When revolutionaries and Cuba supporters around the world heard that President Fidel had taken ill, they were immediately concerned and anxious. This is a leader who is loved and respected not only in his country, but in every nation on the globe.

Fidel is the only leader who can get a standing ovation anywhere.

So it is no surprise that messages of support and wishes to get well were sent to Fidel from around the world. Those sending messages included Gabriel García Márquez; Bolivian President Evo Morales; the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia; General Secretary Hu Jintao of the Chinese Communist Party; Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez; and Brazilian President Lula da Silva, as well as countless activists and leaders.

Of special note were messages from the Cuban Five—Cuban political prisoners held in the U.S. for trying to defend their island country by monitoring CIA-backed

right-wing terrorists in Miami.

From the U.S. government, there is quite another tone. The health issue of Cuba's president is being used as a pretext for turning up an anti-Cuba tirade that is very dangerous. Indeed, Cuba's leaders have warned that Fidel's health is a major security issue for the island.

Imperialism can easily use the current situation as a pretext for intervention.

For example, in clear violation of Cuba's sovereignty, White House spokesperson Tony Snow on Aug. 1, just one day after Cuba's announcement, stated: "The one thing that [President George W. Bush] has talked about from the very beginning is his hope for the Cuban people finally to enjoy the fruits of freedom and democracy. For the dictator, Fidel Castro, to hand off power to his brother, who's been the prison keeper, is not a change in that status. Raúl Castro's attempt to impose himself on the Cuban people is much the same as what his brother did. So, no, there are no plans to reach out. The one thing we want to do is to continue to assure the people of Cuba that we stand ready to help."

The actions of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ratcheted up the danger of U.S. intervention even more. According to news accounts, the secretary of state warned Cuba that Fidel must not be replaced by "a new dictator." Rice urged Cubans to "stay on the island amid the political turmoil."

She said on Meet the Press, which aired on Aug. 6: "This is a transition period for the Cuban people. We are going to stand with them for the proposition that there should not simply be the end of one dictatorship and the imposition of another dictatorship."

## A travesty of justice

# Cuban Five still in jail, one year after court ruling

Last August, a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court unanimously overturned the convictions of the Cuban Five: Ramón Labañino, René González, Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández and Antonio Guerrero. The Aug. 9, 2005, ruling stated that a fair trial had been impossible in Miami.

A year later, the Cuban Five are still behind bars, awaiting some action in their case.

While CIA-backed commandos who have carried out terrorist acts against Cuba remain free, the Cuban Five—who had defended their country by monitor-

"The United States really feels very strongly and we've worked to tell the Cuban people that their future is at home. And, no, a mass exodus is not to be expected, nor would it be condoned," Rice said. "What the United States has been giving is a message to the Cuban people that change is clearly underway. The United States stands clearly with people who want a more democratic future."

Earlier, on Aug. 4, Rice—via U.S.-funded Radio Marti and TV Marti—called on "the world community" to press for "multi-party elections amid uncertainty over Castro's fate." She told Cubans, "We will stand with you to secure your rights—to speak as you choose, to think as you please, to worship as you wish and to choose your leaders, freely and fairly, in democratic elections."

The Miami Herald of Aug. 7 reported that broadcasts to Cuba through TV Marti and Radio Marti have increased to six times a week. Radio Marti began in 1985 and TV Marti in 1990 in violation of Cuba's sovereignty and international law. Radio Marti and TV Marti are tools used by the right wing in this country to spew anti-Fidel and counter-revolutionary messages.

The climate of hostility emanating from Washington has the solidarity movement on alert. In the last few days an international letter titled, "The sovereignty of Cuba must be respected," has circulated around the world. It has been signed by such notables as José Saramago, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Desmond Tutu, Rigoberta Menchú, Nadine Gordimer, Noam Chomsky, Harry Belafonte, Mario Benedetti, Ignacio Ramonet, Danny Glover, Eduardo Galeano, Russell Banks, Alice Walker and Ramsey Clark.

The statement reads in part: "As a result of the communication of Fidel Castro on his state of health and the provisional delegation of his responsibilities, high-ranking U.S. officials have formulated more explicit statements about the immediate future of Cuba. The Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez said that 'the moment has arrived for a true transition towards a true democracy ...'"

"Already the 'Commission for Assistance to a free Cuba,' presided over by the Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, pointed out in a report issued[in] June 'the urgency of working today to ensure that the Castro regime's succession strategy does not succeed' and President Bush indicated that this document 'demonstrates that we are actively working for change in Cuba, not simply waiting for change.'"

