

MUNDO OBRERO

Cuba enseña a leer al mundo
Disensión de soldados de EEUU 12

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Build May Day 2007! 3



RAINBOW SOLIDARITY

Free the Cuban Five! 8

LATIN AMERICA

Still moving left 9

SOMALIA

Africans denounce U.N. attacks 11

ROE V. WADE

34 years and the struggle continues 10

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

Naval armada moves into position Bush gang 'surges' toward war on Iran

By Sara Flounders

In the face of spiraling disaster for the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the Bush administration is moving toward a another reckless adventure—war on Iran.

The positioning of a second aircraft carrier group—with its accompanying destroyers, cruisers, submarines, cruise missiles and combat aircraft—in the Gulf, along with naming Adm. William Fallon of the Navy to replace Army Gen. John Abizaid as head of Central Command, are ominous signs of Pentagon plans.

This array of deadly equipment and this command change are hardly relevant for fighting Iraqi insurgents in the streets of Baghdad or Falluja.

A package of onerous sanctions on Iran, demanded by Washington and passed by the United Nations Security Council, appears to be part of the war preparations, just as past U.N. resolutions against Iraq served to create a war climate.

President George W. Bush's speech on Jan. 10 outlining his new strategy for Iraq directly threatened both Syria and Iran. Bush accused both countries of not doing enough to block insurgents from crossing into Iraq and accused them of funneling arms and fighters to aid the insurgency.

Almost immediately after Bush's speech, the first act of his new escalation took place. It was the provocative storming of an Iranian consular office and the seizure of diplomatic officials in the Iraqi city of Erbil. In international law any attack on diplomats or their offices is considered an act of war.

The following day, rather than pass the blame to lower officials, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice escalated the offensive, goading Iran by declaring that the decision came directly from the president.

BUSH'S QUANDARY

Can't win, can't get out 6

Increasingly in Washington and in the corporate media, speculation has opened on whether the hype about a surge of U.S. troops to Iraq is actually a diversion from plans to launch a new, wider war.

War plans unfold

The Kuwait-based daily Arab Times on Jan. 14 released a report that the U.S. military plans a military strike on Iran before April 2007.

The report, written by Editor-in-chief Ahmed al-Jarallah, said that the attack on Iran would target its oil installations and nuclear facilities and be launched from U.S. ships, while Patriot missiles would supposedly guard all Arab countries in the Gulf.

The report said that the Bush administration believes that attacking Iran will create a new power balance in the region. It said that Bush recently held a meeting with Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others in the White House where they discussed the plan to attack Iran in minute detail.

The Arab Times report was circulated by Xinhua News and China Daily.

Other media and political blogs had similar reports. Steve Clemons, a senior fellow and director of the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation and publisher of the

Continued on page 6

KING'S REAL LEGACY

Honored across the country 4-5



Protest at Times Square Jan. 5 denounces Bush's war plans. Left, Brenda Stokely and NY City Councilperson Charles Barron address the crowd. WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

WW speaks to Willie 'JR' Fleming

'Hip hop: a platform to unite the people'

By Eric Struch
Chicago

Workers World newspaper recently interviewed Willie "JR" Fleming, a member of the Coalition to Protect Public Housing and chair of the Hip Hop Congress Community Development Chapters.

The Hip Hop Congress has 29 chapters nationwide. In Chicago, they have chapters at Columbia College, Loyola University, Morgan Park High School and University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Cabrini Green community.

Its Web site, www.hiphopcongress.com, describes the congress as "a 501(c3) non-profit corporation that uses hip hop culture to inspire social and civic action, and cultural diversity amongst young people."

JR told WW: "Predominantly before, the Congress was basically set up in institutions like universities, affluent neighborhoods and certain high schools. Our vision was to change that, and put it in more local colleges, community-based colleges, communities where there's a lot of African-American or urban population.

"The element of the Congress that we represent is activism, knowledge—I guess another word for that would be advancement of the Congress itself, or Hip Hop itself. By using Hip Hop as a platform or a bridge to get not only artists to be accountable and socially conscious to what's going on, but also the community."

He explained: "Music has always been a platform to unite the people, so we use Hip Hop as one of them tools to unite the people, educate them, and also at the same time, entertain them, or as some people would call, edutain, our people. There has always been a plight in various communities, a lot of social ills exist, a lack of social services, social injustices. So Hip Hop has become a platform to unite these people. We utilize that to the utmost."

