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# A tale of two crises Lebanon rebuilds New Orleans waits

By Joyce Chediak

In the Middle East, after a month of Israeli bombing, the people of Lebanon are digging themselves out from the rubble and struggling to return to their homes. In the United States, a full year after Hurricane Katrina, the people of New Orleans are still fighting to do the same thing: return home.

It might seem odd to compare the two. After all, Lebanon is recovering from war, and New Orleans from a natural disaster and broken levees. But this is only the superficial story. A look at the New Orleans relief effort and its aftermath shows that poor people's right to return home has become just as much a battle there as it is in Lebanon.

In the United States, the New Orleans relief effort was spearheaded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington's disaster relief arm. In Lebanon it is being organized by Hezbollah, the grassroots Lebanese resistance movement that George W. Bush calls "terrorist."

Which group would you want conducting a rescue effort if you lost your home? Let us see how the relief efforts compare.

### The rescues

In New Orleans, the people who could not self-evacuate the city, including the sick and people too poor to afford cars, were left to their own devices when the waters rose. Many of the most vulnerable drowned in their homes.

The tens of thousands of old, sick and infirm people who the city encouraged to gather in the Superdome until the storm passed were left there for five days. They had no medical attention, no sanitation, little water and food. Many died. Some 3,000 other flood survivors stranded at the Convention Center suffered the same fate.

All day the television networks showed footage of people stranded on roofs waving hand-made "help me" signs, and others in the Superdome begging for water and medicine for dying seniors. Yet FEMA head Michael Brown said he didn't realize the extent of the crisis until four days after the levees collapsed. Then he took another four days to rescue the survivors.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah, the force fighting and defending the

### A HUMAN TOLL

There are many similarities between the devastation suffered by the people of New Orleans in the aftermath of Katrina and the devastation suffered by the people of Lebanon after a month of Israeli bombing.

#### DISPLACED PEOPLES:

**In Lebanon**, 800,000 people— one-quarter of the population — were made refugees by Israeli bombing.

**In New Orleans** and nearby areas in Louisiana, 600,000 people became displaced by the flood and broken levees.

#### DEATHS:

**In Lebanon**, 1,500 are believed dead, one-third of them children.

**In Louisiana**, 1,577 lost their lives to the flood,\* disproportionately the old, sick and infirm.

#### THE HARDEST HIT:

**In Lebanon**, Israel bombed to smithereens the southern suburbs of Beirut, and southern Lebanon, home to Lebanon's poorest sector, the Shiites.

**In New Orleans**, hardest hit were the African-American residential communities, especially the impoverished Ninth Ward.

—JC

\* (Times-Picayune, May 19)

villages, at the same time started helping the population as soon as the Israeli bombing began. The Lebanese resistance provided the ambulances and scores of searchers who pulled people from the rubble. They helped organize getting tens of thousands of refugees to schools, public parks and private homes. (Christian Science Monitor, Aug. 16)

In Beirut alone, Hezbollah organized 10 mobile medical teams that cared for 14 schools each, in two-day rotations, helping 48,000 people. Another 70,000 were treated in houses by other professionals.

In a Hezbollah kitchen near downtown Beirut, volunteers pre-

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9TH WARD IN NEW ORLEANS



ISRAELI ASSAULT ON LEBANON

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1942-2006

# Robert McCullough, civil rights organizer

By Kathy Durkin

On Aug. 7, Robert Louis McCullough died at the age of 64 in Rock Hill, S.C., where as an African-American student organizer during the 1960s, he helped to make

Eighteen year-old Robert McCullough

history in a landmark struggle against racism.

McCullough was born and raised in Rock Hill, a textile manufacturing center near Charlotte. In 1957, two years after the historic Montgomery bus boycott, the African-American community carried out the Rock Hill bus boycott, which shut down that city's segregated bus company.

Inspired by the growing movement against racist Jim Crow laws and practices in the South, African-American students held a historic sit-in at the segregated Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, N.C. on February 1, 1960, followed by six months of protests which won desegregated lunch counters there.

The Greensboro actions set off demonstrations all over the South, including in Rock Hill, where Black students marched for a year along that city's Main Street.

Eleven days after the ground-breaking Greensboro action, 100 African-American youth, mainly students at Friendship Junior College, held the first South Carolina sit-ins at Rock Hill's Woolworth's and McCrory's lunch counters, followed by a year-long campaign there.

McCullough helped to organize a key protest in Rock Hill. His fellow student participants appointed him as their leader. As his fellow activist David Williamson explained, "He did all the detail work and made sure everything was in place."

On January 31, 1961, 18-year-old McCullough, along with eight other African-American students from Friendship and one civil rights organizer, sat in at the "whites-only" lunch counter at McCrory's. They demanded service, which they were denied.

Arrested and tried on the official charges of "trespassing" and "breach of peace," these courageous young men were guilty only of seeking justice and an end to racist discrimination.

But these activists brought a new tactic to this struggle. They pledged among themselves to go to jail rather than pay fines or bail, which had been the practice of previous sit-in protestors. When faced with paying a \$100 fine each or 30-day sentences at the York County Prison Farm with forced labor on a chain gang, nine of them went to prison. That they faced imprisonment or fines for fighting for justice was the real crime.

Racist prison officials saw to it that McCullough and seven of his fellow activists served some time in solitary confinement, where they subsisted on bread and water. The jailers were furious that they refused orders to stop singing civil rights songs while daily loading 36 truckloads of dirt on the roadside chain gang.

"This was the first time anyone had served full sentences in the sit-in movement," commented historian Howard Zinn.

The struggle of the Friendship Nine proved to be a vital part of the civil rights movement and inspired many youth.

After their jailing, four Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) organizers went to Rock Hill to be arrested in solidarity with them. They sat in at McCrory's, were arrested and imprisoned. Then 100 activists went to jail in other cities, after similar anti-racist protests.

The "Jail, No Bail" stand taken by the Friendship Nine "made electrifying news" within the civil rights movement, wrote Taylor Branch in "Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63." Besides putting political pressure on the racist power structure, it put financial pressure on them as well. Branch explains that this tactic "obligated the white authorities to pay for [protesters'] jail space and food."

Also significant was the press coverage, particularly in the Baltimore Afro-American Newspaper, and the mass support mobilized for the Friendship Nine. The African-American community organized big, rousing meetings. Picketers lined the street outside McCrory's. SNCC mobilized mass protests bringing African-American students from other cities. Motorcades drove to the prison farm. Protesters even went to Washington, D.C. Picketing continued in Rock Hill for a month after the Nine were released.

Robert Louis McCullough, whom fellow activists described as "our teacher" and called "our general" because of his leadership and strategic skills, left a legacy of struggle and courage. Upon his death, they recalled that he said to them while planning their bold action in 1961, that they were doing it "for all of humanity." They also recalled that at a recent Friendship Nine reunion he said to them, "If we had to do it again, we'd do it again."

The monumental civil rights struggle was marked by great courage, boldness, organization, and untold sacrifices by many. The Friendship Nine were a vital part of that history.

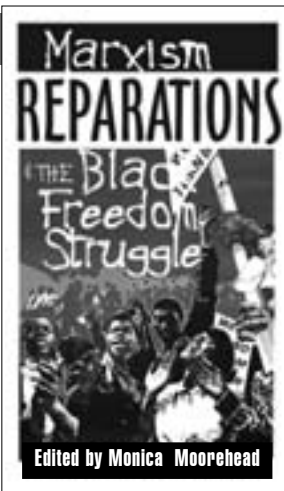
Sources for this article include *Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Timeline at www.crmvet.org*.

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## Part II: Political coverup

# Chicago police tortured prisoners

By Eric Struch  
Chicago

*The report by special investigators Edward Egan and Robert Boyle exposed systematic torture in the Chicago Police Department, but it left the torturers unpunished. Part I of this series described some of the torture and the cops involved. Part II, below, shows how the report helped cover up the role of leading Chicago politicians connected to the case.*

The list of those involved with the conspiracy to protect Jon Burge and his terror squad reads like a who's who of Cook County Democratic Party politics.

LeRoy Martin was Burge's supervisor at Area 2 in 1983 before being promoted as the city's first African American superintendent. As superintendent, Martin received two Office of Professional Standards

(OPS) reports in 1990. One said Andrew Wilson, who had confessed to murder, was indeed tortured. The other detailed the systematic use of torture at Area 2 under the personal direction of Burge.

Martin did absolutely nothing about this for more than a year. Under pressure from the community, he ordered administrative hearings, which finally led to Burge's dismissal in February 1993. Martin is presently the Cook County medical examiner's chief of investigations.

Dick Devine is a prominent "progressive" Democrat in Cook County. He was first assistant state's attorney during now-Mayor Richard M. Daley's tenure as state's attorney, when over 20 people were tortured. Devine joined a private law firm in 1983. He represented Burge in Wilson's 1989 federal civil suit.

With City Hall footing the \$1 million bill, Devine profited handsomely from his

firm's defense of Burge. He became state's attorney in 1996 and has aggressively used his office to fight torture survivors' appeals. Devine is now in his third term. A recent Chicago Reader article said, "[Devine] moved to quash the petition to appoint a special prosecutor despite a clear conflict of interest."

### Gov. Ryan draws cops' wrath

Before clearing death row in 2003, Governor George Ryan pardoned four Burge victims, saying not only that they had been tortured but also that they were innocent, a clear rebuke to Devine and other prosecutors. Devine denounced the pardoned men as "evil."

There is the danger that the report could be used by the Daley forces and the CPD to cast doubt on the torture of Madison Hobley, Stanley Howard and especially Leroy Orange, who received a 2003 pardon from Ryan.

The report is also part of a broader attack on Ryan, his opposition to the death penalty, the death penalty abolition movement and, in a broad sense, all oppressed people. Also, since Ryan took a principled stand against the death penalty that was much more progressive than that taken by any Democrats, it showed there was little significant difference between the two capitalist parties on this issue.

The report will be used to further the prosecution of Prisoner of Conscience Committee Minister of Defense Aaron Patterson, who was tortured by Burge in 1986 and pardoned by Ryan in 2003.

Only three pages of the entire 292-page report contain any mention of Daley's role in the conspiracy of silence. After the report was released, Boyle was pressed by the media to comment upon Daley's role, something he was clearly loathe to do. The best Boyle could come up with was that there was "a bit of a slide" in the State's Attorney's Office during Daley's tenure, and in retrospect, "more hands-on judgment" maybe could have been exercised.

Flynt Taylor, legal counsel for Leroy Orange, said, "The only guy that ever did anything about this torture is the guy who got named" in the report. Taylor was referring to former Police Superintendent Richard Brzeczek. "The only assistant states attorney they're decrying is a Republican," Taylor added, a reference to current Judge William Kunkle.

"Brzeczek at least passed on the information about Burge to Daley, and Daley, as states attorney, did nothing. This paper is nothing but a major effort to deflect blame from where it belongs. The man who should be blamed is Daley," said Taylor.

*Continued on page 5*

## Hidden agenda behind 'civil rights initiative'

By Cheryl LaBash  
Detroit

On Aug. 17, banners hanging from freeway bridges and messages chalked on downtown sidewalks pointed the way to the federal court in downtown Detroit. That's where affirmative action supporters picketed and packed the courtroom in the latest battle to remove Proposal 2 from Michigan's November ballot.

On August 18, in another packed courtroom, U.S. District Judge Arthur Tarnow said he would issue a written ruling before Sept. 8, the deadline for printing ballots for the Nov. 7 election.

Proposal 2, the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, is an attempt to amend the Michigan Constitution to make it illegal for the state and its universities to "discriminate against, or give preferential treatment to" any individual or group on the basis of race, gender, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting. ([www.oneunitedmichigan.org](http://www.oneunitedmichigan.org))

On the surface, this may sound good. However, this deceptively worded and named initiative would not expand but instead weaken civil rights. It will eliminate one of the primary tools for redressing the bloody legacy of slavery, Jim Crow and racism in education and employment for African Americans: affirmative action.

If passed, this initiative will also set back civil rights for Latin@s and women of all races and nationalities.

Today's battle has its roots in the June 2003 U.S. Supreme Court ruling upholding the general affirmative action admissions policy at the University of Michigan Law School while striking down the university's undergraduate admissions formula for awarding admission points if one belonged to an oppressed grouping.

Ward Connerly instigated the challenge to U. of M. admissions policies. Connerly, backed by the ultra right wing, authored the 1998 ban on affirmative action in admissions at the University of California schools causing a 61 percent drop in admissions of African American, Latin@, and Native American students at U.C. Berkeley, and a 36 percent decline at UCLA.

Not content with a partial erosion of affirmative action policies at U. of M.,



One of 50,000 protesters outside the Supreme Court in 2003. Inside affirmative action for students was under attack.

Connerly initiated the statewide petition initiative resulting in Proposal 2.

But this racist move is being fought every step of the way with mobilizations and demonstrations organized by the By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) student coalition.

The Michigan State Board of Canvasers, persuaded by a militant crowd packing their meeting, refused to approve the ballot language and was overridden by the courts. The Michigan Civil Rights Commission found widespread and systematic racially-targeted fraud in the petitioning.

Hundreds of people who signed the petitions or even circulated the petitions based on the intentionally deceptive language have joined the fight to stop Proposal 2 before Election Day.

A very broad-based educational campaign opposing Proposal 2 is underway by One United Michigan and supported by lesbian, gay and transgender organizations, labor, African American, Arab, Asian-Pacific, Latin@ and women's organizations as well as city councils, elected officials and some corporations.

This massive campaign along with the militant mobilizations like the one at the federal court this week will eventually push back the growing tactic by the right wing to advance their agenda by intentionally turning terminology on its head. □

## Cops beat Black youth who joined protest

By Eric Struch  
Chicago

The atmosphere of impunity in the Chicago Police Department that has been reinforced by the release of the whitewash known as the Burge Report has claimed another victim in Cabrini-Green. The cops have decided to pour gasoline on the fire caused by the Aug. 7 shooting of Ellis Woodland, Jr., by the manner in which they carried out the arrest and beating of 17-year-old Maurice Taylor.

After he verbally confronted an officer at a demonstration at the 1160 N. Larrabee police station following the Woodland shooting, the cops targeted Taylor. Pictures of Taylor's confrontation with a smug-looking white cop ran on the front page of the Chicago Defender and the Sun-Times.

Taylor was arrested and taken to the 18th District on Aug. 13 at around 3:00 p.m. Cops grabbed him and threw him up against their car outside a Cabrini-Green CHA building at 365 W. Oak. Taylor's 16-year-old brother Tyreese witnessed his arrest and initial beating, as did other community residents.

Taylor's mother Sherry Taylor said, "I got word that they took my son to Lincoln Park Hospital. ... I called Lincoln Park Hospital and they said that a Maurice Taylor had been brought in by police, treated and taken back into custody by police." LPH refused to give any details about Taylor's injuries or when he was admitted or discharged. He had not yet been charged with anything when he was brought to the hospital.

The chairperson of the Hip-Hop Congress of Cabrini-Green, Willie "J.R." Fleming, said the community feared for Taylor's safety after the photos from the demonstration ran last Aug. 9. Fleming, a witness, said Taylor became angry after being called a "black monkey" by the racist

cop. Cops were overheard threatening to "get" Taylor after the demonstration.

Fleming told the Chicago Defender: "Watch, they will have him charged with criminal trespassing. It's a regular tactic police use up here. First they label you as a gang member, and then wherever you go, they say you're trespassing." Sure enough, the Defender was informed by Officer Kristina Schuler that, "Right now there are misdemeanor trespassing charges, and it is under investigation."

Apparently this "investigation" (probably conducted using the same methods as those described in the Burge Report) alleges that Taylor attacked the cops with a milk crate before his arrest, according to cop spokeswoman Monique Bond, who also claims Taylor received no injuries while in police custody. She attempted to explain away the hospital trip as the result of an asthma attack.

First Defense Legal Aid attorney Diane Aniolaw was able to see Taylor in custody and told his mother that it appeared as if her son had been severely beaten and choked by the cops. Sherry Taylor said: "My son is hurt, and no one will let us see him. My friend went over and tried to see him and told the police that she is his aunt. She said the police told her to get the hell on. I want to see my son, because if he's hurt, I am going to sue them." (Chicago Defender, Aug. 14)

Fleming and others in the community are planning on organizing a community fightback. He said: "I'm not about to sit back and watch them take advantage of our people anymore. This is about land, this is about these white people wanting Cabrini-Green back. They are raising war against us. Well, we're going to raise war back with them through the media and other legal recourse that we have. We're not going to sit back and just take this anymore. There will be an action." □

## ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

### NWA flight attendants set to strike

The federal court overseeing Northwest Airlines' bankruptcy case did not grant an injunction against a strike by NWA's flight attendants. On Aug. 17 the court said it had no authority to block a strike. NWA appealed that decision on Aug. 19.