The statement concludes: "The Department of State has emphasized that the plan includes measures that will remain secret 'for reasons of national security' and to assure its 'effective implementation.' It is not difficult to imagine the character of such measures and the 'announced assistance' if one considers the militarization of the foreign policy of the present American administration and its performance in Iraq."

"In front of this increasing threat against the integrity of a nation, and the peace and the security of Latin America and the world, we the signatories listed below demand that the government of the United States respect the sovereignty of Cuba. We must prevent a new aggression at all costs."

To sign on to this statement, visit [www.porcuba.org](http://www.porcuba.org) or email [soberania@porcuba.org](mailto:soberania@porcuba.org). □

died in that plane bombing. The Cuban Five risked their lives to infiltrate these terrorist organizations, determined it should never happen again.

Organizing materials for the month of protests, including the video "Mission Against Terror," are available through the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five ([www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org)), other affiliate organizations of the National Network on Cuba ([www.cubasolidarity.com](http://www.cubasolidarity.com)), left-books.com, or a Workers World Party branch near you.

—Cheryl LaBash

# Cuban in U.S. jail says, 'Millions love Fidel'

*Granma International of Havana on Aug. 4 published the following transcript of a conversation with Antonio Guerrero, one of the imprisoned Cuban Five, on the health of President Fidel Castro.*

I am calling to reiterate what our brother Gerardo has already said in the name of the Five.

I wrote a letter to the Comandante for his 80th birthday which included a drawing that I did for him using the technique I am currently working on. Then, the Proclamation [on his surgery—WW] was announced, Gerardo sent a message for us all, because what each of us does



Antonio Guerrero

comes from all the Five, as is also the one that Ramón sent.

But here you hear outrageous things and feel the need to communicate with Cuba, to say over and over again to our people what our brothers have said. Therefore I want to reiterate that we have been very concerned, as are all our people, over the health of our Comandante, but at the same time we have the most absolute conviction that he will recover and rise up once again as he knows how, and that we know he is there

and will always be there.

and will always be there.

At a time like this, we redouble our strength. I know that all Cubans are like this, demonstrating that our people, our Revolution and our socialism will be eternal and that we will always be guided by Fidel's ideas and principles.

As to the festivities in Miami, we all know their origins, those who are behind that circus; we also know that that is mafia business, because behind it there is no kind of sentiment; there is money and there is hatred. And behind those little groups of youth who are shouting in chorus, there is manipulation and a great emptiness, a great mediocrity, a spiritual poverty that is shocking.

In the face of that, what is important is that there are many, many more of us who love Fidel, that there are millions who love Fidel both inside and outside of Cuba, around the world, this world where every day we see so many terrible things that are profoundly saddening.

I am fine, in this battle of mine to create something new every day and maintain communication with friends and brothers and sisters from all over the world. And of course, like all of Cuba, I will celebrate Aug. 13 in the solitude of my cell, but in the company of the millions who share my sentiments, wishing our invincible Comandante en Jefe good health and a speedy recovery on his 80th birthday. □



## WWP on U.S.-Israeli terror

*Continued from page 1*

four weeks of continuous Israeli bombing, close to a thousand Lebanese have been killed, thousands are wounded, and over a million people, more than a quarter of the population, have been displaced by the terror campaign of the Israeli generals, which is fully supported, supplied and re-supplied by Washington.

The Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld group was trying to compensate for the disaster in Iraq by getting what they thought would be a quick victory in their phony, so-called "war on terrorism." They conspired with the Israeli government to open up the offensive using any pretext. In this case, it was the killing of three Israeli soldiers and the capture of two others in an action by Hezbollah. The scale of the Israeli aggression that followed makes it clear that Washington and Tel Aviv were simply lying in wait to attack.

But the planners in the Pentagon and the generals in Tel Aviv made the same mistake with Lebanon as Washington did with Iraq. They wildly underestimated the ability and willingness of the masses to resist. There is no quick victory. There have been four weeks of resistance and an end to the myth of Israeli invincibility. The Bush administration has tied Washington openly to Israeli aggression, almost as if it had sent in U.S. troops. The whole world can see it.

The campaign to vilify Hezbollah and Hamas is in full swing. For sending rockets into Israel, they are condemned as "terrorists" by the real terrorists, who have unloaded thousands of tons of U.S.-made bombs and flown thousands of bombing missions against the people and infrastructure of Lebanon and Palestine.

Bush and the Israelis accuse Hezbollah of "starting it first." But this conflict was first started when the Zionists, backed by imperialism, decided to drive the Palestinian people off their land in 1948 and set up a racist settler state that would become a virtual forward base for the Pentagon in the Middle East and serve as a protector of the fabulous oil wealth owned or controlled by the U.S. oil companies.