Fighting police brutality

JR led the Cabrini Green chapter of the HHC in an activist, struggle oriented direction. That was evident in the militant protests at Cabrini Green, organized under the leadership of the Hip Hop Congress, after the Aug. 7 shooting last year of Ellis Woodland, Jr., a 13-year-old African-American.

Woodland was shot three times by police. The killing took place in the North Side Cabrini-Green public housing development.

JR said: "I mean, make no mistake about it, he was shot three times, shot at four, he was hit three times by large caliber firearms. So their intention wasn't to wound

him, disarm him, or anything of that nature. Their intention was to take him out."

First, police claimed the youth had a gun. Then, it became a BB gun. His father, Ellis Woodland Sr., publicly stated that neither he nor his mother ever purchased a BB gun for his son.

The shooting outraged the Cabrini Green community. Several days after the shooting, HHC organized a demonstration against police brutality in front of the police station at 1160 N. Larabee in the heart of Cabrini Green.

"We went around with the bullhorn of course to hype the people," he said. "Word travels fast in this community, you know. Hip Hop Alliance played a role, Coalition to Protect Public Housing played a role.

"A lot of residents over here already know what's going on. You know, this police shooting had more or less something to do with community development more than anything."

There is a rising wave of gentrification of Cabrini Green. It is built on some of the most valuable land in Chicago and borders on one of its most expensive neighborhoods—the "Gold Coast."

The police response was more racism and violence. Cops at the protest were heard taunting a 17-year-old Cabrini Green resident, Maurice Taylor. After he verbally confronted an officer, Taylor reported that cops threatened him. On Aug. 13, Taylor was stopped and viciously beaten by the cops.

"It's just the nature of the treatment of the people" by the cops, JR said. "They feel that the people have been displaced out this community, population is dwindling, and they don't have too many rights, where the people don't really care about what's going on around them. We say we beg to differ.

"We saw the results of the marches. After the shooting occurred, a lot of people, when they got out there, they wasn't just really angry at the police, they was angry at politicians. They was angry at the mayor. They was angry at the Housing Authority. For a lot of people already know the reason behind that shooting stems from the gentrification of this neighborhood, or the urban cleansing of this community.

"So the people have realized that these are just tactics and ploys to make people want to leave this community, quicker than they need be.

"You know, everybody have a right to adequate housing," HR concluded. "[T]he basic cutting of the budget for the housing problem is a crime against humanity. It's plain and simple. That's creating an atrocity. So until the people wake up, we're going to have these problems." □

50-day vigil for Sean Bell

Valerie Bell, whose son Sean was gunned down by New York undercover cops in a hail of bullets, on Jan. 1 began a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week vigil outside the 103rd police precinct in Queens, N.Y. Joined by supporters, she vows to remain camped there for 50 days—one day for each bullet that cops fired at her son and his two friends—until the police officers who killed Sean Bell are indicted.

—Report & photo by Anne Pruden



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

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

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

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

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202

(313) 831-0750
detroit@workers.org

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

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

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

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221

richmond@workers.org

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

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

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

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

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. 3 • Jan. 25, 2007
Closing date: Jan. 17, 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.



This week ...

★ In the U.S.

WW speaks to Willie 'JR' Fleming	2
50-day vigil for Sean Bell.	2
Build May Day 2007	3
ICE drags Pakistani family from home	3
Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy across the country	4
Active-duty GIs speak out on Iraq war	4
Buffalo, NY, says, "Bring the troops home"	5
Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five	8
Lavender & red, part 86	8
Struggle for women's reproductive rights continues	10

★ Around the world

Bush gang 'surges' toward war on Iran.	1
U.S. crisis in Iraq: can't stay in, but won't get out	6
Latin America continues to move left	9
Bolivia uprising thwarts right-wing destabilization plans	9
Protesters demand: close Guantánamo.	9
EU, Morocco repress African immigrants	10
Africans denounce U.S. attacks on Somalia	11
Detroit anti-war movement protests U.S. bombing.	11

★ Editorials

\$1 trillion, \$2 trillion	10
--------------------------------------	----

★ Noticias En Español

Cuba enseña a leer al mundo	12
Disensión de soldados de EEUU lista para ser pública	12

Goal of Feb. 3-4 immigrant rights conference:

BUILD MAY DAY 2007!

By John Parker
Los Angeles

The power and potential of our working class was dramatically illustrated last year on March 25 and again on May 1 with the immense marches by immigrants. Many are still inspired by those huge protests.

