

MUNDO OBRERO

Se necesita solidaridad con inmigrantes 12



SOMALIA-ETHIOPIA

U.S. expands war for oil 6-7

GOODYEAR TIRES

Strike gives lesson in class consciousness 4



JAMES BROWN

• An appreciation 5
• Harlem pays tribute 5

CRUEL & USUAL

Struggle mounts against lethal injection 10

HIV EMERGENCY

Underfunding creates crisis 5



LGBT

OPPRESSION

Roots exposed 2

Subscribe to Workers World

- 4 weeks trial subscription \$1
- One year subscription: \$25

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

Workers World Newspaper
55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011

212-627-2994 www.workers.org

In desperate gamble Bush prepares to escalate Iraq war

Saddam Hussein's lynching, call for troops and money are clear signs

By Sara Flounders

As the death toll of U.S. troops passes 3,000 and the number of Iraqi casualties exceeds 600,000, the execution of Saddam Hussein signals Bush's intention to escalate the war against the people of Iraq as he plans to send 30,000 more troops to maintain the occupation.

The billions that have been spent on this war—and the more than \$100 billion that Bush is asking for this winter and spring—have been robbed from the people here who need the money for jobs at a living wage, health care, affordable housing, education and rebuilding the Gulf Coast.

Saddam Hussein's execution by U.S. military occupation forces in Iraq again shows in sharpest light the nature of the criminal occupation. The execution of the legal president of Iraq was a brutal colonial outrage intended to insult Iraqi national sovereignty. It was orchestrated so as to enflame sectarian and religious hatred among Iraqis.

The unofficial cell-phone video circulating on the internet shows that the atmosphere was truly that of a lynching. It was a chaotic scene with insults, abuse, heckling catcalls and ridicule while Saddam Hussein remained defiant and calm.

As outrage has grown in Iraq and internationally at the execution, its timing and the manner in which it was carried out, the U.S. corporate media has gone to exaggerated lengths to describe the execution as an Iraqi affair, a decision of the Iraqi High Tribunal, a body over which the U.S. occupation forces supposedly had little control or influence.

The Iraqi High Tribunal is a creation of the U.S. occupation forces. Its creation was a desperate effort to justify the illegal and criminal invasion. From the beginning the tribunal was a totally illegal court—expressly prohibited by international law. Under

the Geneva Convention, which the U.S. government signed, an occupying power is explicitly prohibited from changing the judicial structure or establishing new courts.

L. Paul Bremer III, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in 2003, established the tribunal. U.S. occupation authorities appointed all judges and personnel, and the U.S. Congress established a \$128 million fund to pay the court's expenses. U.S. advisers drafted the laws of the court.

During the U.S.-staged trial, three defense lawyers were assassinated. The Iraqi High Tribunal used coerced witnesses, heavy censorship, isolated the defendants and denied them all visitation and legal rights. Even the court announcement of the death sentence was timed to the weekend before the U.S. mid-term elections last November.

Washington controlled trial, execution

Right up to the execution, Saddam Hussein was at all times in the hands of the U.S. military. He was captured by U.S. forces and held at the U.S. base Camp Cropper. For his execution, he was taken by U.S. helicopter, under U.S. guard, to Camp Victory, another U.S. base. U.S. forces transported the Iraqi executioners and the collaborators who were to serve as witnesses.

The U.S. officials chose executioners and collaborators who were identified as being of Shiite heritage apparently to throw the blame on all Shiites in Iraq for Saddam Hussein's execution. Remember it is the U.S. occupation forces who decided who can run for office and how the Iraqi government is structured. They protect the thin layer of puppets and collaborators within the Green Zone.

A statement from the former ruling Baath Party after the sentencing last November noted that "the theatrics that have

Continued on page 8

NYC to N. Carolina: Killer cops still free 3



Wall Street protest against police brutality on Dec. 21.

WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD



This week ...

'The Gay Question,' published 1976

Marxist analysis blazed history's trails

By Leslie Feinberg

For more than 30 years I have looked for an opportunity to publicly thank Bob McCubbin—a white gay brother; intrepid activist/organizer against repression and oppression; working-class intellectual; grassroots historian; dialectical and historical materialist; a revolutionary; a communist; my comrade—for writing “The Gay Question: A Marxist Appraisal” in the autumn and winter of 1975.

I can close my eyes and remember, in visceral detail, the moment I began reading a xeroxed, pre-publication copy on a bitter wintry night in late January 1976.

I was curled up in a bus seat on an 18-hour ride from New York to Chicago. We revolutionary activists were slowly making our way to the “Hard Times” conference in a blizzard, without heat. The glass window near my cheek was slick with ice.

In a small cone of light, I read these words, and my eyes filled with tears: “Anti-homosexual prejudices have not always existed and need not continue to exist in the future.”

I cried as I read the rest of the xeroxed manuscript, all night long, moved by emotional release and ideological exhilaration.

As a young blue-collar lesbian butch, I had survived growing up in the 1950s Cold War ideological and state witch hunt against communists and militants, against same-sex love and against any body or gender expression that sketched outside the lines of 1950s’ Dick-and-Jane gender education.

If I had been taught anything at all about Marxism in my high school classes, it was that that worldview was dogma, moldering and hoary with irrelevance, and that factory workers like me wouldn’t be able to understand a word of it.

But in these pages, I found my life, my love, my class, a genuine basis for solidarity with everyone bat-

ting oppression—here and around the planet—and a materialist compass that pointed the direction toward liberation.

Marxist vantage point of history

“Even before the formation of the Gay Caucus of Youth Against War & Fascism in 1971,” McCubbin wrote, “our gay and straight comrades were actively supporting the struggle against gay oppression. We didn’t need a formal position paper to have it made clear to us that gay people were oppressed and that their struggle should be supported.

“Nevertheless, it is important to bring communist understanding to every social phenomenon and class consciousness to every struggle. These are the objectives of the present book.”

“To understand how homosexuality has come to be viewed the way it is today,” he wrote, “it is important to examine the changing historical periods and their impact on sexual attitudes in general as well as on homosexuality.”

Every phenomenon has a history, McCubbin stressed.

“[D]evelopment and transformation are characteristic of everything that exists. We believe that the uncovering of the history of homosexual oppression will be helpful in bringing that oppression to an end.”

The pamphlet focused on societies in what is termed the Western world. “The reason for this,” McCubbin explained in the 1976 publication, “is that the information available to us concerning homosexuality in non-Western societies is sparse and often subject to disparate interpretations. It does seem clear, however, that nowhere else have attitudes towards homosexuality been as profoundly negative as they are in Western society.”

The Marxist vantage point in this pamphlet lifted me up to a mountaintop overlooking the rolling development of hundreds of thousands of years of human history: pre-class cooperative societies, chattel slavery, feudalism, capitalism.

From there I could see for the first time that during the major portion of that long, long history, human beings worked in group cooperation on every continent. That simple but profound fact created social relations very different than those in capitalist societies today.

Thinking back, that was the most startling realization of all for me in this pamphlet. It meant that human beings were not hard-wired as a species for competition and greed, cruelty and violence. Society had not always been divided by classes, driven by avarice. Social life had changed many times based on the overall economic organization of society.

No wonder my high school facts-by-rote history education concealed this particularly earthshaking fact like a dense fog. The understanding it awakens is downright “subversive.” If things have not always been the way they are now, then they can, and will, profoundly change again.

Next: Surplus produced bosses, lords and masters
E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org

lavender & red

84

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

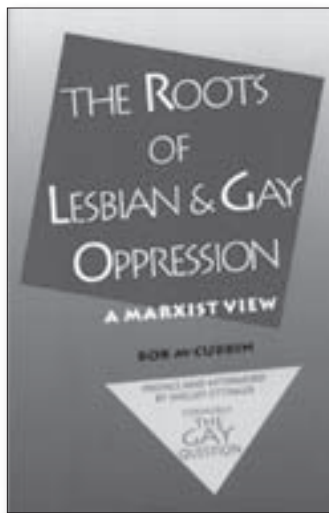
“Every phenomenon has a history. Development and transformation are characteristic of everything that exists.

Uncovering of the history of oppression and bigotry against lesbian, gay, bi and trans people will be helpful in bringing that oppression to an end.”

The Roots of Lesbian & Gay Oppression

By Bob McCubbin

Originally published as ‘The Gay Question: A Marxist Appraisal’ in 1976 is available online at www.Leftbook.com



JOIN US.

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latin@, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students.

If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
(212) 627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
(404) 627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
(410) 235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Army St.,
Boston, MA 02130
(617) 983-3835
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.,
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 566-1115
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
(773) 381-5839
Fax (773) 761-9330
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
phone (216) 531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 831-0750
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 130322,
Houston, TX 77219
(713) 861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
5274 West Pico Blvd.,
Suite 203
Los Angeles, CA 90019
(323) 936-1416
la@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 9202,
Philadelphia, PA 19139
(610) 453-0490
phila@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221
richmond@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
(585) 436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
3930 Oregon St.,
Suite 230
San Diego, CA 92104
(619) 692-4496

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco,
CA 94103
(415) 561-9752
sf@workers.org

State College, Pa.
100 Grandview Rd.,
State College,
PA 16801
(814) 237-8695

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org

★ In the U.S.

Lavender & red, part 84	2
Outrage against police brutality comes to Wall Street. . .	3
Cops gun down unarmed student	3
Dan Perry	3
Goodyear strikers ratify contract	4
Wisconsin struggle for affirmative action.	4
James Brown left indelible mark on Black culture.	5
Harlem honors James Brown	5
Why is there an HIV State of Emergency in Boston? . . .	5
Protesters say ‘Execution equals escalation’	8
Botched executions incite fight against death penalty .	10

★ Around the world

Bush plans to escalate Iraq war	1
Why Somalia has no national state.	6
What’s at stake in the Horn of Africa	7
World condemns lynching of Iraqi president	9
U.N. occupation forces attack Cité Soleil	11
Cuba teaches the world to read	11

★ Editorials

Another U.S. war crime in Baghdad	10
---	----

★ Noticias En Español

Redadas racistas aterrorizan a inmigrantes	12
--	----

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 49, No. 1 • Jan. 11, 2007
Closing date: Jan. 3, 2007

Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk

Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell,
Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker

Contributing Editors: Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel,
Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales,
Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg,
Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt

Technical Staff: Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno

Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez,
Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Carlos Vargas

Internet: Janet Mayes

Supporter Program: Sue Davis, coordinator

Copyright © 2007 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

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

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription.

Send an e-mail message to WWnews-subscribe@workersworld.net.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

Outrage against police brutality comes to Wall Street

By Monica Moorehead
New York

Close to 1,000 people descended on the Wall Street area on Dec. 21 at noon for a militant march against racist brutality by the New York Police Department. The protest was sparked by the shooting death of unarmed 23-year-old African American Sean Bell by the NYPD a month earlier on the same day his wedding was to take place. Trent Benefield and Joseph Guzman were wounded when the police shot 50 bullets into a car driven by Bell after the three left a bachelor party for Bell in the borough of Queens.

The demonstration, overwhelmingly composed of African Americans, was organized by the December 12 Movement and the Black Men's Movement. Latin@s Asians and whites also came out on Dec. 21 in solidarity with the Black community's righteous anger over another unprovoked killing by the police. The crowd included many young people.

Before the crowd stepped off from the Chase Building near the World Trade Center, Amadi Ajamu from the Dec. 12 Movement led militant chants such as "Black power," "Power to the people," "No justice! No peace!" and many more. Roger Wareham from D12 and New York City Councilperson Charles Barron spoke to the multitude of local and national electronic and print media.

Wareham announced a march to the United Nations on Jan. 29 and a conference on police brutality on Feb. 21, the anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. He also linked the unimaginable wealth controlled by Wall Street investors to the oppression of Black peo-



WW PHOTOS: MONICA MOOREHEAD

Wall Street protest on Dec. 21 against police shooting of Sean Bell.

ple, including the fact that African slaves built New York City and their ancestors have still been denied reparations. Wareham also compared the racist occupation of the Black community by the NYPD to the U.S. military occupation and war against the Iraqi people.