In any case, regardless of who struck the first blow in the present conflict, anti-imperialists, especially Marxists, take their stand based not on who started a particular struggle but on who is fighting on the side of imperialism, on the side of the giant transnational monopolies, and is trying to impose national oppression, and who is fighting against it. All resistance of oppressed peoples is ultimately rooted in defense against super-exploitation.

In this regard the U.S.-British-Israeli propaganda machine is trying to make this a struggle against "Islamic fundamentalism," which is devoted to destroying "Western civilization." But anti-

imperialist forces must look beneath ideology and focus on what social forces are in combat in any particular struggle in order to determine how to take sides.

In the case of the war in Lebanon, Hezbollah has rallied the forces fighting against Zionist expansionism. Hezbollah fought Israeli occupation for 18 years and defeated the occupation. That is its crime in the eyes of imperialism.

Hamas has been steadfast in refusing to recognize the right of occupation and in demanding the national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return. That is its crime in the eyes of imperialism.

Bush and the U.S. ruling class have no problem with the extreme fundamentalism of the Saudi royal monarchy because it has been a tool of the U.S. oil companies since the 1940s. The feudo-bourgeois royal families of the oil states in the Middle East are subordinates of imperialism. The Islamic fundamentalism of the counter-revolutionaries who overthrew the socialist government of Afghanistan in the early 1990s did not bother the CIA, who funded them.

Some in the anti-war movement, even some who call themselves Marxists, have separated themselves from Hezbollah and Hamas, have even attacked them when they are under fire, on the grounds of ideology, because they are religious. This is a complete violation of principled anti-imperialism and Marxism.

Ideological differences should not stand in the way of uniting against imperialism in the living mass struggle. Breaking unity at a time when U.S. imperialism and the Israeli ruling class want to extinguish the forces of resistance is an abandonment of internationalist duty. One cannot in reality be on the side of the oppressed in general while opposing their actual, living struggle and the organizations that are carrying out that struggle.

As Israeli bombs fall on cities, towns and villages, the would-be rulers of Lebanon in Washington are engaged in dragged-out negotiations with the former colonialist rulers of Lebanon in Paris to jointly impose an imperialist settlement on the country through the UN Security Council. They are scheming to destroy the anti-imperialist resistance of Hezbollah, which is under attack by the true terrorists in Washington and Tel Aviv, not for its religion, not for its tactics, but for its justified resistance to U.S.-backed Zionist aggression and occupation.

Long live international proletarian solidarity! Long live the heroic resistance of oppressed peoples everywhere!

*Signed by WWP Secretariat:  
Teresa Gutierrez, Sara Flounders,  
Larry Holmes, Monica Moorehead,  
Deirdre Griswold and Fred Goldstein.*

### MARXISM, REPARATIONS & THE BLACK FREEDOM STRUGGLE

With articles on racism, national oppression & the right to self-determination; Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery; reparations & Black liberation and much, much more by Larry Holmes, Sam Marcy, Monica Moorehead, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Bill Cecil, Consuela Lee and Pat Chin. Edited by Monica Moorehead.

Order online at [www.Leftbooks.com](http://www.Leftbooks.com)



## In memoriam GIL BANKS Harlem labor leader

By Sue Davis

**GIL BANKS**—African-American organizer/activist, Harlem labor leader, historian, researcher, linguist, surveyor, trumpet player and Pan-African revolutionary—accomplished so much in his 80 years.

Chief among his varied accomplishments was that he inspired and motivated others of all nationalities to join the struggle against racism, inequality, poverty, imperialist war and all forms of injustice.

"For many, many years Gil Banks was the main organizer at Harlem FightBack, and a leader in the struggle to break down the racism in the construction industry and get jobs for Black and Latin@ workers at construction sites throughout New York and beyond," Larry Holmes, leader of the anti-imperialist Troops Out Now Coalition in New York City, told Workers World.

"Gil's legacy is that he was defiantly in the front ranks of militant and fearless fighters who brought the fight for jobs and economic justice into the civil rights and Black liberation movement," Holmes concluded.

Banks, an ex-GI, founded BAND—Blacks Against Negative Dying—to oppose the racist, imperialist U.S. war against Vietnam. In the early 1960s, Eddie Oquendo joined the Brooklyn chapter of the Congress on Racial Equality, where he met Banks and soon became a member of BAND. Oquendo was motivated to defy the draft and spent 26 months in federal prison, between 1968 and 1970, rather than fight a war of aggression against other people of color.

Oquendo told Workers World, "Gil continues to inspire me every day of my life."

A heartfelt, overflow memorial service for Banks on July 15 was ably led by anti-imperialist labor leader Brenda Stokely.