May 1 has historically been a day to celebrate the massive outpourings in 1886 in Chicago demanding an eight-hour work day. Since then, the capitalist class has worked overtime to try and diminish the day's importance to workers.

The marches last year reignited and re-established the relevance of May 1 in the United States to the working-class struggles of today, this time in regard to the exploitation and repression of immigrants.

As many activists working to revive May Day have put it, the immigrant struggle is a major component of the working-class movement in general in the United States.

The challenge for the labor movement and other progressive organizations is to build solidarity with the immigrant communities by helping to broaden May Day 2007 in terms of greater and more helpful participation by the anti-war and social justice movements, unions and more.

To facilitate that participation, the March 25th Coalition, which initiated and pushed for the May 1 national boycotts last year, has called for a conference to take place this year on Feb. 3-4 here in Los Angeles, where it is based, to begin a national planning strategy to build May Day 2007.

"We intend to put this effort in the context of the history of the immigrant

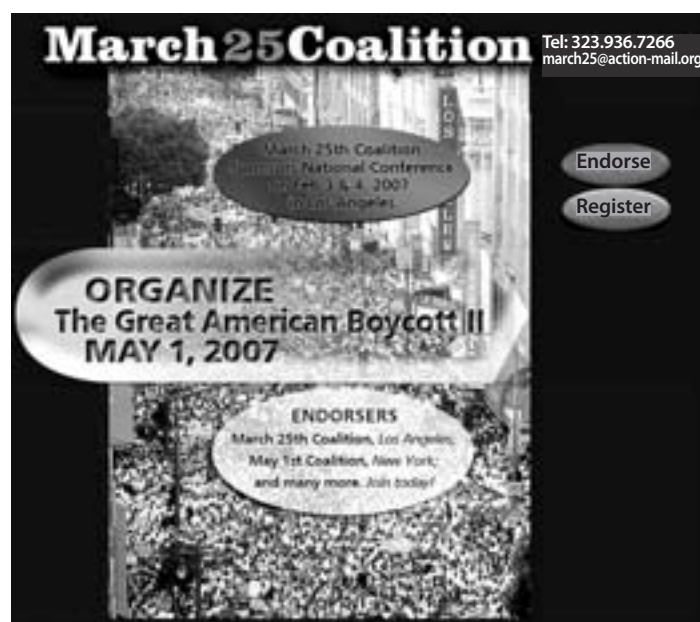
and workers' movements in this country, to link it to allies internationally and to address the root causes of mass migration in the policies of transnational globalization," explained Javier Rodriguez, one of the main organizers of the conference and co-initiator of the March 25 and May 1st actions last year.

In regards to building international and multinational solidarity, a special emphasis is being made at the conference to include the issues affecting Black people in this country. In the plenary session of the conference there will be a speaker on building Black and Brown unity, with a workshop addressing such issues as Katrina, Haiti and more.

'Si se puede!'

The call for the conference starts out: "On election day, Nov 7, 2006, the Iraq war, corruption and a lack of immigration reform took center stage. The electorate spoke and the extreme right lost control of congress and the Democrats are the new majority.

"The correlation of forces has changed and there is a new political reality, but as history tells, the Democrats are part of the 'Empire.' They will not end the war. Corruption and record profits will continue to soar. An inclusive pro-immigrant, non-corporate immigration reform will



March 25th Coalition sponsors National Conference on Feb 3 & 4. in Los Angeles to Organize The Great American Boycott II, May 1, 2007. The Conference will be held at Loyola Law School, located at 919 Albany St. in downtown Los Angeles, CA.

not be addressed unless we march and boycott as we have in 2006."

Already the conference boasts a number of very significant endorsers—student organizations, labor unions, various progressive organizations, activists who are on the front lines of the immigration issue. Included in that latter category is Elvira Arellano, who is in sanctuary at the Adalberto Church in Chicago. Arellano, who has become a symbol for all faced with deportation, was forced to take refuge in the church Aug. 15 after being arrested and threatened with deportation and separation from her son. Her lawyer is working on a temporary restraining order against the Immigration and

Customs Enforcement to provide a legal means for her to attend the conference.

Another endorser is the Border Social Forum, which has 100 organizations on both sides of the border, including Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington State, Colorado, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Sinaloa, Sonora and Baja California.