Throughout the almost three-hour demonstration, the crowd repeatedly counted from one to 50 to signify how many shots the police had fired, riddling Bell's car.

The NYPD tried to intimidate the crowd. Police, some on horseback, were dressed in riot gear, dangling plastic handcuffs from their belts. But to no avail. Even though the large crowd had to wait a long time and then march through side streets to get to the heart of Wall Street, they did not back down.

Once they had gathered near the steps of Federal Hall, where a statue of the racist slaveholder George Washington stands, D12 leader Viola Plummer and Barron fired up the protesters with speeches beseeching them to continue to come out in the streets until Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly is fired.

E-mail: mmoorehead@workers.org

Chicago loses anti-fascist fighter DAN PERRY, 1973-2006

Progressives in Chicago suffered a profound loss on the morning of Dec. 25 with the untimely passing of Dan Perry. Dan, 33, was a longtime revolutionary anti-fascist activist. He was a member of the Chicago Socialist Party and a very active member of the Colombia Solidarity Committee. Perry was so committed to the success of the Colombian revolution under the leadership of the FARC-EP that he collected 250 signatures himself on a petition to free Ricardo Palmera, a Colombian revolutionary arrested in Ecuador in 2004 and extradited from Colombia to the U.S., where he is now being held. After the Katrina tragedy, Perry got a van, filled it with bottled water and drove to New Orleans, where he felt his EMT training would benefit the African-American masses and working class whites affected by this government-made disaster.

In addition, Perry was also very well known in the music scene in Chicago. He was a traditional anti-racist skinhead who loved ska, reggae, soul and R&B. He had a



Dan Perry, left, with friends.

massive record collection—all vinyl—that reflected his special love for 1960s-era soul; labels like Motown, Tamla and Stax were his favorites. He was a disc jockey at a local club in the Noble Square neighborhood of Chicago. The club, Sonotheque, held a benefit for Perry's family on Dec. 27, which would've been his night to DJ. More than 100 progressives, Mods and Skins turned out to remember our comrade. Hasta siempre, compañero Dan Perry. You will be missed.

—Eric Struch

WILMINGTON, N.C.

Cops gun down unarmed student

By Dante Strobino
Raleigh, N.C.

Peyton Strickland, 18, a student at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, was shot and killed Dec. 1 by a special-unit police team at a house Strickland shared with three roommates.

Armed to the teeth while smashing the door in with a battering ram, the police raided Strickland's home with a warrant allegedly searching for two PlayStation 3 systems they claimed he had stolen.

The cops apparently were armed and trigger-happy because they had seen online photographs of Strickland in which he carried weapons. When they assaulted his home and killed him, Strickland was unarmed. Not even waiting for him to open the door, the police fired several rounds through the door, killing Strickland and his dog, Blaze. The cops immediately arrested Ryan David Mills, 20, Strickland's roommate and fellow student.

This occurred amidst a brazen rash of racist police brutality and murders all across the country, including, but not limited to the murder of two African-

American victims, 23-year-old Sean Bell in New York City and 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston in Atlanta.

Investigations still linger in these cases where the victims were African American, and to date no cop has been fired or convicted of murder. In fact, officers are not working, yet still being paid.

In the North Carolina case, where the victim was white, Cpl. Christopher Long was fired and on Dec. 11 charged with second-degree murder. Nevertheless, as is typical in response to state sanctioned violence, the officers were first served a mere slap on the wrist. The three New Hanover County deputy sheriffs have been on paid leave since the shooting Dec. 1, according to county Sheriff Sid Causey. It is routine to put officers on leave if they fire their weapons.

Then, on Dec. 12, officials rescinded the murder charge, after a grand jury foreman said he had checked the wrong box on the indictment form.

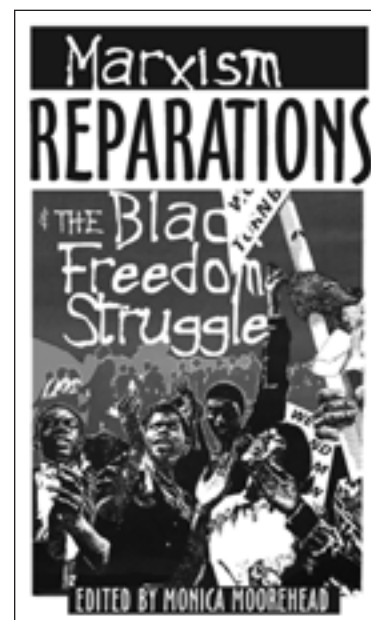
The events reinforce the outlook of working-class organizers in North Carolina that no justice will be served until working-class community forces can unite and force it onto the system. □

Speaking at the Dec. 21 rally against the police shooting of Sean Bell, Roger Wareham "linked the unimaginable wealth controlled by Wall Street investors to the oppression of Black people, including the fact that African slaves built New York City and their ancestors have still been denied reparations. Wareham also compared the racist occupation of the Black community by the NYPD to the U.S. military occupation and war against the Iraqi people."

Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle

Edited by Monica Moorehead includes articles on Racism, national oppression and self-determination by Larry Holmes; Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery by Sam Marcy and a special guest commentary on Harriet Tubman by Mumia Abu-Jamal.

It is available at www.Leftbooks.com



Goodyear strikers ratify contract

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

After three months on the picket line, steelworker union members striking Goodyear Tire were set to return to work Jan. 2, after ratifying a master contract covering 12 struck plants in 11 states. The contract basically mirrors the BF Goodrich-Michelin national agreement, which Goodyear until now had refused to sign. Each of the locals approved the contract, which passed by a two-to-one margin.

A key issue in the strike was Goodyear's threat to close two plants. Goodyear will still close the Tyler, Texas, plant, eliminating 1,100 jobs. The plant will remain open until the end of 2007, however, and buy-out packages will be made available to terminated workers to ease their economic pain. Goodyear agreed not to outsource to low-wage countries the work done at the Tyler plant.

A second key issue was retiree health care, for which a fund has been established. Hourly wage rates remain in place for current employees, a third of whom had faced drastic pay cuts. However, a two-tier pay scale puts new hires at a lower rate of pay. When divisive two-tier wage scales are combined with buyouts—which provide short-term benefits but take thousands of jobs permanently out of the economy—the resulting cocktail of poison pills poses a menace to the strong solidarity built up over the past 12 weeks.

What helped the strike the most was working-class solidarity—on the picket



Goodyear strikers in October 2006.

WW PHOTO: MARTHA GREVATT

line, in the communities and around the world. In Akron, where the rubber-workers union was born and where Goodyear still has its headquarters, few local scabs could be found. The company had to bring in salaried employees, including inventors and attorneys, to build tires. Impromptu donations of coffee and firewood to the picketers were a regular occurrence.

Anger seethed at a Chrysler auto plant near Cleveland, as management repeatedly refused to allow a gate collection to support the Goodyear strike. Many in the plant formerly worked for Goodyear; others had family members on strike.

On Dec. 16, a national day of solidarity with the strike, there were 150 separate pickets outside Goodyear shops. Unions around the world voiced their support

from day one. Just before the settlement, the Canadian Auto Workers pledged to stop handling scab tires if the strike went on past January.

Dealers were running out of tires and losing customers, and Goodyear was losing hundreds of millions of dollars. Even so the union was facing a number of pressures, including economic pressures on the strikers in a time of job scarcity. When the U.S. Armed Forces began to run short on tires for Humvees, the Pentagon brass threatened to invoke the Taft-Hartley anti-strike law and force strikers back to work.

Thousands of workers did vote to reject the contract. "Most of the guys I talked to are against it," Richard Scritchfield, a 28-year tiremaker in Akron, told the news media.

Still, the overall mood seems to be one of relief that the strike is over and that some of the company's demands were pushed back. "People have been out of work, having a hard time, and they're hurting," said Dan Levin, 43, of Waupun, Wis., who has worked at the Sun Prairie plant for 12 years. He described the new contract as "the best we can do." Terry Huddleston, a 14-year Goodyear worker in Akron, said, "It's unfortunate. I love all these guys. God bless them. We've managed to stick it out for three months, but a lot of families are suffering."

Meanwhile another strike is ending the same day as the Goodyear dispute. Also returning to work on Jan. 2 are 830 members of UAW Local 1050 who struck Alcoa in Cleveland Nov. 6. They won concessions in the area of pensions and health care, and the easing of a barbaric attendance/forced overtime policy that made every union member a moving target for firing. The local had won widespread support, in the form of cash, food and holiday toy donations, from all the UAW locals in the area.

Regardless of what the Goodyear workers settle for, they go back to work with a heightened level of class consciousness. With workers at Ford, GM and Chrysler facing a possible strike next September, both the Goodyear and Alcoa workers cheered a supportive auto worker with the comment that "We've got your back."

Martha Grevatt is an elected trustee of UAW Local 122 at the Chrysler plant in Twinsburg, Ohio, between Cleveland and Akron.

WISCONSIN

Struggle continues for affirmative action

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee

A massive turnout in support of affirmative action at a Dec. 19 hearing surprised the Wisconsin state senator, Glenn Grothman, who had called the meeting to attack the progressive policy. Grothman is chairman of the Wisconsin Legislative Council's Special Committee on Affirmative Action Policies.

Pro-affirmative action supporters packed the chamber, filled available seating, sat on the floor and overflowed into the hallways and stairways outside the room.

"I've never been to a committee meeting where we've had so many people," said Grothman, who had invited anti-affirmative action reactionary Ward Connerly to address the hearing at the State Capitol in Madison.

Connerly, of the purposefully misnamed American Civil Rights Institute, is bankrolled by neo-conservative organizations such as the Milwaukee-based Bradley and Olin Foundations (mediatransparency.org).

Grothman, Connerly and the forces behind them launched an attack on all state-wide Wisconsin affirmative action laws, policies and regulations following a 2005 decision by University of Wisconsin System President Kevin Reilly that strengthened student diversity.

Reilly convened an admissions advisory group in an effort to achieve a UW system-wide student population that would reflect the population of Wisconsin. The group ultimately instructed all UW campuses to model their admissions policies after that of UW-Madison.

The UW-Madison has long considered race, ethnicity and socio-economic factors as part of the admissions process, but other campuses have used a set academic formula with almost no other considerations. The UW System has over 120,000 students in 24 two- and four-year colleges and universities as well as graduate schools.

Challenge the hearing!

Before the Dec. 19 meeting, state Rep. Tamara Grigsby of Milwaukee, an African-American member of the committee, charged that the hearing was a "total farce," and was an attempt by Grothman to constrain debate and discussion. She cited the fact that the hearing was scheduled during a busy final exams week at most UW campuses, was barely advertised to the public, and was scheduled for 6:30 p.m.—after the Capitol closed at 6 p.m., leaving only one door open to the general public for the hearing.

The hearing came on the heels of the Nov. 7 passage of a Michigan constitutional amendment barring affirmative action in public employment, public education or public contracting. That amendment followed attacks on affirmative action in other states led by Connerly and right-wing forces, including Proposition 209 in California.

After the 1996 California proposition, the number of Blacks enrolling at University of California (UC) schools shrank, according to a study commissioned by the Institute for Justice and Journalism at UC's Annenberg School for Communication. Black and Latin@ enrollment at the UC Berkeley and Los Angeles campuses fell by half.

In response to the Wisconsin invitation to Connerly, state Rep. Grigsby called for a mass public challenge because of the possible ramifications of dismantling affirmative action in the state.

Many answered her call and came to the hearing to make sure that what has happened in other states does not happen in Wisconsin.

Students took the lead with solid support from UW faculty and staff, community allies and progressive state politicians. Protesters arrived on buses from Kenosha, Milwaukee, Stout and Whitewater. They joined students from UW-Madison who held a rally at that university and then marched to the hearing.

"We are marching to protest the current climate of reactionary hostility towards youth and people of color. We will organize against Ward Connerly and use our efforts to maintain and strengthen Wisconsin's long-standing support for affirmative action," said Carlo Albano in a Dec. 19 statement from the Coalition for Diversity and Accessibility at UW-Milwaukee. Albano is a member of Asian Student Advancement at UW-Madison.