The 9,300 NWA workers in the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA are threatening to initiate CHAOS as of 9:01 PM CDT on Aug. 25. CHAOS, or Create Havoc Around Our System, is AFA-CWA's trademarked tactic of targeted work actions using random, unannounced strikes. Any unilateral change in a contract triggers a right to strike under the Railway Labor Act.

On July 31, NWA prompted the strike by imposing 21 percent pay cuts and new work rules that the workers have twice rejected. The union calculates that total givebacks in health care and other benefits add up to a more than 40 percent pay cut.

"Today we sent a strong message to corporate America: you cannot keep taking from your employees without a fight," said Mollie Reiley, AFA-CWA Interim Master Executive Council President in an Aug. 17 union press release. "Now Northwest management has one more chance. They have the choice to either set greed aside for once and agree to a fair and equitable contract, or they will face CHAOS. Management needs to reduce their demands and do it in a hurry."

The flight attendants are at the barricades not only for themselves but for all workers whose pay checks are shrinking due to ever-increasing capitalist greed for profits over human needs.

### NWA mechanics on strike for a year

The mechanics, cleaners and custodians at Northwest Airlines went on strike Aug. 20, 2005—a year ago—rather than give in to NWA's demand for a greatly reduced workforce, huge pay cuts and other givebacks.

NWA responded by hiring scab replacement workers at lower wages. After issuing an ultimatum last fall, the company refused to negotiate with the 4,300 trained, experienced workers represented by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association.

On Aug. 15—day 361 of the strike—the AMFA Negotiating Committee met with NWA management to, in its words, "resolve outstanding issues that are of mutual interest to both parties." The struggle continues.

### NYC hotel workers sign contract

Though most hotel workers in New York City represented by UNITE/HERE reached a six-year agreement earlier this year with most hotels, Hilton New York and the Waldorf Astoria refused to sign.

Finally, on July 29, they relented and agreed to the same terms: hourly wage increases of 4 percent a year for the first three years, 3.5 percent for the final three and new rules for health and safety and back pay.

An unusual feature of the agreement included a five-year plan called "Partnership for Future Growth." In it Hilton agreed that UNITE/HERE could organize workers using the card check process at its facilities in other cities.

### UFCW campaign for Smithfield workers

The United Food and Commercial Workers have been trying for more than 12 years to unionize super-oppressed workers—mostly people of color—at Smithfield Foods in Tar Heel, N.C. But the union has been up against a relentless, racist, anti-union foe, which nets \$7 billion annually as the largest hog producer and pork processor in the world.

The company is so blatantly anti-union that recently a federal appeals court ruled against it. The court affirmed a cease-and-desist order issued by the National Labor Relations Board in 2004 that "forbid the company from interfering with, restraining, or coercing its employees in the exercise of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act."

To expose the brutal, crippling working conditions, racist treatment and urgent need for collective bargaining and to kick off a boycott of Smithfield pork products, UFCW, along with other labor and civil rights groups, launched "A Change to Win Week." During the end of August, rallies, supermarket initiatives and church services will kick off in seven Smithfield retail markets, ranging from Boston to Chicago to Atlanta.

A rally and march are scheduled on Aug. 30 in Richmond, Va., where Smithfield top officials and stockholders are holding their annual meeting at the Jefferson Hotel. A call has gone out for union activists and supporters to converge on Richmond to show these greedy bosses that they can't keep robbing, maiming and harassing the workers.

The rally will start at the Cedar Street Baptist Church at 11:30 a.m. and march to the hotel. For more information about the Aug. 30 protest and to download a resolution calling for justice for Smithfield workers, visit the union's website: [www.smithfieldjustice.com](http://www.smithfieldjustice.com). □

# Delphi workers 'negotiating' at gunpoint

By Martha Grevatt

Auto and auto-parts executives gathered in Traverse City, Mich., Aug. 11 for a conference titled "The Auto World Future: Round or Flat?" While these executives no doubt believe that "money makes the world go 'round,'" their real agenda is to flatten the world of wages, pensions and benefits. Urging companies to set up low-wage sweatshops in Asia, American Axle & Manufacturing Inc. CEO Richard Dauch proclaimed, "If you can't handle the medicine, go ahead and die."

The Detroit News reported that "venture capitalists" came to Traverse City "shopping for investment targets in the form of struggling auto parts makers." Bankrupt Delphi was no doubt at the top of their shopping list.

That same day, putting the conference agenda into practice, Delphi executives were back on Wall Street, still pressing to have their union contracts nullified. The hearings were delayed another six days after Delphi restated its bogus intention to reach "a consensual agreement" with the United Auto Workers and the other Delphi unions. As of Aug. 17 the hearings were delayed another month. If Delphi CEO Steve Miller was sincere about wanting to negotiate, wouldn't he withdraw the Section 1113-1114 petitions to trash the contracts outright? He has sort of a "gunboat diplomacy" attitude towards bargaining.

Indeed, what more can (or will) the UAW give up? A two-tier wage structure has been in place for four years, with the lower tier maxing out at over ten dollars per hour less than those hired before

September 2003. Most of the older, upper-tier workers have either taken early retirement buy-outs or "flowed back" to former parent General Motors. That is, they have transferred back and are working directly for GM again. This has left Delphi with a drastically reduced workforce of lower paid workers and the right to run the plants with temporary workers whose wages are even lower and who receive no benefits.

All of these workers worked many hard years at GM before the Delphi spinoff. While GM has agreed to maintain their health-care coverage, these workers' pension credits remain with bankrupt Delphi. "We never agreed to sign away our pensions to Delphi," states Gregg Shotwell, organizer of Soldiers of Solidarity, a group representing Delphi workers that led a heroic in-plant resistance to Delphi's assault. "Our retirement was hijacked." Under these most unfavorable circumstances workers are seeing no alternative to taking these buyouts and hoping for the best.

The situation naturally lends itself to profound demoralization and despair. Yet the workers are not vanquished. While the executives were scheming in Michigan and New York, picket lines were in motion in both states. Delphi's second-largest union, the International Union of Electrical Workers/Communication Workers of America, picketed outside the bankruptcy hearing, while SOS managed to bring out dozens of its members to picket Delphi World Headquarters.

If Delphi flattens the pensions, the workers may still have an opportunity to show that struggle makes the world go 'round. □

## Immigrant rights activist gains national support

By Heather Cottin

Elvira Arellano, a 31-year-old Latina single mom, has become the heart of the struggle for millions of undocumented workers who seek to keep their families together.

Arellano has lived in the U.S. since 1997. To protect her seven-year-old son, Saul, who has ADHD and health problems, she defied a Department of Homeland Security deportation order. On Aug. 15, Arellano and her son entered the Adalberto United Methodist Church, on Chicago's West Side.

The pastor of the church, Walter Coleman, said his largely Puerto Rican congregation offered Arellano sanctuary. According to the support committee helping her, the U.S. government is pressuring the church to force Pastor Coleman to expel her.

Arellano wants to work and raise her son in the United States. She purchased a fake Social Security card and got a job cleaning planes. In the hysteria following 9/11, Homeland Security arrested her at O'Hare Airport in 2002.

### Millions of Elvira Arellanos

Why did Arellano emigrate? In 1994, the U.S. pushed Mexico into signing the North American Free Trade Agreement. The effect on the Mexican economy has been devastating. Before its passage, many Mexicans lived on small farms, but under NAFTA, these farmers could not compete with U.S. agribusiness. They fled the countryside and went to the cities. The urban population of Mexico went from 63 percent to 75 percent from 1992 to 2002. (UN Human Development Reports)

This is the face of neoliberalism. Over 36 percent of the Mexican population lives on less than \$2 a day. Women and young people comprise the lion's share of the unemployed.

Throughout the world, "free trade" has made millions of Elvira Arellanos. They are Filipin@s, Koreans, Central Americans, Africans and Eastern Europeans.

Yet the media calls Arellano "illegal," while

right-wing talk show hosts denounce her as an "alien." Racist headlines around the country say the family is "ducking" deportation, "holed up" in a church, likening them to hunted animals.

The case of Elvira Arellano has hit a deep nerve. This administration, which claims to care so much about "family values," has separated thousands of immigrant parents from their U.S.-born children. The Department of Homeland Security, with no immediate plans to send the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) gestapo into the church while the whole world is watching, has Arellano in its sights.

### Support grows for Arellano family

Activist groups in Detroit, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Minnesota, New York, Rochester, San Diego, San Francisco and Vermont are organizing to demand justice for Arellano and immediate legalization for all 12 million undocumented immigrants.

Elvira Arellano "is the face of the movement," said Emma Lozano, executive director of the Chicago immigration-rights group Centro Sin Fronteras, which Arellano helped found. ([montereyherald.com](http://montereyherald.com)) Arellano mobilized for a mass protest on July 5, 2005, in Chicago that drew 50,000 people, and organized with the Coalition of African, Asian, European and Latino Immigrants of Illinois (CAAELII), a broad coalition for legalization of immigrants in Illinois.

Solidarity with the Arellano family is growing. Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, plans to come to Chicago in solidarity. "She is our Rosa Parks," said Teresa Gutierrez of New York's May 1 Coalition.

The National Women's Caucus of the National Alliance for Immigrant Rights is planning demonstrations in dozens of cities, and has launched an email and telephone campaign to deluge Illinois senators Richard Durbin and Barack Obama and the White House with demands for Arellano's right to permanent residency and a moratorium on all deportations. □



## Drug testing

# Cycle of abuse on U.S. prisoners

By LeiLani Dowell

The federal Institute of Medicine recently released a report recommending that regulations limiting federal biomedical research on prisoners be relaxed so that inmates can participate in higher-risk studies.

Current regulations allow prisoners to participate in federally financed biomedical research only if the experiment poses "minimal" risks to the subjects.

To support the recommendation to relax this rule, the report also suggested that greater precautions be taken. The report brief states: "Prisoners face restrictions on liberty and autonomy, limited privacy, and potentially inadequate health care services. These factors can be barriers to the prerequisites of ethical research, namely the acquisition of voluntary informed consent, protection of privacy, and access to adequate health care such that a choice between research participation and non-participation is not simply a desperate action to obtain treatment.

"All of these factors point to a population that is more vulnerable and requires stronger protections than those inspired by the national commission in the 1970s."

Recommended protections include enhancing the systematic oversight of research involving prisoners, and universal regulations and oversight of all testing, regardless of funding. Currently, all private and state testing on prisoners is unregulated. (www.iom.edu)

Yet many find it hard to believe that even with new protections, prisoners' best interests and desires will be considered if more risky testing is allowed. For example, despite the IOM's stated concerns about prisoner well-being, it failed to recommend full medical coverage and services for all prisoners.

Instead it suggests relaxing the minimal risk provision if the "potential benefits ... outweigh the risks."

A New York Times report pointed out that the current incarcerated population suffers disproportionately from HIV and hepatitis C, which some researchers say "could be better controlled if new research were permitted in prisons."

Paul Wright of Prison Legal News told the Times, "It strikes me as pretty ridiculous to start talking about prisoners getting access to cutting-edge research and medications when they can't even get penicillin and high-blood-pressure pills."

Daniel S. Murphy, professor of criminal justice at Appalachian State University, said, "Free and informed consent becomes pretty questionable when prisoners don't hold the keys to their own cells, and in many cases they can't read, yet they are signing a document that it practically takes a law degree to understand."

Murphy said the recommended precautions were "also the parts of the report that faced the strongest resistance from federal officials, and I fear they're most likely the parts that will end up getting cut as these recommendations become new regulations." (New York Times, Aug. 13)

### Poor & oppressed as guinea pigs

The use of poor people, particularly people of color, as guinea pigs for pharmaceutical tests is nothing new.

For 40 years, the U.S. government conducted an experiment called the "Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male," ending in 1972. More than 400 mostly illiterate Black sharecroppers with syphilis were experimented on without any treatment for the disease, even after a cure was discovered. Most had never seen a doctor before, and all were lied to and told that they were receiving treatment from the researchers.

At the end of the experiment, 28 of the men had died from the disease, 100 had died of related complications, 40 of their spouses had been infected, and 19 of their children were born with congenital syphilis. The experiment was conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Public Health Service, with the U.S. Surgeon General assisting the lie by sending the men certificates of appreciation. (www.infoplease.com)

Current regulations on prisoner testing were created only after widespread abuse was found in several prisons across the country. By 1972, the Food and Drug Administration estimated that more than 90 percent of new drugs were tested on prisoners first. (www.eh.doe.gov) Inmates were sometimes offered fees that were coercive given their inability to earn any real income otherwise.

In 1974 allegations of abuse were exposed to the public—such as testing at the Holmesburg Prison in Philadelphia, where studies were conducted on inmates with Agent Orange, psychotropic drugs, chemical warfare trials, and radioactive isotopes from the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. (New York Times)

A report by the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments of the Department of Energy points out: "The use of prisoners as research subjects seems to have been a uniquely American practice in the years following World War II. ... In other countries it seems that the first clause of the Nuremberg Code was interpreted to preclude the use of prisoners in experimentation. This clause begins with the assertion that the only acceptable experimental subjects are those who are 'so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice.'"

More recently, the pharmaceutical industry has taken to exporting its tests to the poor and oppressed outside the United States. In an Aug. 30, 2005, article, The Nation magazine reported that U.S. drug producer Merck was at the time conducting 50 percent of its trials outside the United States, and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals was expected to have 70 percent of its trials overseas by 2006.

The Nation reported that "ethical lapses are strikingly common." One example was

the case of subjects of an HIV vaccine test in Thailand who apparently were misinformed that the test would protect them from the virus. The Nation reported that "placebo trials among ailing AIDS patients," similar to the Tuskegee tests, "are frequently described in the medical press; when the subjects are poor Africans or Asians, nary an eye is batted."

The use of prisoners as human guinea pigs is consistent with the overall treatment of working and poor people in the prison-industrial complex. Rather than subjects of rehabilitation, prisoners are considered dispensable, good only for work at slavery wages and subject to torture, brutality and racism at the hands of the prison guards.

Almost 7 million people are in U.S. prisons, jails, or on probation or parole. The United States has the highest prison population rate in the world, according to the International Center for Prison Studies at King's College London. (www.kcl.ac.uk)

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## Minutemen at ground zero

It was refreshing to see your article. Over the years I have researched these people, and you hit the nail right on the head. ... Just hard to believe people could be so awful. I actively protest them, so I appreciate your article.

Thank you, Kay

## Division Street riots

I was reading the article on the Division Street riots by Eric Struch, and was very pleased to see such an important historical piece about the Puerto Rican people in Chicago written during these times. This was one of the first Puerto Rican-initiated acts of defiance during the Civil Rights movement and sparked a lot of momentum in the late 1960s to help the Boricuas stand up for their rights, which led to the growth and organizing of groups like the Young Lords and Latin Kings.

I also wanted to add on that the victim of the gunshot during that time was a member of the Latin Kings. Many of the people in that crowd that came to his aid and later played a major role in orchestrating the protests and rebellion against the police state in Chicago were none other than members of the Almighty Latin Kings/Queens Nation (ALKQN), who at that time were very community-based and respected by the people before receiving the gang label we have today.

I, being a member of the ALKQN, am aware of the history of these riots and want to inform others of their occurrence, and I will be happy to share this article with others so that our history can help bring awareness and inspiration to our members to bring us closer back to our revolutionary roots. ¡Poder a la gente!

King Prophet  
Almighty Latin  
Kings/Queens Nation

## Meanwhile, back in Iraq

I too have a son in the 172nd Brigade who was given the news just 72 hours before he was to return to the states that he would be staying another four months in Iraq. Imagine his surprise. Needless to say he was NOT happy. In his most recent e-mails he has adjusted his attitude because he didn't have a choice, and I pray now that he will return safely.

So many people oppose the war at this point and I wonder how many people who oppose the war voted for Bush the second time around. We were deep into the war at this point. The reason the war is still raging and we still have troops in Iraq is because of all the people who voted for Bush. I honestly feel if something should happen to my son I would have in bold letters in his obituary, "If you voted for Bush, don't attend my son's funeral. You should be going to prison for murder."

Yes, I am angry. This was my son's second deployment and he was supposed to be discharged from the army on Sept. 24th. The army has totally broken their promise to him. I just hope President Bush and Donald Rumsfeld are enjoying their coffee and pastries in the Oval Office this morning. I'm sure if they had a loved one overseas like me they wouldn't have much of an appetite.