Wing Lam of the Chinese Workers Association told a moving story about



how Banks had wholeheartedly responded when the CWA needed help organizing restaurant workers in Chinatown. Lam paid tribute to Banks' willingness to share and to teach all he knew to help CWA and said Banks' guidance helped win the struggle.

Others who paid tribute to Banks included Jim Horton, president of Harlem FightBack, who detailed his dedication and commitment to the struggle for economic justice for Black and Latin@ workers.

Doris Turner, former president of Service Employees Local 1199, acknowledged Banks' many contributions to organized labor in New York City for more than three decades.

Playthell Benjamin, head of Radio Free Africa on commercial-free WBAI, lauded Banks' research into African history and culture, his political analysis of Africa as the cradle of civilization, and his critical analysis of the writings of Black nationalists.

Many speakers referred to Banks as a Renaissance figure.

As the program noted: "Gilbert Banks was a free thinker, a true revolutionary. He was an educator, studied African history and was passionate about sharing knowledge. He was an indomitable spirit and was ahead of his time. He was known in Harlem as the new Frederick Douglass." □

## How a failed policy led to even greater failure

*Continued from page 11*

America wants, America needs, a decisive Hezbollah defeat."

This was "Israel's rare opportunity to demonstrate what it can do for its great American patron," Krauthammer concluded. "The United States has gone far out on a limb to allow Israel to win and for all this to happen. It has counted on Israel's ability to do the job. It has been disappointed."

### Danger of wider war

The most dangerous prospect, should U.S. imperialism be unable to impose its will in Lebanon, is that another failure will lead the Bush group into even larger adventures in an attempt to recoup the losses for the U.S. ruling class. In particular, failure in Lebanon increases the danger of an attack on Syria or Iran.

According to an Aug. 3 article posted on salon.com by Sidney Blumenthal, "Inside the administration, neoconservatives on Vice President Dick Cheney's national security staff and Elliott Abrams, the neo-

conservative senior director for the Near East on the National Security Council, are prime movers in sharing NSA intelligence with Israel, and they have discussed Syrian and Iranian supply activities as a potential pretext for Israeli bombing of both countries ..."

Blumenthal described how right-wing militarists within the Bush administration are talking about a "cleansing war" which "somehow will redeem Bush's beleaguered policy in the entire region."

The entire capitalist political establishment in the U.S.—Republicans and Democrats alike—are cheering on the aggression by the Israelis and vilifying Hezbollah and its defense of Lebanon. Each party vies to sound more warlike.

Under these circumstances, the anti-war movement must use its resources to reach out and mobilize in this country in order to defend the self-determination of the Lebanese, Palestinian, Iraqi and Afghan peoples, and to stay the hand of U.S. imperialist aggression against Syria and Iran. □

*Special trial subscription for anti-war protesters—4 free issues  
Call 212-627-2994 or order on line at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org)*



## No business as usual

# Mexican sit-ins demand vote recount

By LeiLani Dowell

Aug. 8—Throughout Mexico, the movement for social justice continues to take to the streets to press its demands.

Supporters of presidential candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador took over tollbooths throughout Mexico City on Aug. 8, preventing federal officials from charging tolls on the highways into the city, and blockaded the agricultural ministry, preventing employees from entering. (Reuters)

The actions were in response to a court ruling that dismissed a full recount of ballots from the July 2 presidential election, in which what appears to be massive fraud led to the victory of the big-business candidate Felipe Calderón over López Obrador by a margin of less than one percentage point.

Protesters have occupied the Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City's main thoroughfare, for nearly five miles since July 30. The 47 encampments have stalled traffic along a street containing government offices, the U.S. Embassy and luxury downtown hotels, with business in the area claiming losses of millions of dollars. They have also blocked the entrance to Mexico's stock market.

López Obrador, who campaigned under the slogan "For the good of all, the poor first" and led in opinion polls for the majority of the last two years, made a public call for "mega sit-ins" when he spoke during what is being considered the largest public demonstration in Mexico's history—some 2 million people on July 30. He himself has participated in the sit-ins, sleeping in tents with throngs of protesters in conditions of torrential cold rain and even scattered snowstorms.