Other forces helping to organize the protest included the United Council of UW Students, UW-Madison's Multicultural Student Center, the Wisconsin Black Student Union, AHANA Pre-Health Organization and the Associated Students of Madison.

"We're here to make a statement about how important affirmative action still is," said Dellareese Williams, a first-year student at UW-Whitewater, as she entered the hearing with her allies.

During the hearing state Rep. Grigsby and many more vigorously challenged

Connerly, Grothman and other anti-affirmative action opponents.

Grigsby outlined numerous social indicators, rooted in racist institutional segregation, that point to the need for affirmative action, including higher rates of poverty, incarceration and infant mortality for Blacks and other people of color.

"We have been deemed the Mississippi of the north, based on our horrible disparities. I think it is just silly to imply that race doesn't matter when it clearly is a factor in everything," said Grigsby.

African-American state Sen. Lena Taylor of Milwaukee challenged Connerly as well. Taylor said she sees affirmative action "as liberation" for people of color.

The fight continues

The historic battle to win, consolidate and further affirmative action in Wisconsin is a decades-long struggle replete with numerous sacrifices by many, often the most oppressed, including students of color, particularly those from Milwaukee, a city with semi-apartheid conditions for people of color.

They have no intention of backing down, says Hannah Tien Buck, a UW-Madison student and Dec. 19 protest organizer: "Those who came to this 'Special Committee on Affirmative Action' meeting were there to show Ward Connerly, [regent] Fred Mohs, Glenn Grothman and other members of this committee that as long as they continue to debate this issue, we will be there, and we will continue to follow closely."

In a related supportive action, the UW-Milwaukee Faculty Senate recently voted to continue the consideration of race and ethnicity as factors in admission. □

James Brown left indelible mark on Black culture

By Larry Hales

World-famous singer, songwriter and bandleader James Brown died of heart failure Dec. 25 after having checked into the hospital a day earlier with pneumonia. He had been expected to perform on New Year's Eve in New York City and while in the hospital vowed to make this performance.

Some attribute his vow on his last day of life to be a testament to the phrase he liked to describe himself with: "The hardest working man in show business." This was one of two names for which he was most well known—the other being "The Godfather of Soul." He earned the former name not only for his relentlessly ferocious performances, which could outlast his audience, but also because of the sheer volume of music he put out and how often he performed.

Brown still performed in his last year of life, his 73rd year, even playing to 80,000 in the Irish Oxegen Festival in Punchestown, Ireland. He was on a tour titled, "Seven Decades of Funk World Tour," which was to be his last world tour. He continued his schedule despite suffering from prostate cancer, which was in remission following a successful surgery in 2004.

Many have pointed and will continue to point to his troubles throughout his life—from his days as a youth in Georgia, to his latter years. Some others will undoubtedly question his politics, as he did vote for Richard Nixon at some point, or question his treatment of women, all of which are very valid concerns.

However, the indelible mark on Black musical culture can not be dismissed. His music not only reflected the stride of and the diligence and militancy of the Black liberation struggle, but some of his songs became anthems of Black Pride in the face of racism and state repression, such as, "Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud," which echoed a mantra of Emiliano Zapata, "We'd rather die on our feet/Than be livin' on our knees."

The driving rhythms, laced with pulsating bass and a horn section, and Brown's unforgettable voice—letting out piercing yells and growls and non-verbal utterances was the voice of an oppressed people. Though Brown did not have the smooth voice of Al Green, who he influenced, both entertainers, in performance, were always on the verge of exploding and their performances were not just good to dance to, but mirrored the frustrations and hopes of working and oppressed peoples.



younger musicians, most notably, Michael Jackson and Prince. Brown impacted on those whose careers started before his did, like Miles Davis, who also had an influence on James Brown as well. Davis was always conscious of societal changes' impact on music and resisted critics wanting to keep Jazz music "pure."

James Brown never learned how to read music. There have been many great musicians who didn't read or never learned how to read music. Their talent, drive and music are driven by something other than training, or "refinement," but by the conditions caused by capitalist production and people's responses to those conditions.

Music can be the artistic expression of the conditions of oppressed masses and/or their mood, as well as being a barometer of the struggle. The great musicians remain relevant and always keep an ear to what's happening as James Brown did. □

The view from 125th St.

Harlem honors James Brown

By Joyce Wilcox
Harlem, N.Y.

Dec. 28—Word got around fast, as neighbor informed neighbor. This writer, a visiting nurse, was in a patient's home when a neighbor burst in. "They're taking James Brown's body through the streets, starting at 145th Street to the Apollo!"

By noon, Harlem residents of all ages lined both sides of Lenox Avenue at 135th Street and the island in the middle of the street by Harlem Hospital. Three police helicopters circled overhead.

"Do you see anything yet?" rippled back and forth through the crowd. Word had it that hundreds of people were already waiting in front of the Apollo Theatre on 125th Street, where Brown's body would lie in state from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

It was warm for December, and sunny. People didn't seem to mind the wait, and it provided a chance to reminisce. The woman standing next to me, a Nigerian in her 60s, said, "We love James Brown in Nigeria. My sons learned to dance to James Brown."

"Here he comes!"

The crowd shifted as the blinking lights of the police escort were spotted a few blocks away. Then it passed—a white, glass-walled carriage pulled by two white fine-boned horses in fancy harnesses with white plumes on their heads. The gold painted steel coffin inside was clearly visible, and glistened in the sunlight.

Behind the carriage about 200 people marched, chanting "Say it loud: I'm Black and I'm proud!" and raising their fists. Some carried home-made signs bearing this James Brown refrain. This reporter caught the eye of an International Action Center member, Vondora Jordan, loudly chanting among the marchers, who waved back. The march grew as it passed. Behind this, a motorcade extended for another block.

By 3 p.m., 125th Street was packed with people of all ages. The mood was proud and festive. Media lined the theatre, their four long spiral communication poles reaching into the sky and adding to the excitement.

"It was so amazing, everybody shouting 'I'm Black and I'm proud,' and 'I don't need no one to open the door, I can open it for myself'—it was exciting! It was so great just following James Brown down the streets of Harlem, him leading the march once again— one last time."

—Vondora Jordan

Why is there an HIV State of Emergency in Boston?

HIV public health measures are not sufficiently reaching African-American, Latin@ and Haitian communities in Massachusetts and all other states in the United States. In 2005, Rev. Franklin Hobbs, Director of Dorchester's Healing Our Land, led a grassroots movement that resulted in the Boston City Council voting 13-0 to declare an HIV state of emergency on Boston's communities of color. The following is an interview Gerry Scoppettuolo did with Rev. Hobbs.

WW: Why is there a state of HIV emergency in communities of color for HIV on Boston?

FH: Communities of color have for a long time continued to have HIV escalate. Resources are decreasing rapidly for HIV from the federal level while the incidence of HIV prevalence has been increasing, hence the state of emergency.

WW: Why aren't there enough resources?

FH: Unfortunately, on the federal level a majority of the money has been going to fund the war. That's pretty clear. Social service programs have just been decimated; organizations have been shut down in the most marginalized communities. The first places to be cut are where there has been the least ability to have the voice to shout back. Often times they aren't mobilized to have power to advocate for themselves. With HIV counseling and testing, a lot of sites were closed in the areas that need them the most. Now people that need the access have to go further to get tested and have access to care when they weren't accessing those resources even when they were more accessible. Outreach programs are virtually non-existent.

WW: How many localities have declared HIV states of emergency in communities of color?



PHOTO: J. JACKSON

The Rev. Franklin Hobbs

FH: Alameda County, Calif.; Baltimore; Long Island, N.Y.; Houston; and the state of Alabama, which is the only entire state.

WW: As you know, Massachusetts funds have been cut from \$53 million to \$35 million in the past five years. When you look on the street, where do you see that impact?

FH: In the inner city.

WW: Who have been your allies in the struggle?

FH: The Rosa Parks Committee has been phenomenal; unions that have historically not been known to be part of the movement and that's great; churches and clergy; and a few community-based organizations and their executive directors. These folks were at a public hearing we had, a very diverse group: the Boston AIDS Consortium, the Veterans' Benefits Clearinghouse, the Stonewall Warriors, and a lot of advocates who couldn't represent their agencies publicly but supported the movement.

Continued on page 9

One intervention after another

Why Somalia has no national state

By Deirdre Griswold

Almost every description of Somalia to appear in the corporate U.S. media over the last 15 years or so has included the words “anarchy,” “lawlessness” and “failed state.” What they don’t say is that there has been no functioning national state in this period because the Somali people have refused to accept puppet regimes forced on them by the United States.

Somalia is an arid, largely pastoral country whose grasslands stretch along the east coast of Africa in the area known as the Horn. Imperialist treachery, subversion and military intervention have marked its history and left it in desperate shape.

When the European capitalist powers carved up Africa in the 19th century, the Somali-speaking people who led a nomadic life along the Horn of Africa were divided up. Britain took the largest area and called it British Somaliland. Italy grabbed a piece, too, calling it Italian Somaliland. After World War II, these two imperialist powers withdrew their troops and the two territories united as Somalia in 1960. Like all former colonies, however, it remained dominated by Western capital.

Decolonization came with high hopes and promises. Somalia, like other former colonies, looked to the socialist bloc headed by the Soviet Union for development assistance, as well as to Western-based aid organizations. Mohamed Siad Barre, who became president after a military coup in 1969, called himself a socialist and for a number of years the Somali state played the major role in trying to develop the infrastructure and improve farming and livestock production. But a severe drought in the early 1970s created a crisis for this very poor country.

While hundreds of thousands were dying of famine in nearby Ethiopia, at that time under the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie, the USSR helped Somalia save lives by airlifting 90,000 people from the drought-stricken areas of the north to the south. But the economy continued to be in deep trouble.

U.S. pitted Somalia against Ethiopian Revolution

By 1974, a revolution in Ethiopia had Washington very worried. The Pentagon had a very important air base there called Kagnew from which it launched spy planes to monitor the whole Middle East. It had kept the semi-feudal Selassie regime in power with large amounts of military equipment and training. But the famine exacerbated the class struggle inside Ethiopia. Peasants began taking over land and expelling the landlords; city workers and students carried out strikes and demonstrations against the monarchy.

By 1974 this mass uprising had reached into the military. A council, called the Derg, was formed of mostly lower-ranking officers. It overthrew Selassie, abolished the autocratic Crown Council that had run the country and began to nationalize all land, banks and the small industrial sector. As the Derg moved to the left, top generals who had come from the aristocracy were removed; some were killed in actual gun battles that erupted in the large meetings of the council. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who came not from the aristocracy but from a national minority that had once been their slaves, became head of the Derg.

The U.S. government, both openly and covertly, made overturning the Ethiopian Revolution a priority in the region. Its strategy was to break up Ethiopia by encouraging internal secessionist movements and the territorial claims of its neighbors.

The U.S. made overtures to the Siad Barre regime in Somalia, whose resources had been exhausted by the drought. The editor of Newsweek, Arnaud de Borchgrave, revealed in the Sept. 26, 1977, issue of that magazine that the Somali president had received a secret message from President Jimmy Carter encouraging him to seize Ethiopian territory. The U.S. soon arranged \$500 million in aid to Somalia from Saudi Arabia—a sum equal at that time to two years of Somalia’s gross national product.

Arms and money began pouring into

Somalia, which soon attacked Ethiopia in the Ogaden, a province where most of the people were Somali-speaking. By 1978, revolutionary Ethiopia had been able to defeat the invaders with Cuba’s help but still faced another war in Eritrea and a landlord army backed by a consortium of reactionary regimes.

These wars drained the economies of both Ethiopia and Somalia. The full-court press against the Ethiopian Revolution, while it did not restore the monarchy, did lead to the overthrow of Mengistu in 1991, at the same time that the USSR was being broken up.

After that, the U.S. had little interest in aiding Somalia.