Diane K.

## CORRECTIONS

Readers correctly pointed out that in the article, "Six gay men attacked after Pride festival," the attack was on Saturday, July 29, and not Sunday, July 30; that in the international roundup article of Aug. 4-6 demonstrations, there "were close to 60,000 people at the Montreal rally, despite inaccurate news reports of there being on 15,000"; that in an article of solidarity statements with the Palestinian and Lebanese people, PASOK was not the ruling party in Greece but the opposition (social-democratic) party. Where feasible we have corrected the on-line copies of the articles. We also received a request for more references in our articles, which we are attempting to honor.

—John Catalinotto, managing editor

## Chicago cop torture

Continued from page 3

Of course in Chicago, Mayor-for-Life Daley is untouchable and the one-party rule of the Democrats here is unassailable, so the report comes down hard on people whom it is politically safe to blame, which in this case are the two Republicans, Kunkle and Brzeczek.

Daley's response to the report finally came after two days of deafening official silence from City Hall. Daley asked rhetorically: "Do you think I would sit by. ... That I had knowledge about it, and I would allow it—then you don't know my public career."

U.S. Rep. Luis Gutiérrez, who is considering a run against Daley for the mayor's office in February, criticized Daley's attempt to absolve himself of responsibility in the Burge case, but stopped short of actually taking a stand against cop terrorism.

Torture survivor Madison Hobley said: "The special investigators didn't do any-

thing we wanted them to do. I'm really, really disappointed. I can't believe that this stuff is going on still."

Meanwhile, organizers in the African-American community have rejected the report's cover-up of Daley and other top officials, its attack on torture survivors such as political prisoner Aaron Patterson, and its conclusion that no legal remedy is available.

A meeting convened by attorney Stan Willis of the National Council of Black Lawyers voted to hold a mass mobilization on Sept. 15. They also plan on an extensive series of teach-ins beginning on Aug. 26 and a campaign to vote off the bench judges who admitted these "confessions" into evidence or covered up the torture when they were state's attorneys.

Activists also warn that they may oppose Chicago's active bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics. □

## Greenwich Village, 1969:

# Many histories converged at Stonewall

By Leslie Feinberg

Gay and lesbian historians who view history from a materialist vantage point have emphasized that while same-sex affection and sexuality appear to have existed in all epochs of human society, the conditions of capitalism were required for the development of a distinct political and social minority identity: gay and lesbian.

Therefore these historians describe the Stonewall Rebellion as a qualitative development that is a social product of capitalism.

They point out that the ascendancy of capitalist production in the United States created a vast class of "wage slaves"—workers who owned nothing but their ability to labor. The organizing of a large-scale workforce also centralized laborers, creating large-scale industry and dense urban living with same-sex living situations and relative anonymity.

They trace the devastating economic dislocation of the 1929 capitalist Depression that shook the working class and oppressed, creating a widespread exodus from rural areas and small towns to these cities in search of wage work.

World War II drew massive segments of the population into same-sex working and living situations, and left large same-sex-loving populations in cities where soldiers were discharged and dumped from the ranks of the military. And 1950s Cold War repression inevitably generated resistance.

These overall conditions under capitalism, heated to critical mass by oppression, led to the development of LGBT communities and to a fight-back consciousness.

But Stonewall was not just a product of capitalism, but of national oppression as well. And it is no accident that the rebellion, which drew its leadership from the most oppressed, ignited in an era of national liberation struggles in the United States, Asia and Africa.

The Vietnamese people inspired youth of all nationalities, here and all over the world, by demonstrating that the determination of a people to fight for their sovereignty and right to self-determination was an unconquerable force, even in the face of Pentagon might.

The rising strength of national liberation struggles in the U.S.—Black Power, the American Indian Movement, the Young Lords, the Chican@/Mexican@ movement and organizations of militant Asian youth—stirred great pride in the oppressed here and around the planet. The waves of these movements created more room in their wake for women and LGBT people of all nationalities to struggle to fight oppression based on sex, sexuality and gender expression.

The youth of color in leadership in the sustained battles against the police in Greenwich Village on three hot summer nights in June 1969—many of them homeless youth who struggled to survive on the streets—fought for their right to define and defend their own bodies, sexualities and gender expressions. Their struggle was rooted in a long history of battles against capitalist colonization and imperialism for the right of self-determination and national liberation.

In that sense, the Stonewall insurrection was not the culmination of one history, but of many.

### Roots of same-sex oppression

Historically, the development of class divisions is at the root of same-sex oppression. And specifically, as lesbian

and gay historians have explained, the ascendancy of capitalism over agricultural production in the U.S. was the overall class trajectory that laid the basis for the formation of distinct modern identities of gay and lesbian, vocalized as "Gay Power!" at Stonewall.

But agricultural production in the United States, and its defeat by industrial capitalism, was a class war with many battlefields between oppressor and oppressed peoples.

Gay American Indians (GAI) made a dynamic contribution to this understanding in its ground-breaking 1988 book entitled "Living the Spirit." In this compilation, Indigenous peoples narrate their own histories of the diverse forms of organization on this continent—many of them still pre-class, based on cooperative labor and matrilineal bloodlines—before the colonial military assault which seized the land later used for white settler farming, as well as railroads and other industry.

In an essay in the book entitled "Sex/Gender Systems in Native North America," Midnight Sun (Anishnabe) emphasized that the 400-year history of colonial ethnographic research on Indigenous peoples on this continent omitted and distorted reports about the sex and gender relations they observed, "especially where these deviated from the bipolar European norm of the heterosexual 'man' and 'woman' and contradicted the European patriarchal world view."

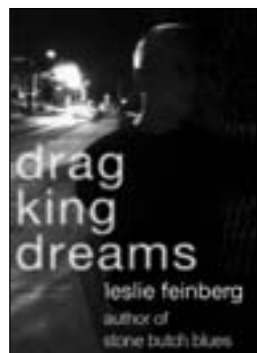
GAI's History Project lists 135 Indigenous peoples on this continent that made room for many more sex/gender roles than the European nations did.

Midnight Sun argued for a historical materialist view of sex/gender systems in these diverse Native societies, explaining: "Social, and specifically sexual, life is embedded in the economic organization of society—an organization that gives rise to a variety of cultural forms. The cultural construction of gender and sexuality must be seen in terms of the sexual division of labor, subsistence patterns, social relations, and male-female relations. Within this context, ideology is not an arbitrary, discrete force—rather, it serves to reproduce and perpetuate social forms, behaviors, and individuals suitable to a particular mode of production."

Colonization, Midnight Sun concluded, attempted to systematically destroy the diverse economic, ideological—and sex/gender systems—of Indigenous societies on this continent.

### The cataclysmic impact of slavery

The history of African American youth who fought hand-to-hand combat with police at Stonewall is rooted in the historic struggle in this hemisphere against enslavement and for national liberation. To overlook the earth-shattering impact of slavery on social relations in this country—then or now—would be tantamount to ignoring the cataclysmic impact of a meteor strike in shaping the history of the planet.



## drag king dreams

Here's the next transgender classic from Leslie Feinberg, author of internationally-acclaimed novel *Stone Butch Blues*. *Drag King Dreams* takes readers on a thrilling new gender journey.

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The tens of millions of African peoples who were taken prisoner, endured the horrors of the Middle Passage and were enslaved as laborers on this continent, came from diverse cultures with their own systems of economic organization, kinship, sex/gender and sexual and affectional expression.

The landed aristocracy of slave-owners was hell-bent on re-forging these social relations, like shackles, to meet its own inhuman economic greed. Historian Angela Davis reveals the contradictions in relations between the sexes/genders in the family lives of those battling the horrific conditions of slavery in her germinal book, "Women, Race & Class" (Random House, New York: 1983).

Davis pointed out that in the pre-Civil War era, "As the ideology of femininity—a by-product of industrialization—was popularized and disseminated through the new ladies' magazines and romantic novels, white women came to be seen as inhabitants of a sphere totally severed from the realm of productive work. The cleavage between the home and the public economy, brought on by industrial capitalism, established female inferiority more firmly than ever before."

However, she explained, "The economic arrangement of slavery contradicted the hierarchical sexual roles incorporated in the new ideology. Male-female relations within the slave community could not, therefore, conform to the dominant ideological pattern."

By mid-19th century, she noted, seven out of eight enslaved Black people—female and male—were field workers.

Davis stressed: "Because husbands and wives, fathers and daughters were equally subjected to the slave masters' absolute authority, the promotion of male supremacy among the slaves might have prompted a dangerous rupture in the chain of command. Moreover, since Black women as workers could not be treated as the 'weaker sex' or the 'housewife,' Black men could not be candidates for the figure of 'family head' and certainly not for 'family provider.' After all, men, women and children alike were all 'providers' for the slaveholding class."

In terms of the division of labor within the home life of enslaved families, she added, "Moreover, from all indications, the division of labor between the sexes was not always so rigorous, for men would sometimes work in the cabin and women might tend the garden and perhaps even join the hunt."

Davis concluded, "This bears repeating: Black women were equal to their men in the oppression they suffered; they were

their men's social equals within the slave community; and they resisted slavery with a passion equal to their men's."

And centuries later, the descendants of those who resisted slavery were battling the police in the streets at Stonewall for the right to define their own sexuality, gender and sex.

### Many histories; many identities

While colonialism and imperialism have used bullets and bibles to reshape the social relations—including organization of the sexes and genders and expression of sexuality—and destroy the economies of oppressed peoples, the struggles of the nationally oppressed have also had a deep overall cultural impact on the oppressor nation.

For example, the Harlem Renaissance—which included such a powerful and lyrical articulation of defiant same-sex and gender non-conforming expressions—is also a defining period in the histories that converged in Greenwich Village decades later.

The Stonewall Uprising, therefore, was not an articulation—as though from one throat—of one sexual minority that has existed in all places, in all historical epochs, without previous voice. Nor did it represent the emergence of a central identity that represents sexual liberation in a form so universal that its visibility can be used as a global marker for who is, or is not, "out of the closet" and proud.

The role of Latin@ leadership in the Stonewall insurrection demonstrates that global roads of history led to the rebellion. Their parents and grandparents were forced by the super-exploitation of U.S. capital and the dictatorships that enforced it to leave their own countries—with their own systems of sex, gender and sexuality—to travel to this country to work and live.

Stonewall combatant Sylvia Rivera was a transgender teenager who had lived homeless on the streets of New York City since she was ten years old. She was Venezuelan and Puerto Rican—and was one of many Latin@s who fought in hand-to-hand battles with police at Stonewall.

For some of the Stonewall combatants, numerous oppressions overlapped in their own lives—racism, misogyny, transphobia—like multiple burdens that create great strength.

When I asked Sylvia Rivera in an interview before her death, "What do you say when people ask you if you fought the police at Stonewall because you were gay or trans? Because of police brutality or racism? Because of being oppressed as a youth or because you were homeless?"

She answered with succinct eloquence: "We were fighting for our lives!"

The Stonewall Rebellion was living proof that as many histories converged in the streets of an imperialist metropolis—the capital of capital—people who did not share a common oppression wrote a new chapter of history together when they rose up to fight back against a common enemy.

Next: *Early left-wing gay liberation: anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist.*

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# 'Big Dig' tragedy reflects corruption

By Bryan G. Pfeifer  
Boston

Milena Del Valle didn't get the chance to greet her loved ones at Logan International Airport on July 10. While traveling with her spouse to the airport, Del Valle, a working-class Costa Rican living in Boston, was crushed to death when three-ton concrete ceiling panels in the Interstate 90 tunnel connector let loose and fell on the couple's car. Angel Del Valle survived with minor physical injuries.

Ongoing investigations since the tragedy have found many structural design flaws. One of the most serious: The bolts used to secure the panels weren't capable of supporting their weight for the length of time the general contractors, the Bechtel Group and Parsons Brinckerhoff, said they would.

The Laborers and Iron Workers unions, among others, had raised concerns about these flaws for years. They were ignored.

Massachusetts billionaire Republican Gov. Mitt Romney, his 2006 Democratic gubernatorial opponent and the state's attorney general, Thomas Reilly, and other politicians have postured to deflect blame for Del Valle's death and the thoroughly flawed Big Dig from themselves, their offices, and the capitalist bosses and bankers.

For them, billions of dollars are at stake—not only in Boston but throughout the United States and internationally.

Still, they and many others, from Massachusetts to Washington D.C. and beyond, are culpable for this entirely preventable disaster. The whole Big Dig project has been so rife with corruption, cronyism, graft, nepotism and wholesale criminal negligence from its inception that the weekly Boston Phoenix headlined a July 28 article "A Handy Guide to the

Big Dig Screw-Up."

To this day, despite over 15 years of Big Dig malfeasance reporting by the Boston Globe and other corporate media, state legislative investigations and more, not one politician or capitalist responsible for the death of Del Valle and the theft of billions of local, state and national taxpayer dollars has been arrested, charged or imprisoned.

## What is the 'Big Dig'?

Billed as the biggest and the most expensive civil engineering project in U.S. history, the Big Dig was meant, according to planners, to build a highway underneath Boston. Billions of dollars of commodities now flow annually through the Big Dig freeway arteries or those connected to it. The primary beneficiaries are the military-industrial complex, Big Oil, the affluent white suburbs and tourism.

In 1985 the Massachusetts state legislature awarded the Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff partnership the Big Dig contract to design and manage the project along with other corporations.

Originally, the partnership was under the direct control of the state legislature. But in 1997 the legislature moved the project to an "independent" authority, and created an "integrated project organization" that joined the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority and B/PB together as co-owners of the project.

Part of the reason for the switch was the exposure of former Massachusetts Gov. William Weld's collusion with B/PB. For one thing, Weld's top aide, Peter Berlandi, was also Bechtel's liaison to Weld's administration.

The original partnership estimate for total Big Dig construction was \$2.6 billion. In 2003 taxpayers had already footed \$14.6 billion for the Big Dig's ostensible

"completion." This made it the most expensive public transportation project in U.S. history, at \$1.8 million per mile.

According to a February 2003 investigative series by the Boston Globe, on more than 3,200 occasions since 1991, the state paid extra money to contractors to compensate for Big Dig design flaws based in un-centralized capitalist chaos.

The state guaranteed Bechtel's profits—even on work required to correct its mistakes on the cost overruns. (www.boston.com)

## Bechtel's role

Privately owned Bechtel, based in San Francisco, has 40,000 employees worldwide. The corporation reported revenues of \$18.1 billion in 2005. Bechtel built the Hoover Dam in the 1930s, and oversaw construction of the English Channel rail tunnel connecting Britain and the continent. The company has won thousands of big contracts from the U.S. government, especially during World War II, as well as from other nations and corporations worldwide.

Individuals embedded within Bechtel's imperialist nexus have included former Bechtel president and current Bechtel board member George Schultz, who was secretary of state under Ronald Reagan; former Bechtel general counsel Casper Weinburger, who was Reagan's defense secretary; and Bechtel consultant William Casey, who was head of the Securities and Exchange Commission under Richard Nixon, head of the Export-Import bank under Gerald Ford, Reagan's campaign manager and head of the CIA under President Reagan.

Bechtel faces protests because the Bush administration awarded it contracts worth tens of millions of dollars for Iraq reconstruction without putting the contracts up for bid, and because of its response to

Hurricane Katrina, which includes an alleged \$48 million in double-billing for maintenance of temporary housing trailers. The corporation is also involved with water privatization, building nuclear bombs and plants, and providing cleanup.

Facing criticism over its Iraq and Katrina actions, company spokesperson Michael Kidder, said, "The huge scope of these projects, and some are first of a kind, are bound to cause some wrinkles along the way, and they become lessons learned." (www.august6.org)

According to the Arms Trade Resource Center, Bechtel compiled "the most complete mineralogical and geographical data of the former Zaire ever assembled, information worth a fortune to any prospective mining or oil firm." Bechtel also "commissioned and paid for U.S. National Aeronautics and Space administration satellite studies of the country for infrared maps of its mineral potential."

## A real alternative needed

A people's commission composed of labor and community organizations as well as individual working-class and oppressed people is needed to investigate the Big Dig project and determine who is criminally negligent. Once a judgment is rendered by such an independent body, it should have the power to imprison the guilty parties and work out and determine all needed repairs and reparations to taxpayers, including Del Valle's loved ones. Perhaps this body could be called the Milena Del Valle commission.