Participants include families, people taking their vacations to spend their days at the camp, and people who return from work to sleep there at night. The highly organized encampments include kitchens every few hundred yards, portable toilets, handicrafts and classes for the children, live music and movies at night. (Los Angeles Times)

López Obrador has argued that there were counting errors in at least 72,000 polling places and evidence of fraud in some 600. Examples of fraud and errors include: Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) findings that 2,366 polling places had observers only from Calderón's National Action Party (PAN); ballot boxes were dumped in Mexico City, a stronghold of López Obrador's Democratic Revolution

Party (PRD); there were polling sites in PAN-dominated areas where the number of votes exceeded the number of registered voters; and sealed ballot packets were found opened at IFE offices in several PAN-dominated regions. (altnet.org)

The Federal Electoral Judicial Tribunal on Aug. 5 refused the demand of López Obrador and his supporters for a full recount, limiting the recount of ballots to those from 11,839 of the 130,400 national polling places—just 9 percent of polling places—to occur over five days beginning Aug. 9. The tribunal also ruled that the recount is to be conducted by the IFE, which López Obrador has accused of rigging computers to guarantee a Calderón victory. The announcement was made by Chief Magistrate Leonel Castillo, who told Milenio magazine a month before the elections that the court would reject any request for a recount. (Washington Post, July 25)

Federal legislator Emilio Serrano expressed the sentiments of many following the ruling. "They're putting at risk the peaceful stability of the country. ... We're prepared to die in the fight," he yelled into a bullhorn outside the court. (Washington Post, Aug. 6) At the camps, local councilperson Hipólito Bravo said: "[The tribu-

nal] sold themselves to the right, and now people are very angry. If there is a call for stronger actions, the people will follow." (Los Angeles Times, Aug. 6)

At a rally later that day, López Obrador refused to accept the ruling and urged his supporters to continue their campaign of civil disobedience. He said: "We cannot permit that a group of the privileged continue controlling the government. ... Let's have confidence in ourselves and our people. They might have money and power, but we have the power of the people." (Houston Chronicle, Aug. 6)

The Post speculated: "The conditions are ripe for an escalation of protests. ... In nine days, summer break ends and tens of thousands of college students—known here for quickly mobilizing aggressive protests—will be pouring into the city." (Washington Post, Aug. 6)

### Oaxacan women fight back

Meanwhile, in the state of Oaxaca a group of about 500 women seized a state-run television station on Aug. 1 for six hours in order to broadcast a home video. It showed a violent police raid against teachers encamped in Oaxaca's central plaza to demand a wage increase.

Since the raid on June 14, teachers, unionists and activists have set up a permanent encampment in the plaza, erecting barricades, smashing hotel windows and painting revolutionary slogans on buildings.

According to John Gibler of Znet Magazine, the women are members of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), which was organized after the June 14 raid to demand the resignation of Gov. Ulises Ruiz. Ruiz not only is responsible for sending the 1,000 police to attack the encampment, but has spent millions to move government offices and remodel the historic town square—while the teachers' 26-year-old demand for an increased federal budget in education has gone largely unheeded.

Gibler reports, "At present, Oaxaca remains an occupied city, where thousands of citizens camp out in the streets, blocking access to state government buildings ... and day after day the APPO accelerates the pace of the civil disobedience to force the fall of Ulises Ruiz." (ZNet, Aug. 4) □

## Stonewall, night 3: 'The battle was on'

Continued from page 6

That was the night the Village Voice coverage of the early events in the Stonewall rebellion hit newsstands. Some community members were so enraged by the anti-gay tone of the journalists that they debated torching the Voice's offices that evening.

Carter states, "The second reason that rioting resumed in full force on Wednesday is because various radical Left groups came to protest."

Participant Bob Kohler recalled: "There were more people rioting that could not be easily categorized, and a lot of that had to do with people that came over from other areas. The straight movement moved in heavily that night as a support."

Reports of those of all sexualities who came in support included members of the Black Panther Party, Workers World Party, the Yippies, a group that called itself the Crazies, and other self-identified leftists.

In reality, these were parties and organizations with memberships of diverse sexualities. And many of the LGBT people who fought the cops at Stonewall also self-identified as leftists and revolutionaries.

Struggle erupted around 10 p.m. A chanting crowd, estimated at 500 strong, met a motorcade of police with a shower of bottles.

Police used their nightsticks to beat back the crowd. Eyewitness Ronnie De Brienza described seeing a friend pummeled by police and dragged off to a patrol car under arrest. "This was it," he said. "From nowhere the crowd swelled to an estimated thousand, and the battle was on."

Those who were there that night describe the battle between police and protesters as ferocious. Once again, eyewitnesses explain, it was the most oppressed who led the struggle. Unarmed protesters fought hard and bravely against

police—who were well-protected by equipment and armed to the teeth.

Dick Leitsch, Mattachine-New York leader, observed that night that bodies of Stonewall combatants wounded in battle lay on the streets and sidewalks on Seventh Avenue South between Christopher and West 10th streets.

He concluded: "Young people, many of them queens, were lying on the sidewalk, bleeding from the head, face, mouth, and even the eyes. Others were nursing bruised and often bleeding arms, legs, backs and necks."