Siad Barre was by this time discredited at home and was overthrown that same year by Mohammed Farah Aidid, who refused to take his orders from Washington. The U.S. posture toward Somalia became increasingly hostile. Toward the end of his administration, President George H.W. Bush announced he was sending U.S. troops to Somalia, but that he envisioned “no greater role for American troops than simply distributing aid.” (New York Times, Dec. 2, 1992)

But once the troops were there, their mission became clear. These highly trained soldiers, some the notorious U.S. Rangers and elite Delta Force commandos, did not come to deliver loaves of bread on the ends of their bayonets. They were there to remove Aidid and the forces around him and replace them with U.S. puppets. The U.S. troops began coming under fire.

‘Black Hawk down!’

Finally, on Oct. 3, 1993, heavily armed U.S. Black Hawk helicopters launched a major assault on downtown Mogadishu, the capital, firing from the air on a crowded marketplace. But resistance was fierce and a helicopter was shot down, leading to the deaths of 18 U.S. soldiers at the hands of an outraged population.

The intense anger of the Somali crowds showed that controlling the country militarily would be impossible. Bill Clinton, the new president, pulled U.S. troops out of Somalia in 1994.

What followed were years of internal warfare among rival clan leaders, some of them supported covertly by the U.S. This dragged the country down further and alienated the population from any officials who had the blessings of the West.

Finally an alliance of Islamic forces emerged with growing popular support and began organizing public services in more and more territory as they pushed back the militias of the clan leaders.

It was revealed last June by several news sources, including Reuters, Newsweek and the New York Times, that the CIA had been backing the clan leaders with money and arms, giving “counterterrorism” as its excuse for this new intervention. But as they lost ground, a struggle opened up within the U.S. foreign policy establishment and its secret police agencies, leading to admissions in the media about U.S. support for the “warlords.”

On June 8, 2006, when it had become clear that the Islamic forces were occupying a large part of the capital, Mogadishu, the Times reported that “the CIA effort, run from the agency’s station in Nairobi, Kenya, had channeled hundreds of thousands of dollars over the past year to secular warlords inside Somalia.” All this was in violation of a U.N.-declared international arms embargo on Somalia.

John Prendergast, who had worked in the State Department and the National Security Council during the Clinton administration, was one of those who criticized the failed U.S. strategy after the fact, saying, “This has blown up in our face, frankly.”

The Islamic alliance made progress this past summer and fall. When its fighters took Mogadishu and other cities, they were welcomed by huge crowds.

But Washington didn’t give up trying to control Somalia. It just changed its strategy. It began giving money, arms and advisers to the Ethiopian government, now headed by a U.S. ally, to attack the Islamic forces in Somalia. A major invasion began towards the end of December.

Ethiopian planes bombed Mogadishu as its troops swept down through the country. They shelled Kismayo, the Islamists’ last holdout, with heavy artillery. Within weeks, Ethiopian troops had taken Mogadishu and the Islamic forces had withdrawn in order to regroup.

The imperialist news media have shed no tears over this ruthless invasion by Washington’s Ethiopian allies. This is in stark contrast to their constant drumbeat of propaganda against Ethiopia during the years when it had a revolutionary government.

U.S. imperialism has once again intervened in the Horn of Africa, bringing suffering and chaos for the masses of people. Washington has switched sides several times, but always with the same objective: to keep this strategic area under its domination and cut down any national movement with popular support.

This is the real reason why Somalia has not been able to build a stable government.

Griswold visited Ethiopia twice in 1978. She witnessed large amounts of war materiel left behind by retreating Somali troops outside the ancient city of Harar and met Cuban soldiers helping Ethiopia defend its border near Jijiga on the Ogaden plain.

E-mail: dgriswold@workers.org

U.S. imperialism has once again intervened in the Horn of Africa, bringing suffering and chaos for the masses of people.

Washington has switched sides several times, but always with the same objective: to keep this strategic area under its domination and cut down any national movement with popular support.

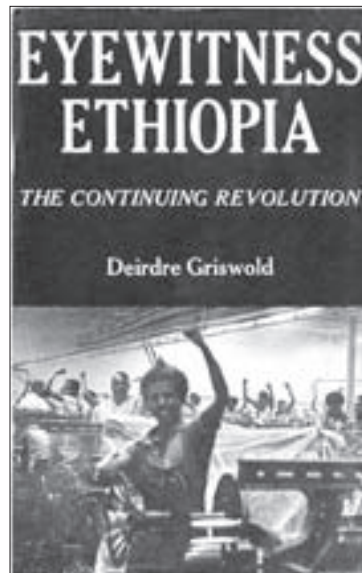
A week by week analysis from Workers World starting on August 17, 1977 with:

“For the Ethiopian Revolution and against imperialist encirclement and dismemberment” up to January 27, 1978 with:
“Site: Washington, D.C. Present: NATO heavies Subject: Ethiopia”

Includes the Program of the National Democratic Revolution of Ethiopia



February 1978 the Ethiopian Revolutionary Information Center invited 125 journalists to Ethiopia for a week packed with interviews and field trips so they could see for themselves the revolutionary transformations that had been taking place in the factories, trade unions, peasant associations and urban dwellers associations (kebeles).



U.S. role

What's at stake in the Horn of Africa

By Monica Moorehead

An estimated 15,000 Ethiopian troops invaded Mogadishu, the capital of the African country of Somalia, in late December to militarily defeat the Islamic Courts Union. The ICU until recently controlled large sections of the southern part of that country. It has now pulled back from the cities and said it will conduct guerrilla warfare against the invaders.

This war and invasion began to escalate in early 2006. Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, which has been put together with U.S. and British connivance, supported the invasion.

As of Jan. 1, the ICU forces have been pushed back on a temporary basis. The ICU has a mass base among many Somalis, along with other Muslims throughout the region, due in part to social services it provides for the poor, especially in the areas of health and education.

The U.S. government has openly supported this invasion under the guise of the Bush administration's on-going war against "terrorism," which began after 9/11. This war began with the illegal invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and now has spread its tentacles into the Horn of Africa. Millions of Muslims view Bush's endless war as a ploy to attack Islam, not just as a religion but also for daring to resist imperialist and colonial aggression.

This recent conflict has drawn Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda into an anti-ICU alliance. Jakkie Ciliers, executive director of South Africa's Institute for Security Studies, stated in the article "Africa, Root Causes and the War on Terror," that "The potential impact upon the region is catastrophic, and may, if not checked, open the Horn as the latest battleground between the U.S. and Islam with disastrous consequences for its peoples, regional stability and the consolidation of African development, peace and security."

A U.N. resolution orchestrated by the U.S. and Britain, which hold permanent positions on the Security Council, is being used to justify sending a "peacekeeping force" to Somalia to protect the transitional U.S.-backed government there from the ICU forces.

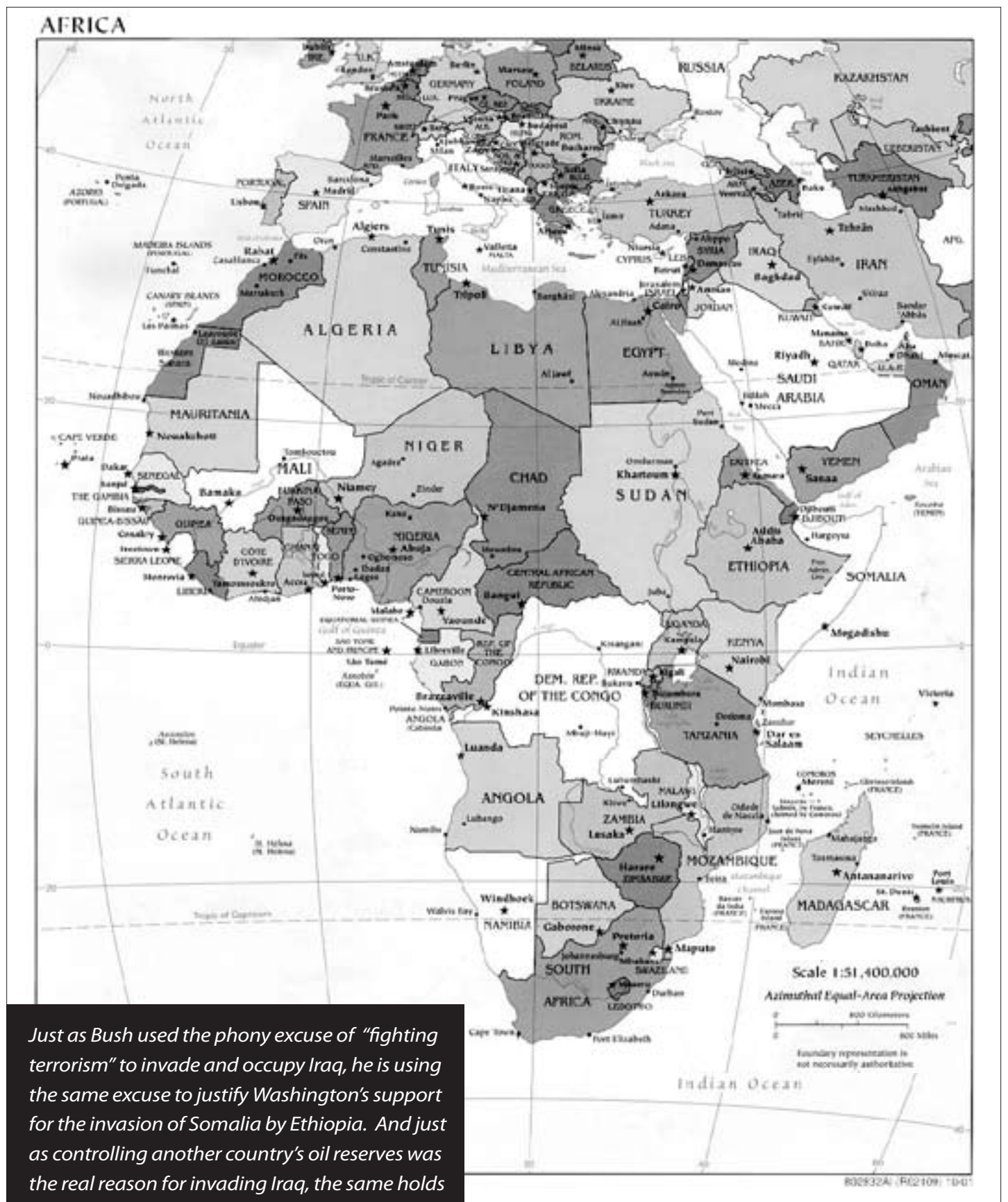
Fighting "terrorism" or quest for oil?

What has been the concrete involvement of the U.S. in this war between Ethiopia and Somalia, two of the poorest countries in the world?

According to William Church, director of the Great Lakes Centre for Strategic Studies, the CIA has been funneling between \$100,000 and \$150,000 monthly to the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism, which includes Somali officials recognized by the West, "warlords" and business people. Military equipment has also been donated to the Somali military by Select Armor, a private company based in Virginia.

The Pentagon also sent \$19 million worth of weapons and loans to Ethiopia in 2005 and is scheduled to provide another \$10 million worth of weapons this year. (Sudan Tribune) In countries as poor as Somalia and Ethiopia, this is a lot of money.

Just as Bush used the phony excuse of "fighting terrorism" to invade and occupy Iraq, he is using the same excuse to justify Washington's support for the invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia. And just as controlling another country's oil reserves was the real reason for invading Iraq, the same



Just as Bush used the phony excuse of "fighting terrorism" to invade and occupy Iraq, he is using the same excuse to justify Washington's support for the invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia. And just as controlling another country's oil reserves was the real reason for invading Iraq, the same holds true for this recent invasion of the Horn of Africa.

The U.S. ruling elite and its military arm could care less for the people of Somalia, Ethiopia or the African people in general. Friends can become enemies and vice-versa at a blink of the eye.

holds true for this recent invasion of the Horn of Africa.