This body could also address the critical questions of how the catastrophic effects of this disaster could have been avoided, and how to reduce needless suffering and loss of life through a system of centralized, planned organization based on mass participation as exists in Cuba. □

# Veterans' conference helps develop GI resistance

By Jim McMahan  
Seattle

Lt. Ehren Watada's case highlighted a week of growing GI resistance that began at the national Veterans for Peace Convention in Seattle, Aug. 10-13, when Sgt. Ricky Clousing opened the events with a news conference announcing his opposition to the Iraq War. Sgt. Clousing stated his intention to turn himself in at nearby Ft. Lewis, Wash., and confront charges against him after being absent from the military.

The conference closed on the U.S./Canadian border, where Kyle Snyder, an Iraq War veteran absent from the military, came forward as an objector. Snyder said if he returned to the army now he would be court-martialed by a military court "composed of generals who didn't fight with me. If anybody has a right to judge me it should be the 35 soldiers I fought with for six months."

Lt. Ehren Watada had addressed the Vets' conference a day earlier. When he got up to speak he was backed up by 40 Iraq War veterans on the stage. Watada, who turned himself in earlier, is insisting on his right to refuse to participate in an illegal war in Iraq, and has a campaign to reach out to all service people and civilians to "Refuse Illegal War." Watada offered the soldiers what he called a "radical idea. To stop an illegal and unjust war, soldiers and service members can choose to stop fighting it," he said.

Such opposition gained momentum at Watada's preliminary hearing on Aug. 16 and 17. On Aug. 16, about 500 people came to support Watada with an extended demonstration and rally outside the gates of Ft. Lewis. Among the supporters was Capt. James Yee, a Muslim chaplain formerly at the U.S.-run concentration camp for Islamic prisoners in Guantánamo, Cuba. Yee had spent 76 days in prison after being falsely charged with espionage in 2005, a charge that was dropped.

This hearing determines whether or not Watada will be court-martialed, which the defense expects. Lt. Watada has been formally charged with two counts of contempt for public officials (namely President George Bush), conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman, and missing movement (to Iraq). He faces over seven years in prison—over five years for simply expressing his opinion that Bush misled the people here into an illegal war.

Watada's defense went on the offensive and put the war on trial during the 4 1/2-hour hearing. Law professor Francis Boyle, former Undersecretary General of the United Nations Dennis Halliday and former army officer Anne Wright all presented information on the illegality of the Iraq War—an opinion that has the backing of hundreds of legal scholars across the country.

Many people now consider Watada's statements to be not only his right but his duty. The charges against him show the

naked tyranny and contempt of the U.S. military command toward Watada and all service people.

Many soldiers have made statements in support of Ehren Watada too. Geoffrey Millard, a sergeant in the Army National Guard supports Lt. Watada. Millard was in Iraq in 2004-05 and said GI resistance is a growing trend. "American GIs are beginning to respect the Nuremburg principles," said Millard. "They are resisting orders. They are going to jail, going to Canada, and going AWOL. And they're talking about why they're doing it."

Supporters of Spec. Suzanne Swift announced an action on her behalf at the conclusion of Ehren Watada's rally. Swift

bases her refusal to return to Iraq on her experience of being sexually abused there, which included being raped by several members of her command. Her supporters announced an encampment outside the gates of Ft. Lewis to begin on Aug. 19. They are demanding an unconditional discharge from the army for Swift, prosecution of the officers who abused her and payment of her medical expenses, including those for post traumatic stress syndrome.

Service people and soldiers of the U.S., too often abused by the military brass, are refusing in growing number to report to Iraq. In doing so they are showing solidarity to the long suffering and resisting Iraqi masses. □

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# Hezbollah leader calls for: 'United front against imperialism'

*It is rare that readers inside the imperialist countries, especially in the U.S., get the opportunity to read and hear the voices of people's resistance due to the blatant censorship of the big business media. Therefore, Workers World is reprinting excerpts from an Aug. 14, 2006, interview with Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah that appeared in its entirety on the Turkish Party of Labor website, www.emep.org. Roza Cigdem Erdogan and Mutlu Sahin, reporters with the Turkish daily, Evrensel, conducted the interview in Beirut.*

**Turkish Daily: Israel had claimed its aim was to destroy Hezbollah in the first days of the occupation of Lebanon. However, it came across a resistance it did not expect and now it has been falling short of this aim. Through violent clashes, the occupying army continues to suffer heavy losses. But this is not covered sufficiently by the media.**

**Hasan Nasrallah:** They are writing that they are bombing the Hezbollah positions and are deceiving the peoples. As you have witnessed personally, this is a big lie! They are martyring the innocent civilians. But, we are routing the Zionists wherever we come across them. We are acting cau-

tiously, and are not firing rockets on civilians. By claiming that we are firing rockets on urban settlements, they are seeking to deceive the peoples of the world. But we are firing rockets under control on to locations we identified before. They are deliberately driving the Israeli Arabs to the border. They are presenting them as a target to us, but we are not playing into provocation and mischief. Our target is not the civilians; it is the Zionist military forces. Our fighters are routing extensively the Zionist forces in the land operation. But they should also know that we have still not used our important weapons. The Zionists, knowing that they cannot daunt us with death, are attempting to destroy our infrastructure, our roads, bridges, our

women and children. This is how they are trying to intimidate us. But, it is all futile, we will not surrender! Apart from the freedom of our motherland, we will not accept any other solution. We will resist and we will fight. Imperialism and its Zionist contractors in the region should know that we are waiting for the Zionists on every hill, every valley, every street and every inch of our country. Our resistance necessitates victory. We have no other way. This war will end with the victory of the oppressed of the world and of the Muslims.

**Is it possible for Lebanon to face once again the threat of a civil war?**

Not only in Lebanon, but also in the region as a whole, the Zionist regime is seeking polarization with the tension between ethnic groups, sects and beliefs. Their strategy of attacking our country also confirms this. But, the Hezbollah has spoiled this game. The oppressed peoples of our country and of the Middle East have come to the defense of Hezbollah and have provided their support. The socialists and

Christians are included in this.

**What is the current state of your relations with the socialist movement?**

The socialist movement, which has been away from international struggle now for a considerable time, at last began to become a moral support for us once again. The most concrete example of this has been Hugo Chávez, the president of Venezuela. What most of the Muslim states could not do has been done by Chávez by the withdrawal of their ambassador to Israel. He furthermore communicated to us his support for our resistance. This has been an immense source of morale for us. We can observe a similar reaction within the Turkish Revolutionary Movement. We had socialist brothers from Turkey who went to Palestine in the 1960s to fight against Israel. And one of them still remains in my memory and my heart—Deniz Gezmiş [founder of the People's Liberation Army

*Continued on page 10*

## Lebanon rebuilds, New Orleans waits

*Continued from page 1*

pared 8,000 hot meals a day—part of a daily total of 50,000 they distributed across Beirut, reported the Monitor.

In New Orleans, families evacuated from the Superdome and the Convention Center were scattered all over the country. Parents were sometimes separated from children. Some didn't know if loved ones lived or died. Three months after Katrina hit, 6,500 people were still unaccounted for, and more than 400 bodies still unidentified, according to the National Center for Missing Adults.

In Lebanon, within 24 hours of the Aug. 14 cease-fire, Hezbollah had set up a hotline to help refugees, and so refugees could connect based on their place of residence, according to Lebanese TV. (www.foreign-policy.com)

In the Superdome, bodies remained for four or five days in 100-degree heat. Relatives standing vigil were forced to abandon the remains during the evacuation, sometimes at gunpoint. Bodies were left in flood waters, many to be discovered by loved ones returning home months later. Evacuees who had lost everything could not afford to bury their dead with dignity. Grieving relatives sent to different states could offer each other little comfort.

After the cease-fire in Lebanon, finding and burying the dead with dignity became a priority. The resistance immediately began digging out bodies buried in the rubble and identifying them. Remains were held for burial until the family returned. Mass funerals were held, paid for by the resistance, so neighbors could comfort each other and lean on the communities' strength. On Aug. 18, a caravan of cars made its way from one service to the next. Said Shiite cleric Sheik Shoue Qatoon, "It was decided that we would schedule the funerals so that we could all attend them all." (AP, Aug. 19)

Scattered in hotels around the country, without jobs or sources of income, New Orleans refugees were offered by Washington a maximum of \$2,000 per family to live on. That was enough for a hotel room for two weeks. Even then, the media launched a racist campaign claiming to expose "cheaters" who were "misusing" the tiny sum. In December, New Orleans' displaced



Lebanese-American Joyce Chediak at Aug. 5 New York rally.

WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

people were given 15 days to leave hotels, with no further provisions made for them.

### The right to return

On Aug. 14, Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah said he would give money for "decent and suitable furniture" and a year's rent to any Lebanese who lost a home in the war. Beginning in the very poorest community of Dehiya south of Beirut, the resistance is distributing \$12,000 per family, a huge sum in Lebanon where monthly rents average \$300. (New York Times, Aug 16)

A year later after the New Orleans flood, "thousands of people are living amid ruins that stretch for miles on end. ... All you see is debris, debris, debris. ... The reminders of death are everywhere." (New York Times, June 21)

Little to nothing has been done to rebuild the Ninth Ward. This majority African-American community is filled with rubble, coated with mud and mold.

Advocates point out that much damage, such as advancing mold, could have been stopped if the area had been cleaned early on. Many residents would have gladly organized their own cleaning brigade, but they were banned entry for the first four months after the flood.

In Lebanon, on Aug 14, the very day of the cease-fire, while Israel was withdrawing its troops from Southern Lebanon, there were reports that hundreds of Hezbollah members spread over dozens of villages across southern Lebanon began cleaning, organizing and surveying the damage. Men on bulldozers were busy cutting lanes through giant piles of rubble. Roads blocked with the remnants of buildings were, just a day after a cease-fire began, fully passable.

The actions of both the Bush administration and key corporations indicate a determination to stop the African-Americans of New Orleans from returning to their communities.

In September, the home insurance giant Allstate refused to reimburse New Orleans homeowners who had flood insurance policies. The company claimed the homes were destroyed by the wind, not by flood. (MarketWatch, Sept. 20, 2005)

In October, the Bush administration reneged on its promised to provide thousands of mobile homes as temporary housing for returning refugees. (New York Times, Oct. 31, 2005)

After promising New Orleans federal housing loans to repair and rebuild, it became apparent that no special loan provisions had been made for victims of the flood and that the White House was pushing for hurricane disaster-recovery loans at a higher rate than any other administration in the last 15 years. (USA Today, March 15)

Regarding public housing, in a thinly veiled racist attack, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson said in April that only the "best residents" should be allowed to return to public housing. (USA Today, April 25) And in June HUD, which had previously reported that it had 7,381 public apartments in New Orleans, now said it had only 2,000, and would demolish the rest.

Meanwhile in Lebanon, a Hezbollah spokesperson announced, "We have full information on all the buildings that have been destroyed or damaged. ... we will either pay for new flats or rebuild the buildings that were destroyed." (Aljazeera.net, Aug. 19)

Representatives of Jihad al-Binaa, Hezbollah's construction arm, are touring the south to assess the damage and start repairing and rebuilding. (Beirut Daily Star Aug. 22)

And what of those who could not wait, but have returned home in the devastated areas of the south before essential repairs have been made and services restored?

"There are people from Hezbollah coming regularly to check on us and give us bread and other basic items," said Mohammad Bazih, 30, from the village of Baakline. Residents of Zabqine, where tobacco is cultivated, told the press that Hezbollah was providing them with basic services. (Beirut Daily Star Aug. 22) □



# Cease-fire shaky as Israelis raid Lebanon

By Sara Flounders

This week after 34 days of intense bombing and massive Israeli destruction, tens of thousands of Lebanese refugees streamed south to rebuild their homes from the rubble. But the U.S.-brokered United Nations cease-fire of Aug. 14 that allows them to return is increasingly uncertain and near collapse.

In a new attack in the central Bekka Valley—far from the positions of the Israeli occupation troops in South Lebanon and in blatant disregard of the cease-fire—Israel staged a commando attack. The Israelis were turned back by a local village unit of the well-organized Hezbollah Lebanese Islamic resistance.

The whole operation was a howling blunder, a complete rout for Israel's most elite military unit, the Sayeret Matkal. This highly secretive unit is famous for its secret operations, comparable to a U.S. Delta unit.

Israeli Lt. Col. Emanuel Morano, the commander of the entire force of approximately 100 trained commandos, died in the attack. Another Israeli officer and a soldier were wounded.

Wearing Lebanese Army uniforms and shouting in Arabic, the Israeli commando unit drove in two military vehicles into the village of Boudai. There, a local guerrilla force repelled them fiercely. Its commander killed, the remains of the Israeli unit made a desperate call for help and had to be evacuated by helicopter, while Israeli aircraft bombed the Lebanese resistance and destroyed a bridge.

Boudai is near the historic ruins of Baalbek in the central Bekka Valley, far from the Israeli border. It is an area that has long been a center of resistance.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora called the Israeli attack a "flagrant violation" of the cease-fire. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said he "was deeply concerned about a violation by the Israeli side of the cessation of hostilities."

Lebanese Defense Minister Elias Murr said the raid showed to the whole world who was violating international resolutions. He also threatened to halt the deployment of Lebanese troops to southern Lebanon if Israel carried out any more raids.

Israeli officials tried to justify the raids as "defensive actions" and claimed that there would be more such actions.

## Cease-fire unravels

The United States and Israel are finding it difficult to accomplish with diplomacy what they utterly failed to do through the most brutal military measures. Their goal had been to divide Lebanon, ignite another civil war and disarm Hezbollah.

After the failed raid, the cease-fire that Washington had cobbled together with the aid of France continued to unravel.

On Aug. 20, the European powers that were to be the backbone of the cease-fire agreement delayed committing any substantial forces to the effort. No country believes that these "peacekeepers" could succeed in disarming Hezbollah if the Israeli Army could not do it in 34 days of bombing and an invasion. UN resolution 1701, the basis for the "peacekeepers," includes the goal of disarming Hezbollah.

France was to command the UN force and provide 3,500 troops, but so far has committed only 200. On Aug. 21, Italy announced it would supply 2,000 troops and possibly lead the UN contingent. Within a day Italy's Lower House Vice President Pierluigi Castagnetti declared,

"Without France we cannot go to Lebanon ... and in any case we have to wait for clarification because the resolution 1701 is still ambiguous to some extent." (AGI news, Aug. 22)

The UN agreement calls for 15,000 foreign troops. The Lebanese Army is to provide another 15,000 soldiers.

Israel has rejected forces from three Muslim countries that have committed troops—Malaysia, Indonesia and Bangladesh. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declared that any country that did not recognize and have diplomatic relations with Israel could not participate.

## Minefields pock the land

Many thousands of tiny cluster bombs dropped by the Israeli military have turned homes, schools, hospitals, streets, farmland and orchards into minefields.

Most of the cluster bombs used in Lebanon release 88 small bomblets per shell in midair, and spread them over a wide area. They are powerful enough to penetrate heavy armor.

Up to 40 percent of the bomblets fail to explode on contact. Lebanon's reconstruction work is complicated by the thousands of unexploded bomblets packed with tiny razor-sharp slivers littering the ground. Disturbed by a breeze or a touch, they can explode.

They are inside bombed homes, in front of a major hospital in Tibnin, in tree branches, in cars, on main streets and buried in fields.

Expert mine clean-up crews need 15 to 30 minutes to safely detonate each one of these shiny silver canisters, which are no bigger than a flashlight battery and especially attractive to children. The rate of injuries, especially among children, is rising.

Officials fear the civilian toll could eventually stretch into the thousands—far higher than the number of those who died in last month's Israeli bombing.

"We already had a major land mine problem from previous Israeli invasions, but this is far worse," said Chris Clark of the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre in Tyre, standing before a map filled with flags indicating bomb sites. UN High Commission for Refugees teams are finding unexploded ordnance a major problem even north of the Litani River. Farmers cannot return to their fields before unexploded munitions are removed.

A decades-old campaign to ban these weapons has failed. The United States is the world's biggest manufacturer of cluster bombs. According to the Aug. 19 New York Times, U.S. contractors supplied these bombs to Israel.

Meanwhile, the death toll from the 34 days of bombing continues to rise.