Within roughly an hour, the fighting ended. But the battles fought by the most oppressed and most militant layers of the LGBT population paved a new road toward revolutionary struggle.

Next: *Left wing of "gay liberation" at every barricade.*

E-mail: [lfeinberg@workers.org](mailto:lfeinberg@workers.org)

## Angola 3 hearing

# 'Free Herman Wallace!'

Continued from page 3

have recanted their testimony. Eyewitnesses have identified the prisoner, now dead, who they say actually killed the guard. Yet the Louisiana courts have not yet ruled on this evidence.

The Louisiana State Court of Appeals has now ordered an evidentiary hearing into Herman Wallace's charge that the state hid the fact that prison officials paid off the chief witness at his 1974 trial with a pardon of his life sentence and ongoing supplies of cigarettes. That hearing will take place Aug. 15 to 17, if all three days are required.

Longtime Angola 3 lawyer Scott Fleming, explaining the importance of this evidentiary hearing, says Wallace's conviction could be overturned if the state court finds that the state offered favors to the prosecution witness and did not disclose this fact to the defense or the jury,

and that this suppression of evidence could have contributed to his conviction.

This explains the importance of a vigil outside the walls of the prison scheduled for the time of the hearing on Aug. 15. Supporters are alerted, however, to the fact that the location could shift to Baton Rouge, based on a request for change of venue.

At the same time, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that there is merit to a civil lawsuit filed by all of the Angola 3, charging that their years in solitary confinement violate their right to due process and are cruel and unusual punishment. The lawsuit is moving ahead in federal court and could go to trial in the autumn.

For more information, visit [www.Angola3.org](http://www.Angola3.org). Details about the feature-length documentary film on their struggle—"3 Black Panthers & the Last Slave Plantation"—can be found at [3BlackPanthers.com](http://3BlackPanthers.com). □

## MUNDO OBRERO

# El Partido Comunista del Líbano

Continúa de página 16

más son los constructores de la gloria del Líbano, defendiendo su tierra, su soberanía, su unidad y existencia mientras se enfrenta con la maquinaria guerrillera criminal estadounidense-sionista.

Nuestro pueblo libanés: Israel una vez más está tratando de invadir partes de la tierra del Líbano, de destruir a nuestro pueblo, y nuestra civilización.

La resistencia islámica continúa haciendo sacrificios heroicos y logrando victorias heroicas. Nuestro ejército sigue dedicado a pesar de que sus oficiales y soldados fueron la meta de lo que fue virtualmente un cobarde intento de asesinarlos. Ahora el deber de la patria nos llama para unirnos a la lucha de resistencia y enfrentarnos a los invasores y a sus crímenes.

Esta es nuestra obligación como partidos políticos, fuerzas izquierdistas y patrióticas democráticas, personalidades,

y combatientes que una vez jugaron un papel noble defendiendo la patria contra la agresión, quienes hicieron actos de heroísmo en el Frente de Resistencia Nacional Libanés en 1982 y después y que nuestro pueblo recuerda con orgullo y gloria.

Llamamos a nuestra juventud a reavivar esa experiencia, a tomar inspiración de ella, y construir sobre ella, uniéndose a la lucha de resistencia quedándose firmes en sus aldeas y sus pueblos. Los llamamos a armarse y encontrar a las hordas del agresor en defensa de nuestra tierra, de nuestra soberanía, de nuestro pueblo, y de todo lo que sea sagrado para nosotros.

La patria está pasando por una etapa histórica. Nuestro pueblo triunfará, trayendo la aurora de libertad, soberanía, y unidad para nuestra patria y la nación árabe, venciendo y derrotando a aquellos que saquearían, invadirían y ocuparían nuestra patria. □

## Declaración del Partido Mundo Obrero/Workers World

# ¡Alto a la agresión de EEUU-Israel en el Medio Oriente!

## ¡No a la agresión contra las fuerzas de resistencia nacional!

El Partido Mundo Obrero/Workers World condena la agresión israelita respaldada por los Estados Unidos contra el Líbano. El objetivo de esta ofensiva militar es el de aniquilar el movimiento libanés de resistencia nacional dirigido por Hizbolá y establecer la autoridad de un gobierno títere pro imperialista en todo el Líbano.

En cuanto a estos dos objetivos, existe una completa colaboración y unidad de propósito entre Washington y su cliente sionista en Tel Aviv. Hay una unidad y colaboración similar entre la administración de Bush y el régimen israelita de Ehud Olmert en su intento de destruir el gobierno electo de la resistencia nacional palestina dirigida por Hamas por medio del uso de fuerza bruta militar israelita en Gaza y en la Franja Occidental.