The Horn has great strategic value, since naval bases there can control the traffic of tankers and other ships through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. In addition, however, the U.S. is well aware that Africa has the world's third-largest oil reserves, after the Middle East and Latin America.

Industry sources say these reserves amount to over 95 billion barrels, or about 8 percent of the world's total. Nigeria is the largest producer of oil on the African continent. It remains one of the poorest countries because Shell, ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco, not the Nigerian people, control the oil production, wealth and profits there.

Much of Africa's overall oil reserves are untapped and are strategically located in the Horn of Africa, which is on the Red Sea and is a direct route to the oil-rich Middle East.

Quaeda members based in Afghanistan.

Just last month, the Pentagon sent a proposal to the White House requesting that an African Command be set up to oversee all U.S. military maneuvers throughout the African region. Bush is expected to approve this request within the next few months.

Can there be any doubt that both these commands will carry out the same task of working on behalf of Big Oil transnational corporations in an attempt to oversee the drilling for oil that is expected to occur in the Red Sea?

The U.S. has expressed concern that representatives of the Chinese government recently visited Kenya, Sudan and Ethiopia to discuss oil and trade agreements with those governments. China is offering developing countries better terms than those established by the imperialist powers. This is another reason why the U.S. wants to deepen its eco-

nomie influence in Africa through military hegemony.

The U.S. ruling elite and its military arm could care less for the people of Somalia, Ethiopia or the African people in general. Friends can become enemies and vice-versa at a blink of the eye when securing profits is at stake.

A case in point is during the early 1990s, when the U.S. military invaded Somalia under the guise of providing humanitarian aid. The troops were driven out by the heroic resistance of the Somali people. Another example is that the U.S. was a major enemy of the 1974 Ethiopian revolution until it was weakened and then eventually overthrown by internal and external factors, including U.S. intervention. Today, the government in Ethiopia is to the liking of the White House.

It is important for revolutionaries and progressive activists to expose what is going on in the Horn of Africa and connect this development to the overall struggle against U.S. imperialist designs in the Middle East, Asia and elsewhere. The people of Africa deserve reparations, political stability and economic development free from imperialist domination and plunder.

E-mail mmoorehead@workers.org

U.S. lynching of Saddam Hussein

Protesters say 'Execution = escalation'

By John Catalinotto
New York

Within 16 hours of the news that U.S. occupation authorities had hanged Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, demonstrators in at least three U.S. cities—Detroit, Boston and New York—were on the streets to warn the public about this new war crime and new threat to escalate the war on Iraq. A few days later a similar protest took place in San Diego.

The first call arose from the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War in Iraq (MECAWI), on Dec. 29, and was quickly followed by a statement from the International Action Center urging such protests.

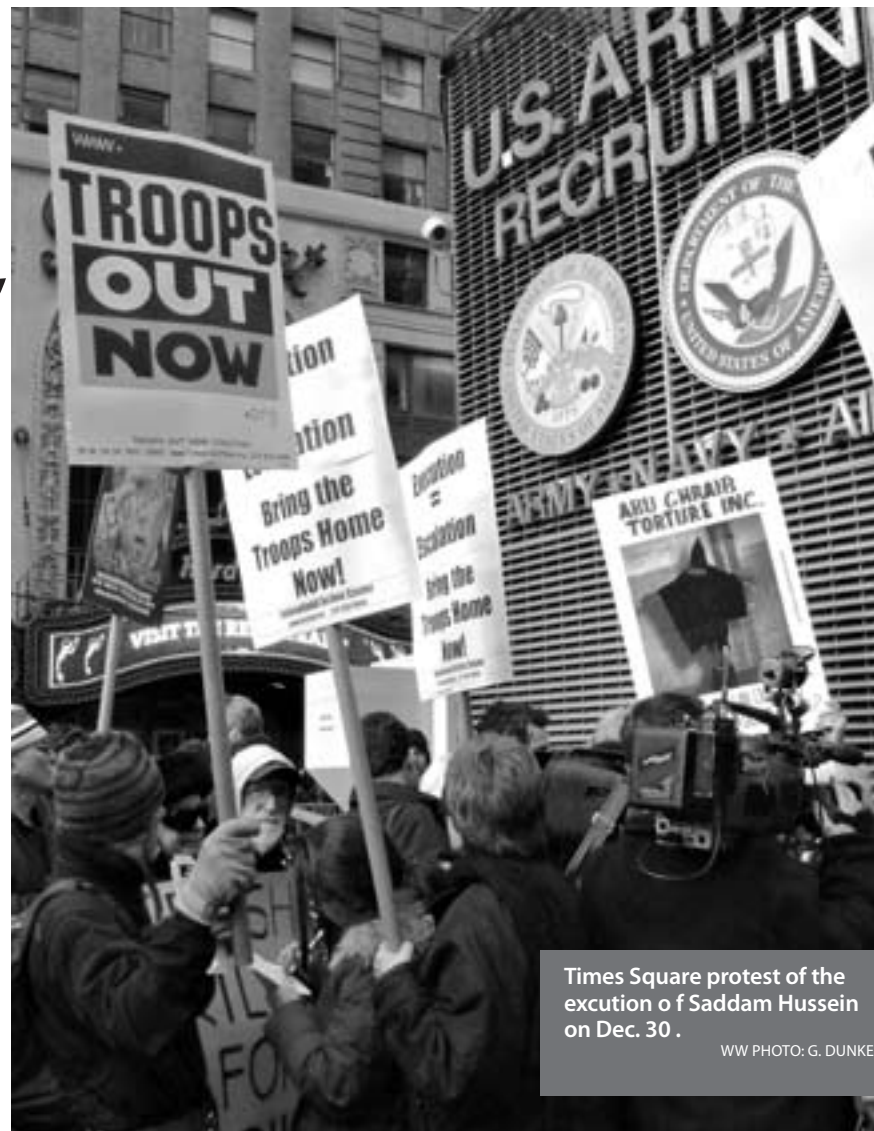
Placards and signs in Times Square read "Execution = Escalation, Bring the troops home" and "Who gave U.S. war criminals license to murder Saddam Hussein?" The demonstrations emphasized two main points: that President George W. Bush intends to escalate the war against the Iraqi people and that the murder of Saddam Hussein was another in a long list of U.S. war crimes against the Iraqi people.

In Detroit, Abayomi Azikiwe, editor of

the Pan-African News Wire, addressed the group gathered at the Federal Building on Michigan Avenue on behalf of MECAWI. Another group protested in downtown Boston. Sara Flounders, co-director of the IAC, was the main spokesperson in Times Square, but the dozens of media present interviewed many of the 40 or so participants.

The demonstrations took the form of public news conferences. While they did not have the mass participation of protests in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Palestine and Jordan, not to mention in Iraq itself, the protests in the U.S. made an important point: Even in the center of world imperialism, where Saddam Hussein has been demonized for 16 years, people were angry about his lynching and about the U.S. role in Iraq.

Those interviewed were strong in bringing out the main messages of the demonstration, and no one retreated before hostile questions by the media. Everyone stuck to the position that the U.S. has no right to execute an Iraqi leader, that this is a war crime, and that Washington is filled with war criminals who are plotting the next escalation.



Times Square protest of the execution of Saddam Hussein on Dec. 30.

WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

The demonstrations, especially in Times Square but also in Detroit and Boston, got much more than the usual media coverage. Local New York television news programs carried interviews with protesters, as did many radio sta-

tions. An Associated Press article went out to its subscribers all over the world.

Showing how skeptical the public is over Washington's war in Iraq, there was much friendly response to the protests and hardly any hostile comments. □

Bush prepares to escalate Iraq war

Continued from page 1

been called a trial are nothing but [U.S.] America's way of putting the onus of the crime of executing Saddam Hussein on the stooge government."

The timing of the execution on the Eid al-Adha, one of the most sacred holidays of the Muslim year, added further offense and outrage to the act. This holiday is traditionally a time of peace, of putting aside quarrels and anger—at least for the duration of the holiday. It follows the time when millions of Muslims make a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is religiously unacceptable and explicitly illegal, even under the U.S.-created constitution written for Iraq, to execute someone during this time.

The execution was an act of desperation and weakness at a time when the U.S. occupation has collapsed and the resistance is gaining strength. Rather than follow the proposals of negotiations put forth by the Iraq Study Group and other imperialist strategists who fear impending disaster for the U.S. in Iraq, Bush has signaled with the execution of Saddam Hussein a decision to escalate the war.

It is also suspicious that an "unofficial video" was released showing alleged Mahdi Army members taunting Hussein. Hussein's assassination follows news that the U.S. has stepped-up attacks and arrests of members of the Mahdi Army, led by Moqtada al-Sadr. This offensive too is part of a desperate attempt to further divide the country and cut off any avenues of negotiation or phased withdrawal for the U.S. forces.

According to sources who monitor Iraqi resistance web sites, these have contained messages warning resistance fighters that the U.S. occupiers are trying to provoke battles between the resistance and the Mahdi Army. These messages urge fighters to make the main target the U.S. occupation forces, and where possible to convince Mahdi Army militia forces to join the resistance against the U.S.



Protest by the Socialist Unity Center in India.

The execution had nothing to do with the alleged crimes of the Iraqi president nor can the trial be seen as a historic judgment of Saddam Hussein's role in Iraq. It is seen in Iraq and around the world as the act of a conquering power, intended for humiliation of a nation occupied against the will of the vast majority of the population.

U.S. supports many dictators

The war was never about bringing democracy to Iraq. This has always been a war about oil and U.S. corporate domination of the entire region. U.S. imperialism has never opposed dictators. It has installed, supported and armed dictatorships when it suited the interests of corporate profits. From their support and arming of dictatorships in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait today to the Shah of Iran, Mubutu in the Congo, Suharto in Indonesia, Pinochet in Chile, the U.S. government has supported some of the most brutal regimes in history, when it served Wall Street's interests.

In the 1980s Washington was ready to collaborate with the Saddam Hussein government when it wanted to use the Iraqis against the Iranian Revolution with the Iraq-Iran war. It was the old "divide and conquer" tactic, and Henry Kissinger even wrote about wanting to weaken both sides

by having Iran and Iraq fight each other.

Saddam Hussein was not executed because the U.S. occupation forces considered him a dictator. Although he had in the past been willing to make deals and to maneuver with imperialism, Washington saw his real crime as his refusal to hand over sovereignty or the control of the rich resources of

Iraq. He refused to bow down to the New World Order. He was executed because he stood in the way of U.S. imperialist reconquest of the Middle East.

Corporate power in the U.S. was determined to turn back the control of the nationalized oil gained through the 1958 revolution in Iraq. This nationalization had transformed Iraq into a prosperous, rapidly developing country with the highest living standard in the region—a modern, secular country with free education and free health care.

The U.S. ruling class as a whole, the entire political establishment, the corporate media and both houses of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, supported the 1991 bombing and massive destruction of Iraqi cities, industries and educational institutions. They also supported the 2003 bombing, invasion and occupation of Iraq.

U.S. war crimes

U.S. imperialism has committed numerous war crimes in its effort to subjugate Iraq. Its Pentagon has used bunker busters, cluster bombs, white phosphorus, napalm and radioactive depleted uranium weapons on the cities of Iraq. Thirteen years of U.S.-imposed starvation sanctions resulted in 1.5 million Iraqi deaths from malnutrition and disease.

Since the 2003 invasion, U.S. occupation forces have carried out massive round-ups, systematic torture and humiliation of defenseless prisoners that the whole world knows about through photos from Abu Ghraib. The U.S. occupation has created a chaos that has shut the schools and universities and hospitals, left even the capital, Baghdad, without potable water, sanitation or more than four hours of electricity a day.

Wholesale corruption by tens of thousands of U.S. contractors has resulted in the looting of reconstruction projects and the theft of tens of thousands of cultural artifacts. Almost four years of occupation have resulted in over 600,000 Iraqi deaths and the flight of 2 million Iraqis from the country.