Union endorsements for the conference include the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas-SME (Mexican Electrical Workers Union), a powerful union in Mexico which today is playing a major role in the struggle against U.S.-supported privatization plans there.

Already, national participation in this conference spans from the West Coast to Midwest, from the South to East Coast. In addition, international participation includes representatives from Venezuela and Mexico, and possibly Cuba.

As the opening of the call for the May 1st National Conference states, it will take a united movement in the streets to stop the attacks on immigrants, like the increased ICE raids plaguing numerous cities in the United States that sometimes even leave children abandoned.

Undoubtedly this united movement in the streets to stop immigration attacks will be the foundation of the renewed struggle to stop the attacks on all workers.

If you would like to register for the conference, you can do so at the March 25 Coalition Web site located at: www.march25coalition.org. □

Dawn raid drags Pakistani family from home

By Leslie Feinberg
New York

Jan. 16 protest outside detention center.
PHOTOS: DRUM

The Siraj family nightmare began on Jan. 8 when 24-year-old Matin Siraj was convicted and sentenced to 30 years behind bars on charges of "terrorism" resulting from entrapment by an NYPD-paid informant.

The next day, at dawn, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents raided his family's home in Queens, N.Y., and dragged off his mother, father and sister.

The Siraj family is being held captive by the U.S. government, which uses the double-speak of a war "against" terror to wage a war of terror against Pakistani and other Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants in this country.

A bus filled with loved ones and community supporters from civil and human rights organizations traveled on Jan. 16 to the Elizabeth Detention Center in New Jersey, where Shahina Parveen and her daughter Sanya Siraj faced an immigration judge in a hearing closed to the public.

Siraj's father, Abdul Rehman, faces an ICE administrative decision that has not been scheduled.

DRUM (Desis Rising Up & Moving), a community-based social justice organization of work-

ing-class and poor South Asian immigrants in New York City, organized the demonstration to support the Siraj family.

Inside the Jan. 16 hearing, the judge set the bail so high—\$20,000 for Shahina Parveen and \$15,000 for 19-year-old Sanya Siraj—that it was, in reality, ransom.

Fahd Ahmed from DRUM stated, "Setting such an unreasonable bond is clearly another political tactic to keep our communities fearful and



silent. The Siraj family, as another victim of the U.S. government's 'war on terror,' is being targeted for their outspoken cries for justice on behalf of their son."

He added that the family remains "steadfast and courageous in speaking the truth as the government continues to try to break their spirits."

That bravery and conviction resonated in a message that Shahina Parveen sent to her supporters from behind the coiled razor wire of detention: "This is a systematic targeting of Muslims, a political attack on a peaceful family—and we have been caught in the middle of it. We have not gotten any justice and will continue to speak the truth. We will continue to struggle with patience and courage."

Desis Rising Up & Moving stated in a Jan. 16 media release, "DRUM, as a community-based organization that works with Muslim and South Asian immigrants and has seen the targeting of this community before and especially after 9/11, is calling on all concerned individuals and organizations to support the immediate release of the Siraj family.

"DRUM, alongside countless civil and human-rights organizations and concerned citizens, will continue to expose the ongoing injustices of the 'War on Terror' against this family and all targeted communities."

For more information, contact Fahd Ahmed, DRUM, 940-391-2660 or Kavitha Pawria, 718-216-0756. □

Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy across

Determined protestors say 'STOP THE EXECUTIONS!'

By Sharon Danann
Cleveland

In blustery cold rain and mud, almost 100 people faced off with prison authorities at the Ohio State Penitentiary in Youngstown, Ohio. The crowd maintained their high spirits and militancy in spite of drenched clothing and the state's video cameras.

OHIO



WW PHOTO: SUSAN SCHNUR

Since 2004, Ohio has been second only to Texas in the number of executions. Most death row prisoners are held at OSP, as are a number of prisoners with life sentences from the 1993 rebellion in the Lucasville, Ohio prison. Many of their family members and friends had come to make their sentiments known, including mothers carrying handmade signs with their son's names. Most of the demonstrators were African American.

Chants echoed over the 50-acre property and the rings of fences around the monstrous prison. In keeping with the spirit of an event in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a Cleveland community group called Black on Black Crime began singing "We Shall Overcome." A banner demanded "Stop the Executions!" in 13-inch letters in the hopes that prisoners would be able to see it from their windows.

Many of the participants learned of the protest through a grassroots prisoner letter campaign. Rally organizers had also reached out to various organizations that oppose the death penalty and anti-war groups.