Esta colaboración entre el amo súper potencia imperialista en Washington y su perro militar en Tel Aviv está a la vista de todo el mundo. La administración de Bush está usando toda su influencia política y diplomática en la ONU, en la reunión de los G-8 y en todos los círculos políticos, para prevenir un cese al fuego y asegurarse de que nada interfiera con la expansión de la ofensiva de las Fuerzas de Defensa Israelita (FDI) mientras ésta causa muerte y destrucción desde tierra, mar y aire sobre barrios, villas, hospitales, plantas de agua, plantas eléctricas, puentes, plantas de comunicación, etc por todo el Líbano. Cientos han muerto, miles han quedado herid@s, y medio millón han sido desplazad@s de sus hogares en los primeros ocho días de ataques—excepto en aquellas áreas donde los imperialistas y sus aliados de clase viven en sus barrios lujosos de Beirut.

Los llantos y lamentos sobre la lucha por el retorno de los soldados israelitas

capturados, dos en el Líbano y uno en Gaza, en pura hipocresía. Israel tiene más de 9.000 prisioneros palestinos, libaneses y sirios, —hombres, mujeres y niños. Además, este llanto es puro teatro para ocultar esta ofensiva planeada desde hace mucho tiempo por la IDF y aprobada por la Casa Blanca y el Pentágono.

El ataque contra el Líbano es un intento militar para implementar el objetivo mencionado por Estados Unidos e Israel de desarmar a Hizbolá, como quedó escrito en la Resolución 1559 de la ONU respaldada por Estados Unidos. Los ataques brutales actuales sobre Hamas son una continuación de la ofensiva que comenzó cuando Bush calificó a Yasir Arafat como enemigo y dio a Ariel Sharon el visto bueno para destruir la Autoridad Palestina.

A pesar de las decenas de miles de millones de dólares en armamento avanzado suplido por Estados Unidos a la FDI, incluyendo aviones, helicópteros, misiles, tanques y equipos de comunicación de alta tecnología, las fuerzas populares en el Líbano, Gaza y la Franja Occidental han rehusado someterse a los invasores. La brutalidad de los israelitas y la determinación de Hizbolá, Hamas y otros luchadores están llevando a más y más gente al lado de la resistencia. Washington y Tel Aviv han subestimado totalmente la determinación de las fuerzas de liberación y se van aislando cada vez más.

En esta nueva fase de la lucha en el Medio Oriente, la administración de Bush aún no ha aprendido las lecciones de Irak. Una vez más los gobernantes han subestimado el poder de las masas. Los neoconservadores le han dicho a Bush y a Cheney que Irak sería una cosa muy fácil. Pero se han encontrado con un centro de resistencia nacional. Los expansionistas israelitas

le dijeron a Bush que ellos entrarían al campo de guerra y destruirían a Hizbolá y transformarían al Líbano en un fuerte pro imperialista y pro Israel. Pero salió lo contrario y éstos han creado una base de odio no sólo contra los invasores israelitas sino contra sus patrocinadores en Washington.

Los propagandistas en Washington y Tel Aviv están tratando de conseguir el apoyo de sus respectivos pueblos presentando este conflicto como una guerra de los “islámicos fundamentalistas” en contra de la civilización occidental y la “democracia”.

Pero el Islam, como la mayoría de las religiones desarrolladas, tiene varias interpretaciones, énfasis doctrinales y prácticas. Solo los chauvinistas agruparían a todo el mundo que profesa al Islam en una misma categoría.

La monarquía saudita es islámica, al igual que las monarquías kuwaití y jordana. Los colaboradores chiítas en el gobierno títere de Irak son islámicos. Todos éstos son partidarios de los imperialistas.

Pero el Islam también juega el papel de grito unificador para las masas del Medio Oriente y en otros lugares para que empuñen sus armas en contra de Washington y sus agentes en la región. En esa medida, es la forma ideológica cuyo contenido es la lucha contra el imperialismo. Hamas es sunita y Hizbolá es chiíta. Y ambos grupos islámicos están combatiendo contra el imperialismo.

La causa real de la crisis actual es la ocupación por 58 años de Palestina por el estado colonizador de Israel que expulsó al pueblo palestino de su patria, y el establecimiento de Tel Aviv como sirviente del imperialismo, un fuerte militar en la región del Golfo Pérsico rico en petróleo. Rodeado por 200 millones de

personas oprimidas, Israel sirve para proteger las ganancias de las empresas petroleras y los intereses estratégicos del Pentágono. Una y otra vez el gobierno de Israel ha asestado golpes contra los movimientos de liberación o los gobiernos nacionalistas progresistas que amenazaron los intereses de los EEUU en el Medio Oriente. El ataque contra Hizbolá, coordinado con los ataques contra Hamas, es el más reciente acto en la larga senda de agresión israelí auspiciado por los EEUU.