Whatever criticisms of and charges Iraqis have against Saddam Hussein, it was their sovereign right to decide his fate, free of outside occupation forces. The independent Iraq Centre for Research and Strategic Studies recently polled Iraqis on whether they were better off under Saddam Hussein's government compared to the chaos and humiliation of today. Almost 90 percent declared that Iraq's situation was better and more stable before U.S. occupation.

The movement that stands against the imperialist war in Iraq and demands that all U.S. troops be brought home needs to also raise its voice against all forms of the colonial occupation. U.S. corporate contracts and laws that have privatized and looted Iraqi resources must be canceled. Hundreds of U.S. bases, thousands of U.S. checkpoints and scores of secret prisons must be closed. The illegal courts must be disbanded.

Finally, it is essential that this movement demand that U.S. government and military officials be charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity for their actions in Iraq.

Sara Flounders is a co-director of the International Action Center, which organized protest demonstrations on Dec. 30 against the execution of Saddam Hussein.

World condemns lynching of Iraqi president

With demonstrations and other forms of protest throughout the Middle East and South Asia, many expressed their anger and dismay over the lynch justice Washington meted out to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Below are small excerpts from statements both condemning the kangaroo-court injustices and the brutal assassination, from varied sources.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark: The great weight of international legal opinion has found the Iraqi Special Tribunal subject to political pressures, lacking independence and not impartial. "The trial" failed to provide due process of law and was unfair. ... Executions, if they occur in the midst of the present violence, are expected to cause a long term increase in the level of violence causing more U.S. and Iraqi casualties.

The BRussels Tribunal: The Iraqi Higher Criminal Court that passed a death sentence on President Saddam Hussein is grounded on illegality. Occupying powers under international law are expressly prohibited from changing the judicial structures of occupied states. Created by Paul Bremer, the Iraqi Higher Criminal Court was never anything but a U.S.-orchestrated puppet court.

Malcolm Smart, director of the Middle East and North Africa for Amnesty International: The independence and impartiality of the court was impugned. There was political interference. Three defense lawyers were murdered. Saddam himself had no access to legal advice for a year.

Human Rights Watch: The imposition of the death penalty—an inherently cruel and inhumane punishment—in the wake of an unfair trial is indefensible.

International Association of Peoples Lawyers Board of Directors: Whereas, the trial was meant to mislead the world and smokescreen reality because the main forces that put Mr. Hussein on trial, which are the U.S. and other states, were themselves his erstwhile supporters, encouragers and financiers and as a previous ally of Mr. Hussein during

the period of the alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity of which he was judged, culpable high officials of the U.S. and other governments like the UK must be included in any trial about these serious charges.

Campaign for the End of the Occupation and for Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI—Spanish state): The execution will not hold back the resistance of the Iraqi people to the foreign occupation, or against the collaborationist forces and all those who are trying to bring about a sectarian division of the country.

StopUSA (a Belgian anti-war movement): In November 1532, the Inca king Atahualpa stood trial before the Spanish conquistadores. He was sentenced to death and hanged in August 1533. Among the accusations against him: he would have been 'cruel to his enemies,' whatever that may have meant. In any case the execution of Atahualpa has gone down in history not so much because of the man's supposed or real cruelty, but because of the grotesque nature of this parody of justice. It won't be different with Saddam's execution."

The National Liberation Council of Bangladesh organized a protest meeting in the capital city Dhaka against the killing of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. At the meeting, Fiezul Hakim, secretary of the NLC, said, "By killing President Saddam Hussein, U.S. imperialism wanted to destroy Iraq. Now Saddam is the symbol of anti imperialism." After the protest meeting a protest procession was held. Many other organizations held protest rallies.

The International Action Center (USA): This punishment has nothing to do with the alleged crimes of the Iraqi leader, nor is it part of an historical judgment of his role. It is the act of a conquering power against a nation that is occupied against the will not only of its 2003 legal government but also against the will of the vast majority of its people.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (ML) outright condemns the hanging of Iraqi

HIV Emergency in Boston

Continued from page 5

WW: You are HIV positive. How does that affect your work?

FH: It's driven it. I've been positive for over 18 years and that's what catapulted me to do this work and give me the sensitivity and passion for the work. I understand by living with the virus—it's not abstract for me.

WW: If you had all the power to have your way to fight the epidemic, what would you like to see done?

FH: I would really like to see comprehensive outreach to marginalized communities and then assessment and treatment. And when I say comprehensive, I mean whether someone is positive or not, so that people, even if they are just at risk, they can be empowered spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally; in every regard so they can be whole. For all those who are infected, a labor-intensive and long-term program. I'd like to see a center for housing and job training.

WW: When you look at the power structure, why have the resources been so late or not there at all?

FH: Our system is a capitalist system that is driven by money and the exploitation of peoples' pain and suffering, to make money off of it. HIV and AIDS are

no different. Unfortunately, people have used it to make careers rather than use the innovations from the people hit by the epidemic and getting their responses and solutions to alleviate the epidemic.

WW: In this coming year what are your hopes for the HIV State of Emergency Committee?

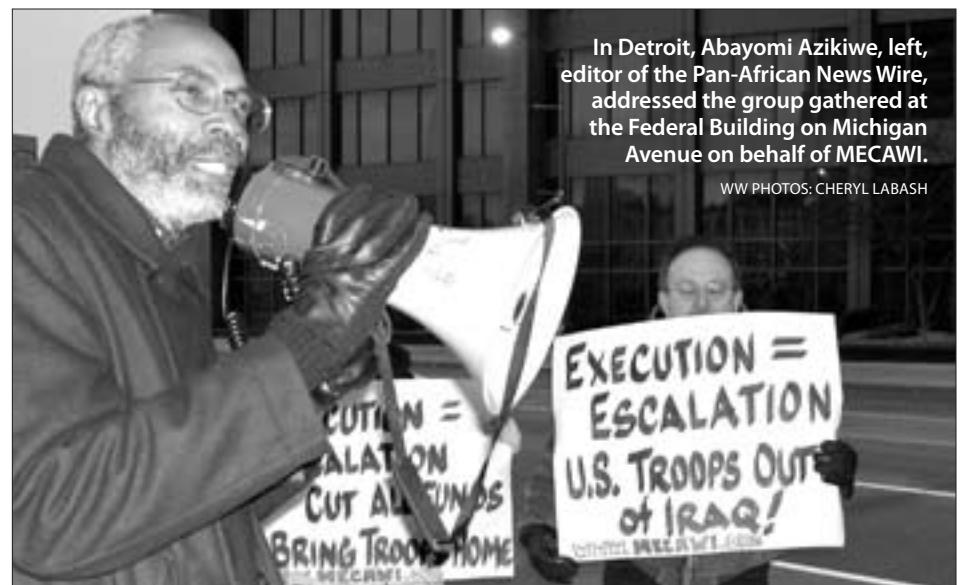
FH: I hope we can mobilize a movement that will be deep and long and have youth who will carry on this movement long after my life is over, and that it will be a movement that will be comprehensive and do the advocacy and address the greater social and economic implications that cause marginalized communities to be hurt.

WW: The word "disproportional" is often used to discuss what is really racism ...

FH: Racism exists and people who are poor and oppressed have the access to information and have less access to utilize it and do not know what is available. There is not an aggressive commitment and ownership to empower. The power construct is white and rich. There are the poor and the rich.

WW: How can people reach you?

FH: I can be reached at healoland@yahoo.com and 617-594-9955. □



In Detroit, Abayomi Azikiwe, left, editor of the Pan-African News Wire, addressed the group gathered at the Federal Building on Michigan Avenue on behalf of MECAWI.

WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH

President Saddam Hussein—who defiantly stood against U.S. imperialist design in the Middle East and jealously stood for independence and sovereignty of Iraq. Ignoring the world democratic opinion, Bush—the worst ever war criminal and number one international terrorist—has perpetrated this heinous crime the way this enemy of democracy did against Milosevic—the ex-president of Yugoslavia.

José Reinaldo Carvalho, secretary of International Relations of the Communist Party of Brazil: Saddam Hussein was executed as the result of an illegal sentence pronounced by an illegal court manipulated by the invading forces that have occupied Iraq since March of 2003. ... The conflicts already underway there [Middle East] will not have a proper ending, an ending consonant with the peoples' yearning for peace, sovereignty and justice, as long as the interventionist and warmongering politics of U.S. imperialism holds sway in the region.

Bert De Belder, www.solidair.org (Belgium): Officially, the former Iraqi president was convicted for the execution in 1982 of 148 villagers in Dujail. In fact, Saddam was eliminated by the United States because he didn't want to surrender his country's oil and sovereignty. His execution is one more entry in a long list of U.S. war crimes.

Anti-Imperialist Camp: They turned Saddam into a martyr of the Iraqi liberation struggle. He will serve as an example for all anti-imperialist fighters for his tenacity and steadfastness. □



Turkey



Jordan



Bangladesh



Another U.S. war crime in Baghdad

Workers World statement on the execution

The U.S. government has committed another war crime against the Iraqi people, one of many, with its execution of President Saddam Hussein. In reality, this is an assassination of the head of state of the nation of Iraq, which is currently occupied and ruled by U.S. imperialism.

Forget the fiction that this killing is a sovereign act of the current Iraqi "government," a puppet regime set up by the U.S. occupiers that can't even control the Green Zone of Baghdad.

U.S. forces arrested Saddam Hussein. They have kept him on a U.S. air base—Camp Cropper—since his arrest. They tried him with no legal basis in a kangaroo court under U.S. tutelage. They sentenced him according to the Bush administration's schedule to attempt to influence the November 2006 elections in the U.S. And now they have executed him to fit Bush's propaganda offensive aimed at re-escalating a war the U.S. has already lost.

This act only adds to the suffering of the Iraqi people and of those young soldiers sent by the politicians to do the dirty work of U.S. imperialism.

Bush will attempt to use this murder of the Iraqi president to show that he is back in control of the situation. The leader of the world's largest imperial power is now parading the head of his adversary on a pike in an effort to obscure the fact that U.S. military deaths are about to top 3,000. He hopes to

obliterate the Iraq Study Group's judgment that the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq has been a disaster.

The Pentagon, which in fact is against any Iraqis who fight for their sovereignty, has also launched an offensive against the Shiite-based Mahdi Army. The Bush gang is scrambling to come up with a way of sending more troops to Iraq than those available in the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, National Guard and Reserves.

Washington, not Saddam Hussein, is responsible for the deaths of over 2 million Iraqis during 16 years of wars and sanctions. No one should be fooled by Bush's statements of sympathy with any sector of the Iraqi people. No one should be fooled into thinking that the U.S.-ordered murder of Saddam Hussein will end the Iraqi resistance to Washington's occupation or will put the U.S. occupation forces or the puppet Iraqi regime in greater control.

The future of Iraq will be determined by Iraqis who are free from U.S. control and who now are fighting against the occupation.

Whatever one's evaluation of Saddam Hussein's role as president of Iraq, his role in history has been set by this murder. He died as an Iraqi leader who stood up to invaders from the most powerful empire the world has known.

Only when George W. Bush and the other war criminals in Washington are put on trial will the Iraqi people begin to obtain justice.

WW on Prez Gerald Ford

With the death of former President Gerald Ford on Dec. 26, the corporate media have with one voice praised this capitalist politician, especially for "saving the nation" by giving a blanket pardon to his predecessor, Richard Nixon, after Nixon's scandal-ridden resignation. In the Workers World issue of Aug. 9, 1974, we wrote about Ford, who had just assumed office. Here are some excerpts:

Criminal Nixon is out. Good. And now there's suddenly a massive propaganda campaign that "the nightmare is over," "the nation must bind up its wounds," etc.

We think the Ford administration is just like Nixon's in this respect: [Ford] is a life-long, true-blue, dyed-in-the-wool servant of the billionaire bosses who run this country. The poor people, the working people, the people of oppressed minorities will be just as shut out of power by Ford as they were by Nixon—and all the other big business presidents before him.

Here is Ford's record to prove it.