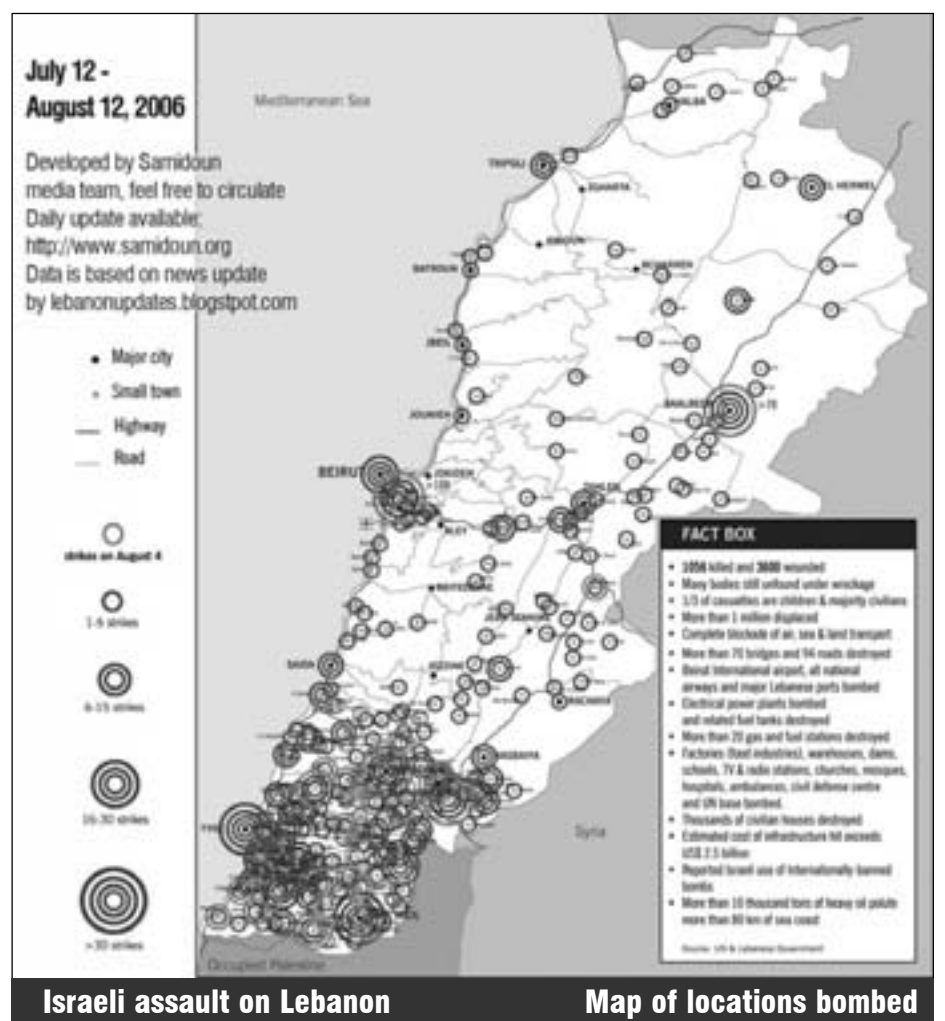
In Srifa, a village east of Tyre, rescue workers pulled another 32 bodies from the rubble, said Mayor Afif Najdeh. Air strikes had flattened 15 houses in the village on July 19.

Municipal authorities in Tyre expected to bury more than 120 war victims in a mass grave on Aug. 24.

Returning refugees who once again witness the devastation of their towns and villages along the south Lebanon border report feelings of pain and loss tinged with a glow of victory. This time, despite the heaviest bombardment ever, Israel was unable to hold even a single village within Lebanon.

## Israeli blockade continues

Despite the cease-fire, thousands of Israeli troops still patrol South Lebanon. The Israeli military continues to blockade



the country, requiring ships to get Israeli approval before docking in Lebanese ports, and allowing flights only between Beirut and Amman, Jordan. According to a Aug. 21 Associated Press report, Lebanese officials are increasing demands to end the Israeli air and sea blockade.

A cabinet minister representing Hezbollah said the Lebanese government may ask ships and aircraft to travel to Lebanon without prior approval from Israel. He said that anything less than complete freedom of movement is a violation of Lebanese sovereignty. Lebanon's foreign minister also called on the international community to end the blockade.

## The state vs. a people's organization

Fadel al-Shalq, head of the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction, told CNN on Aug. 21 that the recent conflict was "probably the most intense" in terms of firepower and devastation since the start of the Lebanese civil war in 1975.

He said that Lebanon needs about \$3.5 billion to repair buildings and infrastructure damaged during the bombing. Civilian sectors such as housing, transport, communications and water treatment were among the hardest hit.

Al-Shalq said that financing the reconstruction effort is not the major problem. Lebanon has received substantial commitments in aid from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and an Arab fund. He said that the government lacks a plan, "and I think what we have is lack of leadership."

Decades of French and U.S. interventions and Israeli invasions, bombings, occupations and the resulting civil wars have left the Lebanese government a barely functioning coalition of religious blocs.

In contrast to the government, Hezbollah was quick to offer immediate aid and to begin the clearing of rubble and reconstruction work. Hezbollah is able to work with the UN and international relief efforts in distributing tarpaulins, plastic and metal roofing, and in providing emergency food and water, fuel stations and medical centers.

While continuing to be on guard against Israeli raids, the resistance organization has taken on organizing the

national relief mobilization.

In a televised speech just after the Aug. 14 cease-fire, Hezbollah Secretary General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah pledged to help rebuild Lebanon. He said Hezbollah would provide money for civilians who had lost their homes to pay rent and buy furniture, some \$12,000 to each claimant.

Hundreds of residents of the southern suburbs of Beirut turned out at makeshift registration centers two days later to sign up for the financial aid, which was immediately distributed in crisp \$100 bills handed out by Hezbollah members. People were also called by phone to come and collect their financial assistance.

Hezbollah's international standing has soared, based on its ability to organize the population for both resistance and for reconstruction.

## Solidarity

Internationally, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's defiant trip to Iran at the height of the Israeli bombing, his embrace of Iranian President Ahmadinejad, and Venezuela's call for the withdrawal of Israel's ambassador aroused millions of people to the potential of international solidarity.

Iran also showed this solidarity by sending assistance to the resistance and stating, as Israeli bombs reached the bridges on the Syrian border, that any attack on Syria would be considered a strike against Iran. This also played a role in the Lebanese united victory.

Secretary General Khalid Kadadh of the Lebanese Communist Party, a participant in the united resistance, called Hasan Nasrallah "our Arab Che Guevara with a turban" and described Hezbollah as "the party of the downtrodden and oppressed and the vanguard of the resistance." Such statements have helped unify the secular and the religious resistance to imperialist aggression.

The wheels of history turn. But history does not just endlessly repeat itself. It moves forward. This is Israel's fifth invasion of Lebanon. This time unity and solidarity, organized resistance and mobilized solidarity moved the struggle forward, and have created a new mood throughout the region. □

# Bush pledges to stay in Iraq despite occupation's collapse

By John Catalinotto

Faced with the utter collapse of his administration's latest game plan for occupying and running Iraq, President George W. Bush has repeated his refusal to consider other options. At an Aug. 21 news conference he said that though the Iraq war is "straining the psyche of our country ... we're not leaving so long as I'm president."

His statement was a preemptive strike against a growing opposition to his Iraq policies that has reached into the Pentagon and even to Republican senators like John Warner, who have supported the Bush administration and its war in the past. No matter how disastrous the consequences of the war, the administration has not only ignored popular opposition, it has refused to listen to other voices from its own class allies and taken no advice about how to pursue U.S. imperialist interests.

Within the United States, popular support for the war has dropped to 35 percent in the latest polls. This the Bush gang completely dismisses, except to design electoral strategies to overcome it.

Bush has even rejected suggestions from military officials and imperialist civil servants who have only tactical differences with his administration's policies—policies that have damaged U.S. interests worldwide even as they inflict murder and mayhem in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon and threaten Iran, Syria, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba and Venezuela.

Through much of this summer the news of the U.S.-backed Israeli assault on Lebanon, which has been another administration setback, dominated the media. On Aug. 17 and 18, articles that refocused attention on the impending collapse of the Iraq occupation in its present form made it to the front page of the New York Times.

As bad as life was for the Iraqi people in the beginning of 2006, their suffering has grown enormously throughout the year. In July some 3,500 Iraqis died in fighting.

It is amazing to think that a few years ago there were voices in Europe and the United States, some even in the peace movement, that warned that a "precipitous" end to the occupation would bring a bloodbath. The criminal occupation continued—and the bloodbath is on.

## Iraqi resistance grows

But the Aug. 18 Times article had an additional message. Even with death squads connected to the puppet regime and U.S. bombs and mysterious masked figures killing 100 Iraqis a day, the resistance movement against the U.S. occupation is still growing.

U.S. officials in Iraq revealed to the Times that attacks against U.S. troops had nearly doubled in July as compared with last January. "In July, of 2,625 explosive devices, 1,666 exploded and 959 were discovered before they went off. In January, 1,454 bombs exploded or were found."

The Times quoted an anonymous "senior Defense Department" official: "The insurgency has gotten worse by almost all measures, with insurgent attacks at historically high levels. ... The insurgency has more public support and is demonstrably more capable in numbers of people active and in its ability to direct violence than at any point in time."

"Insurgency" is the word U.S. officials use to describe the heroic Iraqi resistance, especially in the areas of Iraq that are predominantly Sunni and where the Ba'ath Party still has a strong following.

After Gen. John Abizaid testified to Congress that Iraq was in danger of sliding toward civil war, "the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Sen. John W. Warner of Virginia, said that if Iraq fell into civil war, the committee might need to examine whether the authorization provided by Congress for the use of American force in Iraq would still be valid." (New York Times, Aug. 17) Since Warner has up to now been a strong supporter of Bush's policy in Iraq, it can be assumed that Bush's Aug. 21 declaration was aimed at preventing this defection from gaining momentum.

While the Bush government and Congress often speak as if they would do anything to avoid civil war and "sectarian violence" in Iraq, U.S. policies have exacerbated differences and provoked fighting between Iraqi communities. Ever since the Iraqi resistance showed its strength toward the end of 2003, U.S. strategists have advised the government to split Iraq into Kurdish, Sunni and Shiite sectors.

Never before in modern Iraqi history had Sunni and Shiite communities battled with each other on the basis of their sectarian differences. But Washington promoted an Iraqi Constitution that reinforces these differences. The U.S. occupiers have relied on some of the Shiite-based political parties and their militias like the Badr Brigades to provide the backbone of the puppet Iraqi state.

## Iraqi Shiites praise Hezbollah

While these parties and militias have been antagonistic to the Sunni-based resistance and especially to Ba'athists, they have not always followed Washington's wishes.

The most glaring example was when hundreds of thousands of people from around the country, called to Baghdad by Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army, demonstrated in solidarity with Hezbollah and its heroic resistance against the Israeli attack. The puppet Iraqi government had to allow

the demonstration, and it also publicly protested the U.S. and Israeli policy with regard to Lebanon.

In general, Hezbollah's successful defense against the supposedly invincible Israeli army has encouraged united struggle of Shiite and Sunni forces throughout the Arab and Muslim world.

While the Iraqi opponents to U.S. occupation have not yet formed a united national resistance, Washington can rely on none of the major forces in Iraq to provide a stable base for a client state.

Perhaps that's why another anonymous military affairs expert told the Times that "senior administration officials have acknowledged to me that they are considering alternatives other than democracy." While no serious observer of the Iraq occupation ever thought Bush was sincerely interested in "democracy," this comment means that the administration is considering changing the current Iraqi regime that resulted from elections.

## Haditha shows dilemma of occupation

On Aug. 18, the Times and other media reported on the news of the military investigation of last fall's events in Haditha. This is the small city in Iraq where a group of U.S. Marines killed 24 Iraqi civilians under suspicious circumstances and, Iraqis say, raped a young Iraqi girl and murdered her family members.

The latest news was that not only did the rank-and-file Marines involved in the massacre lie in their statements to investigators, but senior Marine officers failed to aggressively investigate the events and indeed could be seen as having covered up the crimes, although they are not directly charged with this.

The logbook for last Nov. 19, the day of the crime, had all its pages missing. In addition, Marine officers originally told investigators that a video of the day's events taken

by a drone was unavailable. Later, after an initial investigation had been completed, these Marines were forced to produce the tape, which did exist after all.

The Marines' original report claimed that 15 civilian deaths were caused by a mine explosion. This was a lie that everyone knew was a lie. It is doubtful that any of the 24 people killed were resistance fighters, although the resistance was strong in Haditha and had strong popular support.

While the Marines' actions in Haditha were excessively cruel and violent toward the Iraqi people, it is apparent that the situation itself—enforcing an occupation against a popular resistance—makes such massacres almost inevitable, just as they were in Vietnam. The military brass from Bush on down impose an attitude that Iraqis are less than human, that they are all dangerous to U.S. troops and that troops can open fire at them at will.

According to the Aug. 20 New York Times Magazine, the message on the wall at one U.S. base near Barwana in Anbar province was, "Be polite, be professional, have a plan to kill everyone you meet." The Times article discussed the weaknesses in the puppet Iraqi army and indicated it would be impossible for the Iraqi army to replace U.S. troops in years, let alone months.

Now the Pentagon is again calling up troops on "inactive ready reserve" status to send them to Iraq. These are troops who had ended their active military duty over a year ago. Additional U.S. troops are being positioned in Baghdad from Anbar province, where the fighting has been hardest. Everything points toward a troop increase rather than a pullback.

The most optimistic news is that resistance within the U.S. military to being used as war criminals and/or cannon fodder is growing. One can only hope this resistance grows quickly. □

# Hezbollah calls for united front

*Continued from page 8*  
of Turkey—WW] ...!

## It is possible to see the posters of Che, Chávez, Ahmadinejad and Hezbollah side by side in the streets of Beirut. Are these the signs of a new polarization?

We salute the leaders and the peoples of Latin America. They have resisted heroically against the American bandits and have been a source of morale for us. They are guiding the way for the oppressed peoples. Go and wander around our streets...! You will witness how our people have embraced Chávez and Ernesto Che Guevara. Nearly in every house, you will come across posters of Che or Chávez. What we are saying to our socialist friends who want to fight together with us for fraternity and freedom, do not come at all if you are going to say religion is an opiate. We do not agree with this analysis. Here is the biggest proof of this in our streets with the pictures of Chávez, Che, Sadr and Hamaney waving along together. These leaders are saluting our people in unison. So long as we respect your beliefs, and you respect ours, there is no imperialist power we cannot defeat!

## Western governments are intensifying their pressure on Damascus and Tehran for which they are proposing a change of regime. Some

## sources are of the view that the attack on Lebanon will be directed on Syria. Is a regional war possible?

The centers of imperialist power want to make collaborators of our region as a whole. They expect us to kneel before them. Syria, Iran and we are opposing this. The provocation concerning the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and the efforts to secure the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon and going even further, their wish to attack callously on to Tehran and Damascus are all due to this reason. Syria, with Iran and Hezbollah will certainly resist this. The imperialists of the west are seeking to make a second Kosovo out of Lebanon and our region. They are seeking to create a clash between sects. But we have spoiled this trick. In our streets, the whole of Lebanon, with its Christians, Sunnis and Shias, are flying the flags of Hezbollah. Again, the unipolar world has already been left back in history. There is us, there is Iran, there is Syria, there is Venezuela, Cuba and North Korea. There are the resisting peoples of Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan! As long as there is imperialism and occupations, these people will continue resisting. They can forget about peace. If they want peace, they should now respect the freedom of peoples and should eliminate the collaborating gangs. God willing, the victory will be ours. They are

not going to be able to turn our country and region into a Kosovo. Now our people are aware of everything and will not play into imperialist tricks. We will absolutely not permit them to attack Iran or Syria. We are going to fight for our freedom to the last drop of our blood. Let no one doubt this. They are claiming that Iran has nuclear weapons at its disposal. On the contrary, most of the nuclear weapons are in the hands of the collaborating gang of Israel and the U.S. Furthermore, nuclear weapons are nothing but excuses put forward in order to create collaborating regimes in the region.

## There are claims that Hezbollah is being directed by Tehran.

This is a great lie. We are an independent Lebanese organization. We do not take orders from anyone. But this does not mean that we are not going to form alliances. Let me reiterate, we are on a side. We are on the side of Iran and Syria. They are our brothers. We are going to oppose any attack directed at Tehran and Damascus to the last drop of our blood just as we do in Lebanon. We uphold global resistance against global imperial terrorism. Peace cannot be unilateral. So long as there is imperialism in the world, a permanent peace is impossible. This war will not come to an end as long as there are occupations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. □

# Was Lebanon a prelude to attack on Iran?

By Ardeshir Ommani

On July 31 the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1696, which demands that Iran suspend all uranium enrichment related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, by Aug. 30. This resolution was passed before Iran had an opportunity to study and respond to the package of incentives, which Iran had said it would respond to by Aug. 22. The resolution states that Iran must comply with its provisions and suspend uranium enrichment or it will face the possibility of economic and diplomatic sanctions by the powers that sponsored the draft of the resolution.