Forma parte de una ofensiva más amplia de parte del gobierno de los EEUU que tiene la meta de reconquistar el Medio Oriente, y que comenzó con la invasión y ocupación de Irak en el 2003. El objetivo es la eliminación de todas las fuerzas anti-imperialistas en la región que obstruyen la dominación completa de Washington y el Pentágono. Eso es lo que está detrás de la ofensiva en Gaza y en el Líbano. Es por eso que la administración de Bush y el gobierno de Olmert están continuamente amenazando a Irán y a Siria.

Mientras el imperialismo de los EEUU y el régimen apartheid de Israel amenacen los pueblos y los gobiernos independientes de la región, no podrá haber paz y estabilidad. Hay una sola solución al problema del Medio Oriente: que los EEUU salga de la región y se rompa el dominio sionista sobre Palestina.

El movimiento tiene que movilizarse para defender a Hizbolá y Hamas y a todas las fuerzas de resistencia nacional contra la agresión de los EEUU e Israel.

¡Alto a la ocupación israelí de Palestina!

¡No a la agresión contra Siria e Irán!

¡Qué se regresen a casa las tropas en Irak ya!

¡EEUU fuera del Medio Oriente! □

‘Llamado para resistir la ocupación sionista y defender nuestra tierra y nuestro pueblo’

## El Partido Comunista del Líbano publicó la siguiente declaración el 29 de julio

Nuestro Pueblo Libanés:

El ejército del enemigo sionista está continuando su agresión contra el Líbano por tercera semana consecutiva. Desde la etapa inicial, esta agresión ha tomado la forma de una guerra depredadora y salvaje. Ni hombre ni piedra están seguros de este infierno llameante, tampoco instituciones humanas y civiles, medios de comunicación, ni infraestructura. La máquina sionista asesina últimamente ha atacado hasta observadores internacionales.

Esta tempestad salvaje que usó de pretexto el secuestro de dos soldados israelíes ha excedido toda respuesta posible en tales circunstancias mientras que busca infligir venganza contra el Líbano y su pueblo en el intento de infligir todo el daño posible al Líbano destruyendo la estructura del mando militar de Hizbolá con las armas

más intensamente destructivas y mortíferas y con los medios más barbáricos y cobardes.

Los EEUU se han revelado como socio vicioso y desvergonzado en esta guerra. Su administración ha proclamado abiertamente que espera ver el “amanecer de un Medio Oriente nuevo”, completando su plan de tomar el control de la región, sus recursos, y los destinos de sus pueblos, un plan que fue lanzado con la invasión americana de Irak hace más de tres años.

Aunque la fuerza aérea, naval y aérea sionista ha continuado matando y destruyendo, han fracasado en lograr sus metas designadas y por eso los sionistas ahora se han visto forzados a lanzar una ofensiva por tierra, lo cuál ellos habían tratado de evitar desde su salida innoble del Líbano en el año 2000.

Ya hace una semana que ellos han estado tratando de avanzar para ocupar tierra libanesa en el distrito de Bint-Jbeil, específicamente la confluencia de Marun ar-Ras, el pueblo de Bint-Jbeil, y la zona que lo rodea. Esos asesinos están tratando de ocupar y profanar nuestra tierra sagrada una vez más, imponer sus condiciones y las condiciones de sus patronos a través de asesinatos, masacres, desplazamientos, y destrucción lo cuál la maquinaria de la guerra sionista supera en términos de criminalidad y salvajismo.

Y como siempre, Washington los está respaldando y apoyando; aún cuando eso quiere decir que tiene que oponerse al mundo entero.

La barbarie de la agresión y las peligrasas metas que se han asignado le imponen serias responsabilidades al pueblo

libanés: el repeler, resistir y frustrar esas metas. Estas también obligan al gobierno libanés a negar la política de complicidad, complacencia, o soñar con la protección estadounidense o “internacional”.

Los Estados Unidos es participante en la agresión y debe ser tratado firmemente teniendo esto en cuenta.

El pueblo y el gobierno deben unirse en la confrontación, tomando todas las posiciones y medidas en cuanto al nivel de política, acción militar, seguridad, y el bienestar del pueblo. A este fin necesitamos un gobierno verdadero de unidad nacional que distinga entre los amigos del Líbano y sus enemigos, revelados por los resultados de la agresión, un gobierno que constituya un verdadero partidario y socio de los héroes de la resistencia que una vez

Continúa a pagina 15