Ford on labor: Few right wingers in Congress can beat Gerald Ford's antilabor record. He voted against raising the minimum wage from \$1.60 an hour. He opposed unemployment insurance for farm workers. He's consistent. Way back in 1950 he voted against the Fair Employment Practices bill. The AFL-CIO rated his quarter-century voting record on labor issues at 102 anti-union votes against only seven pro-union.

Ford's legislative record includes votes against the occupational health and safety bills in 1970 and 1972. He has been a staunch friend of the antilabor "right to work" lobby.

In his recent speeches for Nixon, he has charged in a stock phrase that his boss was the victim of "left wingers, the ADA [Americans for Democratic Action] and the AFL-CIO."

Ford on Nixon: "I think the president is innocent. I can say from the bottom of my heart the president of the United States is innocent and he is right."—Ford speaking in Muncie, Ind., on July 26, 1974, two weeks before Nixon's resignation.

"I believe President Nixon, like Abraham Lincoln, is a man uniquely suited to serve our nation in a time of crisis. Every action taken by Mr. Nixon since he took the oath of office as president bears out the confidence, the feeling of trust I have in the man who now leads the nation."—Feb. 10, 1969

Ford on humanity; Ford voted against the Civil Rights acts of 1965, 1966 and 1969. He cast four votes against busing. He opposed public housing seven times. He was against Medicare, against rent subsidies, against funds for daycare, and against legalized abortion.

But he's been for more funds for the military, more funds for the aggression in Indochina—and for a constitutional amendment to introduce the Christian religion into all public schools.

Ford on repression: "There is and has been an atmosphere of permissiveness in this country, a mistaking of license for liberty. It won't be corrected by soft-headed liberals in Congress, but only by Republicans who recognize that law and order must prevail in America."—May 25, 1968

Ford on Vietnam: "Why are we pulling our best punches in Vietnam? Would the American people believe that after two and a half years of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, only three out of every 10 significant military targets had even been struck by U.S. airpower? Why are we still pulling our airpower punch?"—July 16, 1971 □

Botched executions incite fight against death penalty

By Sharon Danann
Cleveland

Following a botched execution in Florida on Dec. 13, in state after state, judges and governors are calling a halt to executions by lethal injection.

Don't believe the state politicians are suddenly becoming more compassionate. Instead, there is a growing movement by prisoners and their allies on the outside, in this country and internationally, who are fighting to stop the executions.

While Washington tries to promote the bizarre idea that it is spreading democracy and freedom abroad, the states are murdering poor and oppressed people with gruesome means.

A number of recent horrific executions that seem like deliberate cruelty but may be incompetence have prompted prisoners to challenge the lethal injection procedure in individual and class-action lawsuits.

A year ago, a nationwide movement failed to stop the execution of Stanley Tookie Williams. Witnesses to Williams' torturous execution on Dec. 13, 2005, were told they could not speak above a whisper or "sob loudly" as they watched his execution in growing horror. It took 20 minutes to insert a tube in Williams' vein; the mishandling of the injected chemicals resulted in a contorted struggle.

These witnesses then defied the rules, giving the Black power salute and shouting in unison, "The state of California just killed an innocent man!" Their courageous act received worldwide publicity.

Within a month another California inmate, Michael Morales, had filed suit, claiming that lethal injection would subject him to excessive pain. This led to a hearing in September 2006 that brought to light the barbarism and bungling of Williams' execution.

On Dec. 15, Judge Jeremy Fogel issued a "Memorandum of Intended Decision" in which he reports that "the team failed to set an intravenous line during the execution of Stanley 'Tookie' Williams." Fogel adds that "the evidence raised concerns that inmates may have been conscious when they were injected" with the drugs, which would subject them to pain.

Fogel lists the "critical deficiencies," including "lack of meaningful training of the execution team" and "unreliable record-keeping," so that it can't be determined if all of the anesthetic in the syringes was actually injected. The judge concludes that as currently implemented, the state's use of lethal injection is unconstitutional.

Death penalty still in force

But this decision does not eliminate the death penalty. Fogel states that the deficiencies are correctable and suggests that the state execute prisoners using the anesthetic, sodium thiopental, or another anesthetic alone. Executions may go on. They are just halted temporarily while the state works out the glitches.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger released a statement Dec.

18 saying that his "administration will take immediate action to resolve court concerns which have cast legal doubt on California's procedure for carrying out the death penalty." Remember, Schwarzenegger has a reputation of being the "terminator," and can be expected to get California's death machine quickly back in action.

On the same day as Judge Fogel's memo, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush issued an executive order creating a Commission on Administration of Lethal Injection. This was in response to the execution of Ángel Nieves Díaz on Dec. 13 that took 34 minutes to kill him, in contrast to the usual 15 minutes. Díaz was moving, looked toward the witnesses and may have been speaking. He had to be given a second dose of the drugs.

The autopsy revealed that the original needle went through Díaz's vein and delivered the chemicals to his muscles rather than his blood circulation, causing great pain. After the medical examiner's ruling, Gov. Bush suspended all Florida executions. New Jersey, Maryland, Missouri, Delaware, Arkansas and South Dakota also have holds on executions by lethal injection.

Prisoners in Ohio also began a class-action lawsuit challenging lethal injection. Some participants in the lawsuit have nevertheless been put to death. Recently, however, there have been two stays of execution for prisoners in the lawsuit. This still leaves open for execution prisoners who are not in the lawsuit, particularly those who are "volunteers."

Lucasville Five

Other Ohio prisoners have a renewed fighting spirit. This includes the Lucasville Five, political prisoners framed for their positive roles as prisoner leaders during and after the 1993 rebellion in Lucasville prison. One of the Five, Bomani Shakur (aka Keith Lamar), has recently won a new evidentiary hearing expected to take place this coming spring.

Banner headlines in the Cleveland Plain Dealer on Dec. 29 declared, "Riot testimony called a lie." A new affidavit presents the argument that a witness who sent four of the Lucasville Five to death row lied on the stand to benefit himself. This witness was released from prison in September 2006. Now this "witness" is walking the streets while the Five are condemned to permanent solitary confinement.

One of the Five initiated a prisoner chain-letter throughout the Ohio prison system to bring prisoners' family members and friends to a rally outside the country's largest death-row supermax in Youngstown, Ohio, on Martin Luther King Day weekend in January.

Anti-death-penalty activists believe they must redouble their efforts at this time and also act on behalf of specific prisoners. The rallying cry for this movement is that the death penalty is racist, it targets the poor, it is barbaric, it doesn't deter crime, and it murders the innocent; it is an instrument of control that has nothing to do with justice. □

Don't forget to renew your subscription

HAITI

U.N. occupation forces attack Cité Soleil

By G. Dunkel

U.N. occupation forces invaded Cité Soleil, Haiti, on Dec. 22 with guns blazing, supported by their armored personnel carriers with heavy weapons and helicopters. U.N. troops from Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Bolivia took part in the all-day siege, backed by Haitian police under the control of the U.N. mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Community leaders in Cité Soleil reported to Haiti AlterPress that the attack killed 17 people, including young children, and that St. Catherine's, the local hospital, was overflowing with casualties.

Sophie Bouteau de la Colombe, the spokesperson for MINUSTAH, reported that no U.N. personnel were injured. She did acknowledge that some deaths might have occurred in Cité Soleil, an extremely poor community of 300,000 people in the northern suburbs of Port-au-Prince and a bastion of support for ex-President Jean Bertrand Aristide and his Lavalas party.

According to Pierre Alexis, the Haitian Red Cross coordinator for Cité Soleil, the U.N. soldiers prevented the Haitian Red Cross from treating children injured during the assault and stopped Red Cross ambulances from entering the area. The Haitian press agency AHP reported that "residents were outraged that [U.N.] soldiers refused to allow medical care ... for people they had injured."

Bouteau de la Colombe claimed that MINUSTAH was trying to suppress "bandits" and "kidnappers" as well as regain control of an armored personnel carrier (APC) with its heavy machine gun that protesters in Cité Soleil had seized.

Residents in Cité Soleil differed. "The foreigners came shooting for hours without interruption and killed 10 people," Johnny Claircidor told Reuters. "They came here to terrorize the population," Rose Martel said. "I don't think they really



PHOTO: HAITI PROGRES

March from Cité Soleil through Haiti's capital, Dec. 16.

killed any bandits, unless they consider all of us as bandits."

AHP reported that Cité Soleil residents had "very serious property damage and there are concerns that a critical water shortage may now develop because water cisterns and pipes were punctured by the gunfire" and that "the victims were ordinary citizens whose only crime was that they live in the targeted neighborhood."

The APC had broken down and the U.N. had made no attempt to retrieve it. Also, kidnapping is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in areas where wealthier Haitians live. Corrupt police are often implicated in kidnapping plots. Thus Bouteau de la Colombe's explanation doesn't ring true.

Cité Soleil's grassroots activists argue more plausibly that the attack was "punishment" for their ongoing protests demanding an end to the U.N. occupa-

tion, restoration of full democracy, return of President Aristide and the release of political prisoners.

They point to the Dec. 16 massive protest led by Cité Soleil residents through the center of Port-au-Prince, joined by large numbers from other poor communities. There was a huge turnout even though MINUSTAH shot up the district the night before, in an attempt to intimidate people. A main slogan of the peaceful march was, "Down with occupation, down with tutelage."

Bouteau de la Colombe proclaimed in mid-December that MINUSTAH has a 10-year mandate to occupy and "stabilize" Haiti, while it tutors Haitians in the ways of democracy. MINUSTAH had replaced the U.S., Canadian and French troops that carried out the coup-kidnapping of Aristide on Feb. 29, 2004 and occupied the country subsequently.

Dec. 16 was the anniversary of the 1990 election in Haiti, when in a landslide the Haitian people made Aristide president, even though Washington spent millions backing a compliant rival. Aristide's electoral victory was guaranteed by the support of a mass movement called Lavalas—the Creole word for flood. Aristide has also called his political party Lavalas.

The Haitian movement's key demand now is that Aristide be allowed to return from his exile in South Africa. Aristide's New Year's statement condemns the corrupt Haitian bourgeoisie—the patripòch—that took over Haiti on Feb. 29, 2004, after U.S. Special Forces kidnapped him to assure a successful coup d'état. Aristide ties the current wave of kidnappings in Haiti to that "coup-napping."

The former president's message was widely played and discussed on Haitian radio stations in the Diaspora and is available on the Internet.

The Haiti Action Committee has denounced this assault on Cité Soleil, demanded reparation for its victims and their families, and prosecution of the U.N. officials, commanders and soldiers responsible for this latest MINUSTAH atrocity in Haiti. They ask for people in the U.S. and throughout the world who are in solidarity with the Haitian people to send an email or fax to the following U.N. officials:

TO: Edmond Mulet, U.N. Special Representative in Haiti—mulet@un.org; fax 011-509-244-3512

cc: Thierry Fagart, U.N. Human Rights chief in Haiti—fagart@un.org; fax 011-509-244-9366

cc: Louise Arbour, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights—ngo-ahr@ohchr.org; fax 011-41-22-917-9011

For more information on this campaign, call 510-483-7481 in the United States. E-mail: gdunkel@workers.org

Cuba teaches the world to read

By Cheryl LaBash

In just 45 years a socialist revolution transformed Cuba from an impoverished U.S. colony to an international educational powerhouse. In 1961, Cuban rural illiteracy was 42 percent. In 2006, UNESCO awarded Cuba for its international literacy program.

On Dec. 22, 1961, the Cuban Revolution marked the successful end of the initial phase of the National Literacy Campaign that brought basics of reading and writing to nearly a million Cubans, many in isolated rural areas. In less than a year's time an army of 268,420 teachers, new graduates and high and middle school student volunteers laid the foundation for the doctors, clinics and medical schools Cuba shares with the world today. Women comprised more than half of the brigadistas and youth aged 10 to 19 numbered 100,000.

Fidel Castro explained the long range importance of the national campaign that reduced the 42 percent illiteracy rate to 4 percent: "This literacy campaign will give opportunities to those who were denied an education for economic and social reasons. ... They must be helped; they must be persuaded that they can study. Some people at first had bad eyesight and they got eye examinations and free glasses. There can and must not

be any obstacle. ...