For the Security Council to issue a resolution that orders a nation, which has suffered greatly at the hands of the U.S., to indefinitely suspend its nuclear energy program is one thing; for this to be lawful, just and fair is another. The resolution flagrantly violates the provisions of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and neglects the fact that more than 2,000 inspection days of Iran's nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found no transgressions from the NPT.

Prior to the offer of the incentives package presented by the "5 plus 1"—five members of the Security Council plus Germany—the Islamic Republic of Iran made its position clear. First, it would not accept a precondition of suspending its uranium enrichment program, which was the very issue that was supposed to be the subject of negotiations. Second, it considers its civilian nuclear energy program as an inalienable right of a sovereign state under the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And third, Iran would not exchange its nuclear enrichment program for a package of promises, such as possible membership in the World Trade Organization in 10 years or the future construction of light-water reactors. Similar promises were given to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by the United States and they were never honored.

But this is not the first time that the Security Council, under pressure of the U.S., has suggested sanctions against a country at odds with Washington. Before the U.S. illegal war on Iraq, the council passed a resolution that imposed harsh and broad sanctions on Iraq for more than a decade. These sanctions resulted in the deaths of half a million Iraqi children.

It is not a secret that the Security Council, with the U.S., Britain and France on one side, has permanently tipped the balance of power in the interests of the developed capitalist states. Furthermore, the above-mentioned countries, with less than 10 percent of the world's population, have veto power over the remaining 90

percent. This composition of the world order in the UN is unjust and hence unsustainable.

Since the start of George W. Bush's presidency in 2001, which was soon followed by the catastrophic events of Sept. 11, U.S. foreign policy orientation has taken more than ever an adventurous turn, instigating wars of aggression, directly invading Iraq, setting up a puppet government in Afghanistan, and currently promoting, funding and fully backing Israel's invasion of Lebanon. But all the while Bush & Co. blame Iran and Syria for "instability" in the region.

## Israel's invincibility myth shattered

This pattern of illicit conduct could be observed clearly when Bush, at the G-8 Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, on July 16, described Iran and Syria as the "root causes" of instability, destruction and death in Lebanon and Palestine. Yes, Bush was right when he said that the world is witnessing a "new Middle East" in the aftermath of Israel's invasion of Lebanon—but it is a Middle East in which the credibility of the U.S. as an impartial broker is seriously challenged, even among the middle classes. The myth that no army in the region can stand up to Israel has been badly shattered.

As for the "root causes of instability," Iran, under the leadership of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has been recognized and admired by the Arab, Muslim and world-wide oppressed masses as a reliable and formidable force challenging the U.S. dream of domination in the Middle East. And Syria has emerged as a necessary and logical ally of the Lebanese people.

Seymour Hersh, in his "Watching Lebanon" article in the Aug. 12 issue of the New Yorker magazine, cites statements, policies and practices of the U.S. government showing that Israel's war on Lebanon could "serve as a prelude to a potential American attack to destroy Iran's nuclear installations."

Strangely enough, the current U.S. administration, followed slavishly by the British government, turns every opportu-



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Ardeshir Ommani, center.

nity for peace and progress into war and regression. Remaining true to its illegitimate ambition, at the end of every unsuccessful attempt at subjugating the people of the Middle East, the Bush administration's drive and appetite for widening the arena of war, from Lebanon to the borders of Pakistan, has intensified.

This passionate affection and adoration for war has reached such a height that Newt Gingrich, former Republican House speaker and a current Fox news analyst, in two separate interviews recently concluded that the U.S. strategy in Iraq "has failed," which is nothing new, but added that "America is in World War III and President Bush should say so."

Some U.S. figures admit that Israel's invasion of Lebanon was a tactical preparation in the U.S.-Israel strategy of war against Iran. This prelude to the upcoming war with Iran will undoubtedly take the form of containment on financial, commercial, cultural, political and diplomatic exchanges, the relics of the cold war era.

Iran has the world's second-biggest proven oil reserves, after Saudi Arabia, and is the world's fourth-largest producer of oil.

As long as the world is in need of Iranian oil and gas, the West cannot freeze the Iranian financial assets used to finance the imports of industrial, chemical, pharmaceutical, medical and electrical products.

## Sanctions as a form of war

The main purpose of sanctions, used particularly as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy, is to damage the backbone of the Iranian economy and drown the masses of people in poverty by way of unemployment and lack of sanitation, transportation, education facilities and health services.

By doing so, Washington expects that these shortages of goods and services imposed through sanctions will lead the population to rise up against their own government and carry out the Bush order of "regime change." But as the case of Cuba has proved to the world, this

is clearly wishful thinking on the part of the instigators in Washington.

The U.S.-E.U. pretense for such cruel policies toward the Iranian people has been packaged in their fabricated claim that Iran's civilian nuclear energy program is a cover for the production of nuclear weapons and therefore Iran must permanently suspend its uranium enrichment process in exchange for a handful of peanuts.

No doubt, the imposition of sanctions by the West through the United Nations Security Council is a declaration of hostility towards Iran. Already the United States has imposed sanctions against a dozen Chinese and Russian state enterprises that have had commercial transactions with some sectors of the Iranian industries.

The growing threats against Iran are an extension of the U.S. war in Iraq and U.S.-backed Israeli war on Lebanon and Palestine. The anti-war movement that stood up in solidarity with those struggles should also stand up in solidarity with Iran.

Go to: [www.StopWarOnIran.org](http://www.StopWarOnIran.org) and [www.progressiveportals.com/aifc](http://www.progressiveportals.com/aifc) for more information.

*The writer is a founder of the American-Iranian Friendship Committee.*

## AFGHANISTAN

# U.S./Canadian casualties mount

By G. Dunkel

The first victory Bush and his team proclaimed in their "war against terror" was overthrowing the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001 shortly after 9/11. Following the script of the Rumsfeld doctrine, this victory was supposed to be short, sharp and effective.

Now, five years later, the Bushites' rosy proclamations are fading. The Montreal Gazette of Aug. 18 reports that hush-hush behind-the-scenes talks are taking place between NATO and some factions of the Taliban in the province of Kandahar, a very large city in south Afghanistan close to the Pakistani border. This was confirmed by Canadian Forces Major Scott Lundy.

Twenty-six Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed since Canadian forces deployed to Afghanistan in 2002,

with 19 dying in the past six months. While this is far less than U.S. losses in Iraq, Canada is a far smaller country and each loss has been extensively reported, with pictures of the bodies returning home and the funeral rites both on television and in the written press.

A recent Canadian press poll has 49 percent of English-speaking and 62 percent of French-speaking Canadians opposed to the Canadian presence in Afghanistan.

A similar reaction has taken place in Great Britain, following losses in the British forces in Afghanistan. The Independent, a liberal British newspaper generally opposed to Prime Minister Blair's interventions, ran a long report Aug. 21 on how the Taliban have penetrated Kandahar.

Local residents feel that if the U.S. left Kandahar, it would fall to the Taliban in a week. While NATO and UN forces don't appear poised to leave any time soon, the

Taliban felt strong enough to try to take over a regional center close to the city. They lost the battle, but the fact that they felt strong enough to try is an indication of their growing strength and the weakness of the U.S./NATO position.

The fighting has grown so intense that even the U.S. press has started covering it in the past few days.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, with most of its people living under feudal-like conditions. Barely half of the population is literate and education for girls and young women is still taboo in many parts of the country. Despite major social problems, however, five years of military firepower by the U.S. and its allies have not been able to overcome this popular resistance, led by Islamic fundamentalists, and set up a stable puppet government.

*Email: [gdunkel@workers.org](mailto:gdunkel@workers.org)*

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# Israeli occupation of Syrian lands

By Michael Kramer

The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War resulted in a vast expansion of the areas encompassed by the Zionist colonial enterprise known as the so-called State of Israel. Parts of Egypt, Syria and additional Palestinian lands came under military occupation.

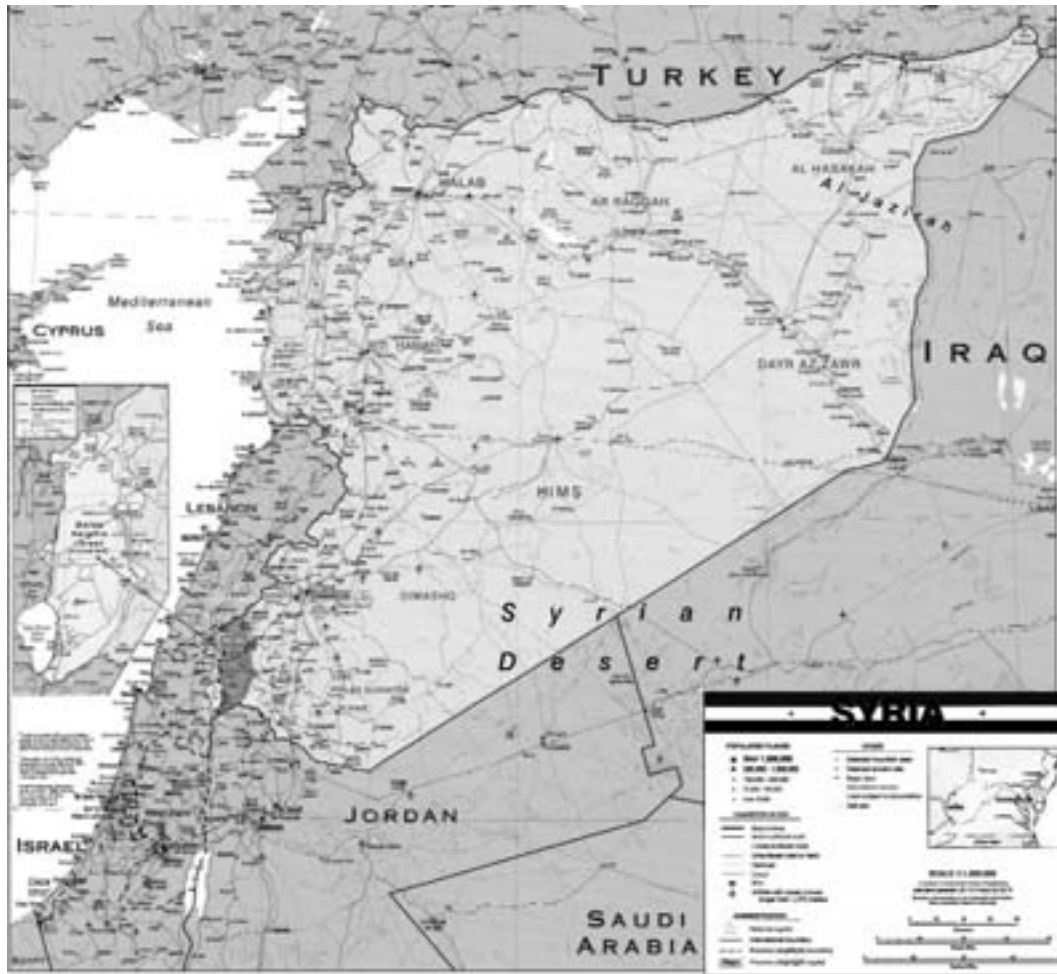
The Egyptian lands—the Sinai Peninsula including the Abu Rodeis oil fields—were returned in 1982 following a 1979 U.S.-brokered peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Syrian and Palestinian lands remain under occupation 39 years later, although the Zionists have been forced into partial retreats, at great cost and sacrifice, from the Syrian city of Quneitra in May 1974 and from the Gaza region of Palestine in September 2005.

Occupied Syria lies in the southwestern part of the country, in the province of Quneitra. It includes the western part of the Golan Heights plateau with its apples the size of grapefruits, the southern and eastern slopes of the beautiful 9,200 foot Mount Hermon, and the stunning shoreline along Lake Tiberius.

The area seized by the Zionists had a population before June 1967 of around 148,000, including 9,000 Palestinians who had fled from northern Palestine in 1948. They lived in 139 villages and two towns.

Within a few days after the occupation began the population dropped to around 6,500, as the result of mass expulsion and wartime flight. Those who fled have not been allowed to return. As with Palestine, "the right of return" is a just demand and



## COMMENTARY

not negotiable.

Also, the Syrian people have the right to end the occupation by any means they think is necessary.

The provincial capital, also called Quneitra, was totally bulldozed except for a movie theater. It had had a population of 25,000. Only five villages, all located in

the northern Golan Heights, remained populated. The others were also bulldozed. Many of the stone fences that marked pastures, orchards and wheat fields in this rich agricultural area remain.

In many ways the occupation of Syria parallels the occupation of Palestine. Right behind the Israeli Defense Forces

came the Zionist settlers. Today there are over 18,000 settlers living in the Golan Heights in 41 settlements. Some of the settlements are built over the sites of destroyed Syrian villages. The names of geographical features have been changed from Arabic to Hebrew. Aquifers and rivers are under complete Israeli control, with large amounts of water diverted to the settlements.

The population of Syrians who were able to stay has today grown to 25,000. They remain steadfast in their resistance to the occupation. On Dec. 14, 1981, the Israeli Knesset (parliament) annexed the occupied Syrian lands and demanded that the population accept Israeli ID cards. The Syrians refused—and on Feb. 14, 1982, launched a successful 157-day general strike that forced the Zionists to retreat. Every year since on Feb. 14, the anniversary of this historic strike is commemorated.

Other than the recent feature film "The Syrian Bride," the continued illegal occupation of part of Syria has received little attention

from the media or even from the international anti-war and progressive solidarity movements. It is time for this to change.

*The writer who is also anti-Zionist served in the Israeli Defense Forces and took part in ground operations in the Golan Heights during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War.*

# Campaign to account for war crimes

By Dustin Langley  
New York

On Aug. 30, the International Action Center and People Judge Bush will launch an international campaign to demand that the United States and Israel be held accountable for their war crimes against the people of Lebanon and Palestine.

The kick-off for this campaign will be held in New York City, at the United Nations Church Center at 44th Street and First Avenue, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

This meeting, which will be the first in a series of public gatherings, will begin with live and videotaped testimony from eyewitnesses from Lebanon and Palestine. The campaign has already received support and endorsements from all corners of the globe.

The Aug. 30 program will include former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, representatives from the Palestinian, Lebanese, and Iranian communities, solidarity organizers, and anti-war and community activists.

Presentations will address:

- The planning and preparation for war by the U.S. and Israel, including a historical overview of the U.S. agenda in

the Middle East.

- Details of U.S./Israeli violations of the Geneva Conventions, the Nuremberg Charter, numerous U.N. resolutions, and other international laws and treaties.
- A detailed expose of U.S. culpability in Israeli war crimes.
- The links between the Israeli attacks in Lebanon and Palestine and the U.S. agenda in Iran, Syria, and Iraq.

The meeting will also explore the serious domestic costs of Bush's agenda of endless war. "Each bomb dropped on Lebanon also explodes in poor and oppressed communities here," said Larry Holmes of the International Action Center. "The money spent to kill and maim could provide health care for all. It could rebuild cities and infrastructure, like the levees in New Orleans, rather than foster a deadly and purposeful policy of racism and neglect that still has not been addressed."

Ramsey Clark, who helped initiate the call for the Campaign for Accountability, wrote, "Individuals in the U.S. and Israeli governments must be held accountable by prosecution for their criminal acts, and responsible leaders must be removed from

office by impeachment in the U.S. and appropriate legal action in Israel."

"The Aug. 30th meeting at the UN will mark the beginning of an international effort," said Sara Flounders, an organizer with the Campaign for Accountability. "This will be a historic opportunity to expose, with documents, video, and eyewitness accounts, the U.S./Israeli planning and preparation for all out war against all forms of popular resistance."

"However, this will be much more than an expose of U.S./Israeli war crimes," Flounders said. "The real thrust of the Campaign for Accountability is to build

resistance to the U.S. agenda of endless war and corporate hegemony in the Middle East. The people of the region have the right to resist U.S./Israeli invasion and occupation, and activists in the U.S. have an obligation to defend that right and to do everything within our power to demand 'U.S. out of the Middle East!'"

For more information on the Campaign for Accountability, see [www.PeopleJudgeBush.org](http://www.PeopleJudgeBush.org).

*The writer is a U.S. Navy veteran and an organizer with the Campaign for Accountability.*

## Israeli soldiers refused Lebanon duty

Although early reports from Israel from the government and pro-government media insisted that there was overwhelming support from the Jewish population for the invasion of Lebanon, the Israeli organizations New Profile and Yesh Gvul report that many soldiers and reservists in the Israeli Army have avoided service in Lebanon and hundreds have said they would refuse. At least 10 of those who refused have been sentenced to jail time, most of them to 28 days in military prison.