"The literacy campaign directly benefits the poor. This is the great injustice which the revolution is correcting. At the same time, it is of vital importance for the country. There can be no progress without education. It is necessary if we are to carry out the great projects in science and the economy, which the revolution plans. If we are to eradicate poverty and raise our living standard, this is necessary."

In 2006, UNESCO awarded Cuba the King Sejong Literacy Prize for "working through an innovative literacy method with more than 15 countries to use literacy to advance individual and social potential." Although several other countries were awarded for their internal literacy work, the Latin American and Caribbean Pedagogical University of the Republic of Cuba (IPLAC) received the only award for assisting other countries.

The Cuban "Yo sí puedo" (Yes I can) method combined with the political will of the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela recently ended illiteracy there, teaching 1.5 million people to read in two years. In Ecuador several Indigenous mayors adopted the method.

Cuba "implemented the literacy programmes in different social and cultural contexts covering all levels of society including indigenous peoples, those in rural and urban areas, those serving pris-

on sentences, people with special educational needs, migrants, ethnic minorities, at the same time paying special attention to women's education." (UNESCO)

Bolivia aims to end illiteracy by 2008 with the support of Cuba and Venezuela. In both rural and urban areas the Aymara and Quechua Indigenous people are learning to read and write in their own languages.

A report to the 14th Summit of the Non Aligned Movement revealed that 2.3 million people in 15 countries, including Mexico and New Zealand, are presently studying under the program. Currently there are requests from Gambia, Nigeria, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, and from the city of Seville in Spain for Cuba to send advisors to start the method.

Although the mass mobilization for the National Literacy Campaign started on April 15, 1961, preparation began earlier. On Jan. 5, 1961, Conrado Benítez García, a young Black man who was one of the early volunteer teachers, and peasant Eliodoro Rodríguez Linares were murdered and mutilated near Trinidad on the south coast of Cuba's Sancti Spiritus province. The youth brigades named in honor of Conrado Benítez mobilized just days before the direct CIA invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs (Playa Girón), an invasion originally planned for the Trinidad area.

The 1961 Cuban school year ended early; it did not resume in the fall until the national literacy campaign was completed in December. Through the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) 30,000 workers were mobilized to help the campaign without hurting production.

In 1961 Fidel Castro told CTC members in Havana province, "Imperialism offers educational plans to be carried out in 10 years, they claim; but they will not be fulfilled. The Cuban revolution will show that it can be done in one year."

Some 45 years later, in a country that spends billions to occupy Iraq and Afghanistan, Fidel's words ring true. As school districts across the United States struggle with unfunded mandates for the "No Child Left Behind" program, Detroit has an illiteracy rate of 47 percent. A Dec. 15 U.S. Department of Education press release stated, "The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), released today by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), found little change between 1992 and 2003 in adults' ability to read and understand sentences and paragraphs or to understand documents such as job applications."

The National Adult Literacy Survey found a total of 21 to 23 percent or 40 to 44 million U.S. adults, 16 years and older, are at the lowest literacy level; 21 million of those cannot read at all. □

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

SE NECESITA SOLIDARIDAD

Redadas racistas aterrorizan a inmigrantes

Por John Parker

Durante éste tiempo se enfatiza mucho el compartir con l@s niños. Sin embargo, para l@s niños de l@s trabajadores de la compañía carnicera Swift & Co. ubicada en seis estados de la nación, es época de miseria, de miedo y de ira.

Agentes del Departamento para la Seguridad de la Patria (DSP), y del departamento de Implementación de Inmigración y Aduanas (IIA), portando armas militares, irrumpieron en los lugares de trabajo sindicalizado de la Swift Co. el 12 de diciembre, aterrorizando a casi 1300 trabajador@s en lo que el Secretario del DSP, Michael Chertoff calificó como un ataque contra la “Inmigración ilegal”.

Según declaraciones del sindicato de trabajadores de la industria de alimentos, la United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCWU), que representa a est@s trabajadores, los agentes del IIA “entraron a las plantas el jueves por la mañana (portando) armas militares, empujando, separando y aterrorizando a l@s trabajadores. Los portones de las plantas se hallaban bloqueados.

“Las familias han sido fragmentadas dejando a l@s niños traumatizados esperando ser recogidos en las escuelas. En algunos casos, sus padres están siendo transportados a centros de detención en ciudades lejanas negándoseles la oportunidad de llamar a alguien que les pueda ayudar con sus niñ@s. L@s trabajadores de la Swift en Grand Island, Nebraska han sido transportad@s por autobuses a Camp Dodge, en Iowa, a seis horas distantes de sus familias, sin garantía alguna de transportación de regreso.

“L@s trabajadores en la planta Greeley en Colorado, reportaron oír disparos. A l@s representantes y abogados del sindicato UFCW, quienes han tratado de representar a est@s trabajadores, se les ha negado el acceso a l@s detenidos.”

En el pueblo de Marshalltown en Iowa, el periódico local reportó que un sacerdote y una monja fueron forzados por los agentes de IIA a abandonar todos los esfuerzos para encontrar la madre de un bebé a quien estaba amamantando. Después de haber viajado hasta Camp Dodge, donde la gente aún está detenida, ellos no recibieron ninguna cooperación.

“No nos dijeron nada sobre nadie,” dijo el Reverendo Jim Miller, sacerdote de la iglesia St. Mary. El también preguntó sobre el padre de un niño asmático y la madre de una niña de 7 años que pregunta repetidamente el porqué se llevaron a su madre.

Al siguiente día, el bebé rehusaba cualquier alimento y hasta el pecho de otra madre.

Según algunos reportes, los agentes de inmigración también detenían automóviles y golpeaban las puertas de residentes tarde en la noche. Es natural que bajo esta tensión la gente tenga miedo de ir a trabajar. Algun@s permanecen escondid@s o están refugiad@s

en las iglesias. Much@s temen lo que esta campaña de terror pueda significar para una comunidad forzada a vivir de cheque en cheque y aún así sin poder comprar alimentos o pagar el alquiler o el costo de la calefacción durante el invierno.

Redadas racistas y antiobreras

Muchos están señalando el carácter racista de estos ataques. El Colegio Nacional de Abogados Hispánicos reportó el 18 de diciembre que a l@s empleados “no latinos” y a los de tez clara les proporcionaron unas pulseras azules para evitar ser interrogad@s, mientras que l@s trabajadores que parecían ser hispan@s o tener origen latino, fueron sujet@s a procedimientos de inmigración. ... La preocupación sería es el uso de oficiales de la policía o del servicio de inmigración para inspeccionar la planta y determinar, basados en criterios desconocidos, quién es o no latin@, y luego asumir que todas las personas percibidas como latinas son ilegales”.

La interpretación de los oficiales del DSP divulgada por los medios de comunicación corporativos, es que esas redadas son justificadas no solo por razón de la falta de documentos sino también por razón de actividades ilegales, como por ejemplo el robo de identidad personal. Sin embargo, un 95 por ciento de l@s arrestados no fueron acusad@s de robo de identidad ni de cualquier otro acto criminal, aparte de inmigración ilegal. De l@s casi 1.300 detenidos, 65 fueron acusad@s de robo de identidad personal y/o de otros crímenes.

Si la razón de las redadas fue para poner un alto a la inmigración ilegal, se pensaría que el gobierno perseguiría a las compañías que atraen a l@s trabajadores a sus fábricas y que a veces hasta proporcionan números de seguro social. En vez de esto, sin embargo, oficiales de la DSP enfatizaron que sólo l@s trabajadores de la Swift y no la compañía, habían sido acusad@s de haber cometido algún delito.

El hecho es que l@s trabajadores inmigrantes crean miles de millones de

dólares en ganancias para las empresas de aquí y la falta de su trabajo devastaría la economía. Según un reporte en el periódico New York Times, las empresas “temblaron” al enterarse de las noticias sobre las redadas en la Swift y el ejecutivo de la Swift advirtió que los niveles de producción caerían temporalmente por debajo de lo normal.

“Esta es la pesadilla de cualquier empresa, ya sea en la industria de la carne o no”, dijo Janet Riley, vocera del Instituto Americano de Carne.

En vez de esto enfocar el terrorismo, el crimen o la inmigración ilegal, como asevera Chertoff, lo que sí tiene que ver es con atacar a l@s trabajadores, especialmente l@s trabajadores sindicalizad@s. El ataque contra l@s trabajadores inmigrantes es un arma utilizada para dividir a toda la clase trabajadora de este país.

Las redadas tomaron como blanco a l@s trabajadores miembr@s del UFCW despojándoles de todos sus derechos sindicales. Los oficiales del sindicato ni siquiera pudieron acercarse a sus miembr@s.

Esto no es nada menos que un intento por socavar la militancia de la comunidad inmigrante vista el Primero de Mayo del año pasado e intimidar a l@s trabajadores para forzarles a abandonar los sindicatos. El DSP y la “guerra contra el terror” proporcionan los medios.

El rol de la guerra económica y militar estadounidense

Al explicar las incursiones a los medios de difusión, los oficiales del DSP aprobaron el intento de la administración de Bush para promulgar una nueva versión de servidumbre contratada, una especie de programa “Bracero” nuevo que estafó a l@s trabajadores mexicanos a mediados del siglo 20.

La propuesta de Bush de “trabajador@s invitados” permitiría a los patronos “invitar” a “trabajadores” del otro lado de la frontera a trabajar y rechazaría a l@s que quisieran un sueldo mejor o un sindicato.

Chertoff también exhortó al Congreso a pasar legislación que permitiera a los

oficiales del Seguro Social revelar información sobre los números de Seguro Social válidos que están siendo utilizados en lugares múltiples de empleo. Esto sería especialmente útil para “justificar” incursiones en el futuro contra trabajador@s de la Smithfield, por ejemplo, quienes procesan la carne para el mercado en el estado de Carolina de Norte. Est@s trabajadores, a mediados de noviembre, recuperaron los puestos de empleo de compañer@s de trabajo que habían sido despedid@s por no tener Seguro Social que correspondía a los números autorizados.

La administración de Bush y también el Partido Democrático saben que la guerra económica y militar del imperialismo estadounidense causa inmigración. Está bien documentado cómo la promulgación de NAFTA (TLCNA)— el Tratado de Libre Comercio para Norteamérica — por el Presidente Bill Clinton empobreció a l@s trabajadores en el exterior. El TLCNA es una forma de guerra económica. Pero esa no es la única clase de guerra estadounidense que ha destruido las economías y condiciones de vida y ha impulsado el desplazamiento a los Estados Unidos.

L@s trabajadores que fueron detenid@s en el ataque del 12 de diciembre eran de México, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Sudán, Etiopía, y de otros países más.

En Guatemala l@s trabajadores sufren todavía los efectos del golpe fomentado por la CIA en 1954 que derrocó al Presidente electo Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán terminando con su exitoso programa de reforma agraria que distribuyó tierra a l@s campesinos que desesperadamente la necesitaban.

En Honduras, la invasión militar estadounidense de 1905 y el apoyo y entrenamiento de escuadrones de la muerte años después, aseguró que hoy en día el 65 por ciento de la población de Honduras viva en la pobreza.

En El Salvador, los Estados Unidos crearon los escuadrones de muerte y armaron su ejército en una guerra contra l@s pobres y l@s trabajadores en los años 70 que exacerbó la pobreza y la falta de vivienda, impulsando a much@s a emigrar en busca de una vida mejor.

La historia del involucramiento estadounidense en África es una llena de fomento de guerras civiles para debilitar esas naciones y tratar de dominarlas, como ha tratado de hacer en Etiopía y en Sudán.

En vez de deportaciones, lo que debería estar haciendo el gobierno estadounidense es desmantelar su enorme aparato militar y ofrecer reparaciones a l@s que han atacado.

El pueblo trabajador y todas las organizaciones progresistas deben unirse para luchar contra esta peligrosa amenaza del DSP. Un paso vital sería la solidaridad con l@s trabajador@s de la Smith & Co. □