In the most publicized cases, Israeli soldiers and officers have stated their opposition to the war on moral and political grounds. For example, Capt. Amir Pasteur, an infantry officer and student at Tel Aviv University, said at his trial that "taking part in this war runs con-

trary to the values upon which I was brought up."

Sgt. Itzik Shabbat, explained on July 19, "In my opinion only by refusing to participate in this war can we bring this madness to an end and also prepare to end the false representation that the entire home front supports this unnecessary war, which is being carried out under false pretenses."

According to the Israeli anti-war groups, which were able to hold some demonstrations in the thousands and many smaller ones during the Lebanon offensive, along with the dozen or so outspoken soldiers who challenged the war plans there were over 100 troops who avoided service on medical and physical grounds or who simply left the country.

—John Catalinotto

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## What is to be done?

# Scientists find new perils in global warming

By Deirdre Griswold

Scientists are now confirming what many people have suspected for several years: that there is a connection between global warming and a rise in seismic activity leading to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

This news should be yet another alert to governments around the world—especially the U.S., which produces one quarter of the greenhouse gases that cause global warming—that a Herculean effort must begin now to reduce the use of fossil fuels and at the same time prepare for massive emergencies.

Instead, the Herculean effort is going into taking toothpaste and bottled water away from airline passengers. It is going into the disastrous wars that Washington has either launched or provoked in the Middle East, which in turn are aimed at control of the world's richest oil area to generate profits for the politically powerful energy companies and banks while there's still money to be made.

All of this only compounds the problem of global warming and its effect upon our entire planet.

### Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods—and earthquakes?

In the United States, there is now widespread awareness that devastating storms are being generated by a warmer Atlantic Ocean. Many parts of the country brace for hurricanes, tornadoes and floods each summer. In July, a heat wave that crossed the continent brought hundreds of deaths and a scorched earth susceptible to dangerous wildfires.

After Katrina, can there be any excuses for not preparing every community for the worst?

Yet even these casualties pale in comparison to the deaths in Asia over the last two years from earthquakes and related tsunamis. The Indian Ocean tsunami of Dec. 26, 2004, caused by an earthquake deep below the sea off the island of Sumatra, killed about 250,000 people in a few hours. Had there been an early-warning system in place to alert people along the coasts to immediately seek higher ground, like the one the U.S. has installed around the Pacific rim, many, perhaps most, of these casualties could have been avoided.

The earthquake that hit a remote mountain area in Pakistan and Kashmir on Oct. 8, 2005, led to 75,000 deaths within the first month, and it was feared that many more people would not survive the harsh winter. An estimated 3.3 million people in Pakistan were left homeless, and landslides blocked most of the small roads into the area.

No one can say whether or not these particular earthquakes were precipitated by global warming. But it is a fact that the Earth's crust is shifting as glaciers melt and water is redistributed around the planet.

### 'Evidence is stacking up'

An article in New Scientist magazine of May 27 titled "Climate change: Tearing the Earth apart?" takes a cautious but clear look at what is already happening as a result of climate change.

"All over the world evidence is stacking up that changes in global climate can and do affect the frequencies of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and catastrophic sea-floor landslides. Not only has this hap-

pened several times throughout Earth's history, the evidence suggests that it is starting to happen again," writes Bill McGuire.

"The climate interacts with the Earth's crust via the changing mass of water and ice that is shifted around the planet. The pressure of water and ice on the crust is considerable: 1 cubic meter of water weighs 1 ton, while the same volume of ice weighs slightly less, up to 0.9 tons. With this in mind, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the loading and unloading of the Earth's crust by ice or water can trigger seismic and volcanic activity and even landslides," he explains.

Scientists have confirmed that during both the arrival and departure of the last ice age, there was a "link between glacial advances and retreats and the rate of global volcanism."

In parts of the North American continent, the Earth's crust may still be adjusting to the melting of glaciers some 10,000 years ago.

"Yet while we may still be feeling the effects of the last ice age," says McGuire, "the impact of today's warming trend might already be making itself felt. In 2004 NASA geophysicist Jeanne Sauber and geologist Bruce Molnia of the U.S. Geological Survey linked unloading of the crust as a result of the rapid glacial melting in south-west Alaska to a magnitude 7.2 earthquake in 1979, and warned that more could be on the way. 'In areas like Alaska, where earthquakes occur and glaciers are changing, their relationship must be considered to better assess earthquake hazard,' says Sauber."

Today, cruise ships in Alaska's magnificent Prince William Sound—the site of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill—routinely entertain their passengers by stopping within stone's throw of ancient glaciers. To everyone's delight, these melting mountains of ice pop and groan as they make

their slow progress downhill, huge chunks breaking off and falling into the water every few minutes.

The story is the same all over the world. The snow is melting and glaciers are receding in the Alps, the Himalayas, the Rockies and the Andes, all of which are crisscrossed with geological faults.

"Of particular concern is the continental shelf around Greenland," says McGuire. "Here, the unloading and uplift that would follow catastrophic melting of the ice sheet might trigger earthquakes strong enough to dislodge the huge piles of sediment that have accumulated around the edges of the land. The resulting underwater landslides could generate tsunamis on a scale comparable to those that followed the Storegga slide 8,000 years ago off the west coast of Norway. ... The result was a tsunami more than 20 meters [60 feet] high in the Shetland Isles off the north coast of Scotland and up to 6 meters [18 feet] high along the east coast of the Scottish mainland. This region is now stable, but similar piles of sediment near Greenland are ripe for collapse."

These catastrophes are still just in the realm of possibility. However, scientists are predicting that by the end of this century, if global warming continues, many glaciers will have melted and sea levels will have risen markedly. Within just one generation, this process may become irreversible.

### What kind of future?

People with the means to do so start preparing for their children's future at birth. They look ahead to getting them into good schools and making sure they have health coverage. They set up trust funds and

take out life insurance policies to provide for their kids in case anything happens.

These are the people who run this capitalist society—the moneyed class. Why do they seem paralyzed when it comes to doing anything about the looming disasters of global warming? Do they really think that their money will protect them and their families? That they can buy their way out and the hell with the rest of us?

Of course, they've done it before. It wasn't the rich in New Orleans who were left behind as the floodwaters rose. They don't live in the trailer camps or flimsy

shacks that explode when tornadoes roar by.

Yet even rich tourists were trapped by the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Modern humans have been around for at least 200,000 years and during most of that time lived in communities where wealth was shared. Global warming caused by the combustion of fossil fuels began only decades ago. It is not the product of humanity per se, but of a particular socio-economic system, capitalism, that has vastly expanded the scientific-technological and productive apparatus—but without planning, with little forethought, and always driven by the bottom line: profits for the ruling class.

The human race will survive. It has been through many other catastrophes—both social and natural—and is a supremely adaptable species. But capitalism? It will have to go. Its gravediggers will be those who have the least to lose and the most to gain by breaking the political grip of the privileged few and reorganizing production on a rational, socialized basis to meet the long-term needs of all the people sharing this planet. □



# The roots of Zionism

The following are excerpts from a March 20, 2003, article, "Why Palestine must be defended," by Workers World managing editor, Leslie Feinberg. Go to [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) to read the entire article.

It is the claim by Zionism and its imperial patrons that Israel is a Jewish homeland that has won sympathy from those who, after the horrors of the holocaust, felt the Jewish people deserved a safe haven.

In reality, the establishment of the state of Israel is a crime of monstrous proportions against the Palestinian people. Carrying out this state terrorism in the name of all Jewish people compounds that crime.

Since the end of World War II, when the U.S. emerged as the dominant force in the oil-rich Middle East, the goal of Washington has not been peace in the region, but pacification. Today the oil giants, banking institutions and military-industrial complex are releasing their war hawks to ensure all-out military aggression against any national liberation movement or independent country that resists re-colonization.

Quelling opposition means trying to crush the Palestinian movement, the heartbeat of regional resistance to the empire.

The Israeli settler state is, by the admission of its own early ideologues, a bulwark

for imperialist economic, political and military ambitions in the region.

More than half a century ago, former Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion explained, "Strengthening Israel helps the Western powers to maintain equilibrium and stability in the Middle East. Israel is to become the watchdog. There is no fear that Israel will undertake any aggressive policy towards the Arab states when this would explicitly contradict the wishes of the U.S. and Britain. But if for any reason the Western powers should sometimes prefer to close their eyes, Israel could be relied upon to punish one or several neighboring states whose discourtesy towards the West went beyond the bounds of the permissible." (Ha'Aretz, Sept. 30, 1951)

When progressive movements made it difficult for Washington to directly prop up right-wing regimes, the Zionists stepped up to bat.

After World War II, the ruling circles in the U.S. and Britain infested themselves with anti-Semitism and racism, and cynically manipulated desperation to divert the Jewish exodus from Europe to Palestine.

Zionist commandos drove Palestinians from their homes, villages and towns with mass lynchings and terror campaigns, while claiming Israel was "a land without a people for a people without a land."

It was a racist lie. And the promise of a

"safe homeland" was a lie, too.

In the more than 50 years since what the Palestinians call Al-Nakba—the Catastrophe—there has been no peace. The U.S. continues to fund a perpetual state of war, pitting Jews against Arab liberation.

This tiny state, with a population of only 5.5 million people, is the biggest recipient of U.S. military aid in the world. Because of its relationship with Washington, it has a nuclear capability, F-16 fighter jets, helicopter gunships, sophisticated tanks, and limitless weapons for combat against Palestinian communities.

Tel Aviv has used these weapons not only to try to quash Palestinian resistance, but to invade and steal territory from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan, and to pummel Lebanon.

When Washington and Tel Aviv talk about peace, they really mean that the Palestinians must accept the loss of their homeland and stop resisting. But half a century of occupation, forced Diaspora, mass murders, beatings, imprisonment, torture, squalid living conditions and economic deprivation have not forced the Palestinian people to surrender.

Is fighting against the crimes of Israel and for Palestinian self-determination consistent with battling anti-Semitism? It is not only consistent, it is absolutely essential. □

## A good sign

Something happened this August that was a good sign. So far it is only a sign, but even this is a cause to hope for new struggles.

A Detroit-area federal district judge—a senior African-American woman named Anna Diggs Taylor—slapped down the arrogant president of the United States by ruling that it is unconstitutional for the Bush administration to monitor U.S. citizens' international communications without a court warrant.

In her explanation of this ruling, she said: "There are no hereditary kings in America and no powers not created by the Constitution."

Now, no one should be misled about what this means for freedoms and privacy and rights. Nor should they think it will stop wiretaps if the government really wants them. Before Bush, all the government had to do to get people's phones tapped was ask a rubber-stamp committee to authorize the request.

Nor is Bush giving in. He has said that the judge and those who support the decision "don't understand the world we live in." That is, George Bush insists that he needs to keep this authority he usurped, all because of his "war on terror." It's the same argument he used to justify the U.S. invasion and destruction of Afghanistan. It's the same argument he used to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and now to justify his decision to remain in Iraq. It's the same

argument he uses for threatening Iran and Syria. It's the same argument he used to support Israel's bombing and invasion of Lebanon, and for torturing prisoners in Guantánamo.

Judge Taylor's decision won't eliminate these crimes, but that doesn't diminish what she has done.

Some legal pedants have criticized the judge's phrasing of her decision. They are missing the point. She finally said "no" to George Bush and his phony "war on terror." She stood up to him and to an administration that has won the world series for arrogance of power.

It's not the strongest challenge to his authority. That has come from the Iraqi resistance, from the Lebanese who refused to allow the "invincible" Israeli armed forces to grab a foothold in their country, from the Cubans and Venezuelans who demand their sovereignty, from Afghans who have made their country a living hell for occupation troops.

But none of the above happened right here at home. And though Judge Taylor's dissent doesn't carry the weight of a mass strike or of the huge demonstrations that have confronted the power of the Bush regime, it's at least a good sign that someone in the judicial system is reflecting the shift in mass consciousness and starting to say "no" to this arrogant, corrupt and criminal regime in Washington. Let's hope it's only a beginning. □



WW PHOTO: PETER COOK

### BOSTON FORUM:

## Long live Fidel!

A meeting in solidarity with socialist Cuba was held on Aug. 17 in Boston. Speakers discussed many of the advances that have taken place in Cuba since the 1959 revolution, including education, health care and the sciences. The U.S. government's lack of response to Hurricane Katrina was compared to the impact that socialist planning has had on the Cuban response to natural disasters. U.S. imperialism's repeated attempts to overthrow the Cuban government were soundly denounced, as was the lack of justice and continued detention of the Cuban 5.

Those in attendance all signed a card wishing President Fidel Castro a happy 80th birthday and a speedy recovery from the surgery that has forced him to tem-

porarily step aside.

Speakers included: Berta Joubert-Ceci of Workers World Party; Tony Van Der Meer, Co-Chair of the Boston Rosa Parks Human Rights Day Committee; Jorge Marin, MLK Jr., Bolivarian Circle; Nalda Vigezzi, July 26th Coalition; Puerto Rican activist Dorotea Manuela; Josue Renaud of the New England Human Rights Organization for Haiti; and Roberto Torres of Latinos for Social Change. Askia Toure read several of his poems on Cuba; Ahmad Kawash of the Palestinian American Congress, who was unable to attend, sent a message of solidarity. Mia Campbell chaired the event and read one of her poems.

—Evan Sarmiento and Peter Cook

# Raúl Castro speaks on

*Granma's Lázaro Barredo Medina had a conversation with General of the Cuban Army Raúl Castro Ruz on Aug. 18 in his office at the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINFAR). He has taken on the duties of his beloved brother, President Fidel Castro, who is recovering from stomach surgery. Go to [www.granma.cu](http://www.granma.cu) to read the entire interview.*

**Granma: Comrade Raúl, our people joyfully received the message and photographs of the Comandante en Jefe published in the press and the subsequent television report of the encounter with President Chávez. It would be greatly appreciated by millions of people who have attentively followed information on the state of health of compañero Fidel, to hear your personal assessment, as someone always so united to him.**

**Raúl Castro Ruz:** On behalf of all the people, I will begin by congratulating and thanking the doctors and the other compañeros and compañeras who have attended to him in an excellent manner, with an unsurpassable professionalism and, above all, with much love and dedication. This has been a very important factor in Fidel's progressive recovery.

Moreover, I think that his exceptional physical and mental nature has also been essential to his satisfactory and gradual recovery.

**We, Cubans, even when we don't see you for a while on television or in the written press, know that you are there, at your combat post as always. But I think that these words of yours will also disarm the speculation and lies present in some of the foreign media.**

If you are referring to those in other countries who entertain themselves by speculating about if I am going to appear on television or in the papers or not; well, I appeared with Fidel on Sunday (August 13) and when I received President Chávez, although really those comments don't bother me in the slightest.

What does interest me greatly is what our people are thinking, although, fortunately, we live in this geographically small island, where everything that we are doing is known. I can confirm that when I talk with the population or other local leaders in my tours of the country.

As a point of fact, I am not used to making frequent appearances in public, except at times when it is required. Many tasks related to defense should not be made public and have to be handled with maximum care, and that has been one of my fundamental responsibilities as FAR minister.

**No essential orientation has been overlooked.**

On behalf of the Comandante en Jefe and the Party leadership, I will take the opportunity of thanking everyone for the innumerable displays of support for the Revolution and for the content of his Proclamation, as well as the demonstrations of affection that have been expressed by figures from the cultural sector; professionals and workers in all sectors; campesinos, soldiers, housewives, students, pioneers; among them numerous believers, public figures and religious institutions from the overwhelming majority of denominations; finally, the people of Cuba. It has been a conclusive demonstration of their unbreakable unity and their revolutionary consciousness, essential pillars of the fortitude of our country.

**The breadth of support coming from all over the world has also been impressive.**

Yes, really heartening. That is why I should also like to express thanks for the numerous messages of solidarity and respect from all over the world, from people of the most diverse social categories, from simple workers to intellectual and political figures, as well as a significant and representative number of religious institutions and figures. All of them have done so without any conditions whatsoever. Messages from the few who did not act in that way were not accepted or acknowledged.

Also, they have been joined to date [Aug. 17] by some 12,000 signatories supporting the call made 10 days ago by prominent cultural personalities from more than 100 countries, among them various Nobel Prize winners, condemning the interfering and aggressive statements of the government of the United States, and which also exposes the openly interventionist nature of the Bush Plan, as we are calling that monster that would seem to be dusted off from the times when—as at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th—they frustrated the independence of Cuba and imposed their administrators on us.

Now they have also designed one for the supposed "transition." One by McCarry, who recently stated that the United States does not accept the continuity of the Cuban Revolution, although he didn't say how they are thinking of averting that.

**One gets the impression that the enemies of the Revolution have been left speechless by the conclusive reaction of the Cuban population, immune to their giant and disgraceful campaign of offenses and lies. They are talking with surprise at the calm reigning in Cuba, as if it was something unusual and not exactly normal, and which all of us here knew would happen in a situation such as this.**

As you were saying, absolute tranquility is reigning in the country. And something even more important, the serene, disciplined and decisive attitude that can be felt in every workplace, in every city, in every neighborhood. The same one that our people always assume in moments of difficulty. If we were to be guided solely by the internal situation, I am not exaggerating in affirming that it would not have been necessary to mobilize even one pioneer from among those who guard the ballot boxes in the elections.

But we have never ignored a threat from the enemy. It would be irresponsible to do so when faced with a government like that of the United States, which is declaring with the greatest audacity that it does not accept what is established in the Cuban Constitution. From over there, as if they were the rulers of the planet, they are saying that there must be a transition to a social regime of their liking and that they "would take note of those who oppose that." Although it seems incredible, this boorish and at the same time stupid attitude was assumed by President Bush a few days ago.



# 'Why the enemy can't defeat us'

## They'll have to waste a lot of paper and ink.

A lot. For that reason I would advise them to do the opposite. To "take note," as they say, of the annexationists on the payroll of the U.S. Interest Section here in Havana, those who are going to receive the crumbs of the announced \$80 million earmarked for subversion, because the bulk of it will be distributed in Miami, as is usually the case.

On the contrary, the list is going to be interminable. They would have to list the names of millions and millions of Cuban men and women, the same ones who are ready to receive their designated administrator with rifles in hand.

At this juncture, they should be very clear that it is not possible to achieve anything in Cuba with impositions and threats. On the contrary, we have always been disposed to normalize relations on an equal plane. What we do not accept is the arrogant and interventionist policy frequently assumed by the current administration of that country.

Recently rereading Party Congress documents, I found ideas that seemed to have been written today. For example, this excerpt from the Central Report presented by Fidel to the Third Congress in February 1986:

"As we have demonstrated many times, Cuba is not remiss to discussing its prolonged differences with the United States and to go out in search of peace and better relations between our people."

And he continued:

"But that would have to be on the basis of the most unrestricted respect for our condition as a country that does not tolerate shadows on its independence, for whose dignity and sovereignty entire generations of Cubans have fought and sacrificed themselves. This would be possible only when the United States decides to negotiate with seriousness and is willing to treat us with a spirit of equality, reciprocity and the fullest mutual respect."

## Nevertheless they are continuing with the same aggressive and arrogant policy as always.

That is the reality. More than 20 years have passed since Fidel pronounced the words that I have just cited; they have that 485-page interventionist plan that I already mentioned, approved in 2004, in which they detail how they propose to dismantle the achievements of the



Raúl Castro, holding paper, during interview.

PHOTO: GRANMA

Revolution in health, education, social security, agrarian reform and urban reform; in other words, to kick the people off their land, out of their homes so as to hand them back to their former owners, etc., etc., etc.

To cap it all, just a few days ago, on July 10, President Bush officially approved a document complementing the former one, and which they had posted with a very low profile on the Internet in June. They have openly stated that it includes a secret appendix that is not being published "for reasons of national security" and "to ensure its effective implementation;" those are literally the terms that they used, and which constitute a flagrant violation of international law.

For a while now we have been adopting measures to confront those plans. These were reinforced particularly when the current U.S. government initiated the unbridled warmongering policy that it has maintained to date, including the announced intention to attack without previous warning any of those places that they call the "sixty or more dark corners of the world."

## A notable escalation of aggression.

Effectively, and in 2003 the plans became more explicit. On Dec. 5 of that year, Mr. Roger Noriega, then assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere Affairs, declared—I don't know if it was intentional or a slip—that "the transition in Cuba—in other words—the death of Fidel—could happen at any moment and we have to be prepared to be agile and decisive." That "the United States wants to be sure that the regime's cronies have no hope of holding onto

power" and, so as to leave no doubt, he added that they were working "to ensure that there is no succession to the Castro regime." Subsequently he and other senior U.S. officials have returned to the theme insistently.

What other form exists for obtaining these goals that is not military aggression? Thus, the country adopted the pertinent measures for counteracting that real danger.

Faced with similar situations, Martí taught us what to do: "Plan against plan. Without a plan of resistance, a plan of attack cannot be defeated," he wrote in the newspaper *Patria* on June 11, 1892.

The United States government is not revealing the contents of that appendix because it is illegal. Its publication must be demanded, above all now that they have spoken about its existence in order to threaten Cuba.

On the contrary, our defense plans are transparent and legal, simply because they do not threaten anybody; their sole objective is to guarantee the sovereignty and independence of the homeland; they do not violate any national or international law whatsoever.

## Some of the empire's war hawks thought that the moment had come to destroy the Revolution this past July 31.

We could not rule out the risk of somebody going crazy, or even crazier, within the U.S. government.

Consequently, at 3 a.m. on Aug. 1, in fulfillment of the plans approved and signed on Jan. 13, 2005 by compañero Fidel, and after having made the established consultations, I decided to substantially raise our combative capacity and readiness via the implementation of the projected measures, including the mobilization of several tens of thousands of reservists and militia members, and the proposal to our principal units of reg-

ular troops, including the Special Troops, of missions demanded by the political/military situation that has been created.

All of the mobilized personnel has completed or is currently completing an important cycle of combat training and cohesion, part of that under campaign conditions.

These troops will rotate, in approximately equal numbers, as the proposed objectives are attained. All of the reservists and militia members who are to participate in these activities will be informed, with the necessary anticipation, of the date of incorporation into their units and the time that they will remain in these to fulfill their guard duty to the homeland.

It is not my intention to exaggerate the danger. I never have done so. Up until now, the attacks during these days have not gone further than rhetorical ones, except for the substantial increase in subversive anti-Cuba broadcasts over radio and television.

## They have announced the use of a new airplane.

Previously, they were using, at varying intervals, a military airplane known as Comando Solo. From this past Aug. 5, they began using another type of aircraft that has effected daily transmissions. On Aug. 11, it did so in conjunction with the aforementioned Comando Solo.

In fact, on the 5th and 6th, our radars detected that transmissions were being made from international waters, in outright violation of the agreements of the International Telecommunications Union, to which the United States is a signatory, which once again we are condemning via the corresponding channels and agencies, given that moreover these transmissions are affecting broadcasting in our country.

All things considered, they are spending millions in U.S. taxpayers' money to achieve the same result as ever: a TV that is not seen.

I add to these reflections on the country's defense an idea expressed by Fidel in 1975, in his Central Report to the First Party Congress, which I have quoted so much that I know it by heart:

"As long as imperialism exists, the Party, the State and the people will give their utmost attention to the services of defense. The revolutionary guard will never be neglected. History shows with too much eloquence that those who forget this principle do not survive the error."

That has been our guide throughout many years, and continues to be today for more than enough reasons. □

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## MUNDO OBRERO

# La huelga de PATCO

Continua de pagina 16

sito aéreo se han reorganizado.

Las huelgas son una escuela de la lucha de clases. Tienen que planearse cuidadosamente con anterioridad. Mientras el capitalismo continúa robando la plusvalía a l@s trabajador@s, las huelgas pueden llegar a nivel de huelgas generales y huelgas de brazos caídos, como hicieron en los años 30. O pueden decaer, como ha ocurrido en años recientes, a un bajo nivel.

Hay también muchas otras formas de lucha — económicas o políticas — aparte de las huelgas.

El tiempo más favorable para l@s tra-

bajador@s preparar una estrategia de huelga es en un periodo de acumulación capitalista rápido y antes de que empiece el ciclo de recesión. Esta fase económica actual, la cuál está produciendo riquezas sin precedente para unos pocos a expensas de la mayoría, puede proveer las condiciones para resucitar la militancia del movimiento laboral en la mesa de negociación y en las líneas de piquete.

Aquí está una perspectiva para una lucha amplia — organizada, independiente, multinacional y de clase — necesaria para invertir al declive de 25 años que empezó con la derrota de PATCO. □

## 25 AÑOS DESPUÉS

# ¿Qué se puede aprender de la huelga de PATCO?

Por Milt Neidenberg

Hace 25 años—el 3 de agosto de 1981—l@s trabajador@s de la Organización de Controladores Profesionales del Tráfico Aéreo (PATCO siglas en inglés), comenzaron una huelga. En busca de una semana de trabajo más corta, incremento de los salarios, mejora en las condiciones de trabajo y mejor seguridad para l@s pasajero@s, el sindicato desafió un ultimátum dado por el nuevo presidente Ronald Reagan de regresar al trabajo.

Cuarenta y ocho horas después, Reagan despidió a 11.359 controlador@s de tráfico que estaban en huelga.

Líderes y miembro@s del sindicato fueron arrestad@s, encarcelad@s y multad@s. La cuenta de sustento para la huelga con un valor de \$3.5 millones de dólares fue congelada, la huelga se rompió y eventualmente el gobierno invalidó el sindicato.

Reagan terminó lo que el Presidente Jimmy Carter había comenzado en enero de 1981, antes de dejar el puesto.

Un mes antes de que las negociaciones por un nuevo contrato comenzaran, la Agencia Federal de Aviación (FAA)—la agencia para la cual PATCO trabajaba, y el Departamento de Justicia compilaron una lista de líderes sindicales y miembro@s que serían arrestad@s si había huelga. Ambos partidos capitalistas, Republicano y Demócrata, fueron responsables por el desastre de PATCO, aunque Reagan fue más traidor y vicioso.

A solo semanas antes de las elecciones presidenciales, el 20 de octubre de 1980, el candidato Reagan escribió una carta tranquilizadora al entonces presidente de PATCO, Robert Poli, comprometiéndose a cooperar con el sindicato.

Reagan escribió, “Los miembros de mi gabinete me han informado ...que muy pocas personas están trabajando horas irrazonables con equipos obsoletos. ...Puede estar seguro de que si soy elegido como presidente, tomaré los pasos necesarios. ... le prometo a usted que mi administración trabajará junto a usted para traer un espíritu de cooperación entre el presidente y los controladores aéreos.”

Reagan se jactaba diciendo que él era un miembro de por vida de la AFL-CIO. En sus días de Hollywood, él había sido presidente del gremio de actores Screen Actors Guild.

### **PATCO hizo todo lo posible para que Reagan fuera electo**

Una vez electo, Reagan traicionó al sindicato y declaró que la huelga era “un peligro para la seguridad nacional.” Invocó la famosa ley antisindical Taft Hartley, la cual había sido legislada en 1947 bajo la administración del Presidente Harry Truman, un demócrata. Esta ley le da el poder a los presidentes de cualquier partido de romper huelgas y aún está en los libros.

Por 25 años, en todo lo que se ha escrito sobre PATCO en la prensa capitalista, las

mentiras, las traiciones, y las promesas rotas de ambos partidos junto al aparato represivo capitalista han sido suprimidas.

Un artículo escrito en el 25º aniversario de la huelga en la sección de opinión en el Washington Post, un periódico “liberal” capitalista, ignoró esta conducta traicionera que llevó a la destrucción de PATCO. El artículo, titulado “Ecos de una Huelga Rota,” se enfoca en la subsiguiente disminución de huelgas, membresía sindical y de trabajadores organizador@s. Fue escrito por Charles J. Whalen, economista político del Instituto para los Estudios de las Industrias, de la Universidad de Cornell.

Whalen declaró, “Inmediatamente luego de la huelga de PATCO, muchos observadores reportaron que la acción de Reagan fue un momento crucial en las relaciones laborales de los EEUU. La historia ha demostrado que esa caracterización fue muy precisa. Si es cierto que la huelga es la “única arma real” de los sindicatos, como dicen algunos sindicalistas, entonces prácticamente todo el movimiento sindical ha quedado desarmado. Esto también indica que el derecho legal para sindicalizarse y negociar colectivamente tiene poco significado real”.

Whalen citó datos compilados sobre las acciones de romphuelgas. “En 2005, las disputas laborales en los EEUU resultaron en 22 paros significativos, según la Agencia de Estadísticas Laborales (Bureau of Labor Statistics). Desde el fin de la Segunda Guerra Mundial hasta 1981, la cifra anual era casi dos veces esa, y a veces mucho mayor. La razón principal del declive agudo: el bien publicado despido de los trabajadores de PATCO alentó a los empresarios a través del país. De un día para el otro se volvió legítimo el amenazar a los empleados en huelga con reemplazos permanentes”.

### **Recesión tiene impacto en huelga de PATCO**

L@s trabajador@s de PATCO enfrentaron condiciones económicas desfavorables. La alta tasa de desempleo permitió que el gobierno llenara rápidamente los puestos de l@s controlador@s despedido@s. Pilotos, maquinistas y azafatas, temiendo la pérdida de sus trabajos, siguieron trabajando durante toda la crisis de PATCO.

PATCO careció del apoyo de un paro general, que el movimiento sindical no estuvo en condiciones para organizar. Ni

la burocracia de la AFL-CIO encabezada por Lane Kirkland —patriota de la Guerra Fría y traicionero de clase — tuvo el ánimo para ampliar el conflicto. Como resultado, la huelga de PATCO estuvo condenada a fracasar.

La recesión capitalista fue un tremendo obstáculo para PATCO y sus valientes y militantes miembros en huelga.

Según un reportaje en enero del 2002 por la Institución Brookings Centro de Políticas Urbanas y Metropolitanas, “La recesión de 1980-1982 fue muy severa, la peor desde la depresión de los años 1930. Esa recesión que siguió al período de inflación acompañada por el estancamiento de la economía de los años 1970, fue conocida como la ‘recesión de doble bajada’...”

“La tasa nacional de desempleo subió durante los años 1980 y 1981 y se quedó en alrededor de un 10 por ciento durante la mayoría del 1982 y 1983. ...

“La pobreza también incrementó sustancialmente en las grandes ciudades durante los principios de la década de los 1980, así como en el resto de la nación. Entre 1979 y 1983, la cifra de personas viviendo debajo del nivel de pobreza en las ciudades centrales de los EEUU aumentó en más de 3 millones”.

Aunque el reportaje no explicó el impacto desproporcionado sobre la población negra y las otras nacionalidades oprimidas, no cabe duda que la tasa de desempleo y pobreza subió enormemente para estos grupos.

Reagan, el sirviente leal de la clase dominante, fue totalmente despiadado en sus ataques contra l@s trabajador@s y las nacionalidades oprimidas.

PATCO fue una víctima temprana. Reagan no podía permitir el paro del sistema de transporte aéreo — era una industria de \$30 mil millones, que involucraba 14,000 vuelos y 10,000 toneladas de cargamento aéreo al día. Un promedio de 800,000 pasajeros, 60 por ciento de los cuales eran ejecutivos de negocios, pasaban por los terminales estadounidenses cada día. Las líneas Braniff, Eastern, TWA — ya desaparecidas desde hace mucho — y American Airlines estaban perdiendo \$30 millones al día.

### **La estrategia y el momento oportuno de la huelga**

El ciclo económico del desarrollo capitalista es a menudo decisivo, afectando tanto el éxito de l@s trabajador@s en su lucha por ganar beneficios como la cuestión de que si la huelga es la forma más apropiada de lucha.

L@s líderes y l@s miembro@s de los sindicatos tienen la grave responsabilidad de desarrollar una estrategia victoriosa. PATCO no estaba bien preparada para el ataque extremo de la administración de Reagan.

Pero por 48 horas la huelga creó estragos para las aerolíneas y redujo sus ganancias.

Hoy en día l@s controlador@s de tráfico

*Continúa a página 15*



## Mitin en Harlem: Viva Fidel

Más de 300 personas acudieron a un animado mitin en la Iglesia de San Ambrose en Harlem ciudad de Nueva York para celebrar el 80º cumpleaños del presidente Fidel Castro de Cuba y para expresar solidaridad con la revolución cubana. La audiencia era predominantemente negra y latina. La Red de Solidaridad con Cuba, la Coalición de Patrice Lumumba y el Movimiento 12 de Diciembre patrocinaron la reunión. Las activistas Nellie Hester Bailey y Rosemary Mealy moderaron el programa. Después de numerosos mensajes de solidaridad, presentaciones y poesías, una gran torta de cumpleaños con 80 velas encendidas fue traída al escenario y tod@s cantaron feliz cumpleaños a Fidel. El primer diputado de la misión cubana en la ONU, Héctor Ramírez, agradeció a tod@s por venir a mostrar amor y respeto por el líder cubano, quien se está recuperando de una cirugía.

—Reportaje y foto por Monica Moorehead