In addition to the locally based Youngstown Prison Forum, LOOP (Loved Ones Of Prisoners), and Youngstown Peace Action, Cleveland organizations showed up in force. Black on Black Crime had a contingent of many carloads. Cleveland Coalition Against the Death Penalty brought many signs. The Cleveland Lucasville Five Defense Committee and Peoples Fightback Center arranged for a 12-person van and coordinated a four-car caravan from Cleveland. The statewide Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE-Ohio) was also represented.

The International Action Center put out an e-mail about the rally. Messages of solidarity and support came in from Vancouver, British Columbia and England.

The rally signifies the start of a new campaign to halt executions and to get the Lucasville-related convictions overturned, with Ted Strickland newly inaugurated as Ohio's governor. Write to Governor Ted Strickland, 77 High Street, 30th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215, fax 614-728-4819 or call 614-728-4900.

The Cleveland Lucasville Five Defense Committee is planning a series of educational and outreach activities in the months to come to increase the public's awareness of the false convictions. Evidence continues to emerge showing the perjury of "witnesses" who sent the Five to death row. The prisoners are in solitary confinement and are handcuffed during non-contact-only visits. This has gone on for 13 long years and is taking a health toll on some of the prisoners. It is time for their unjust convictions to be overturned and they be allowed to walk free. (See Workers World, Oct. 18, 2006, and Oct. 30, 2006)

The prisons in this country are concentration camps for the poor and oppressed.

In the prisons reside men with proven leadership abilities, like the Lucasville Five, who the authorities feel are far too dangerous to allow out on the streets to do the organizing that they might feel compelled by their experiences to do. Among the 2 million inmates imprisoned in the United States are many who were simply unable to afford a decent defense. They provide fodder for the prison industrial complex, while their communities are badly depleted of precious human resources. The state apparatus hopes that this will prevent further rebellions in the streets, but we shall see.



LOS ANGELES

Labor, anti-war, immigrant rights converge

"Bring my nephew home," "Yea, bring 'em home!" were some of the cheers that greeted the Service Employees International Union Local 660 contingent at the Los Angeles Martin Luther King Day Parade. The International Action Center and the March 25 Coalition for the May 1 Great American Boycott II joined the SEIU contingent with banners and signs against the war at home on immigrant



WW PHOTOS: J. LARIVA

workers and the U.S. wars abroad from Iraq to Afghanistan and Somalia. The parade route was lined with tens of thousands of Angelen@s, one of the largest MLK Day parades in the United States.

—Maggie Vascassenno

Active-duty GIs speak out on Iraq war

By John Catalinotto
Norfolk, Va.

Twenty-five active duty GIs reflected the growing opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq at a news conference Jan. 15 in Norfolk, Va., by publicly acknowledging that they had signed the "Appeal for Redress," a statement offering a view of the Iraq occupation that differs from that of President George W. Bush. The appeal has been circulating since last October.

Organizers had chosen the date to connect their appeal with the legacy of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s struggle for justice and peace. Some 35 active-duty troops and reservists, including Iraq veterans and other veterans, and the day's speakers filled the stage at the Unitarian Universalist Church. Banners around the walls of the church greeted the 100 people filling it, including one banner with the message: "Support the troops; listen to them."

And those who came, along with Norfolk's TV stations and some national and international media, listened. They heard, if they listened carefully, that a new movement of active-duty troops was starting to speak with its own voice. They heard that those in the civilian anti-war movement were pledging to support this new GI movement and to welcome it.

Some of the appeal's drafters and early organizers spoke out at the meeting and clarified their position with a four-hour series of nonstop interviews with television and press media and documentary filmmakers. These active-duty troops included Navy Seamen Jonathan Hutto and Javier Capella, Petty Officer Dave Rogers and Marine Sergeant Liam Madden.

Hutto and Capella are stationed on the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt with a complement of more than 3,000 officers and enlisted sailors stationed in Norfolk. Hutto, who grew up in Atlanta under the strong influence of that city's movement



Active-duty GIs read their 'Appeal' aloud in Norfolk, Jan. 15.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

for civil rights, helped focus the conference on Martin Luther King and his opposition to the Vietnam War.

Madden, who is stationed at the Marine base in Quantico, Va., and has only a week of active duty left in his contract, spoke about the need to pay attention to King's words more than one day a year. He read the Appeal for Redress, which the movement drafted in such a way that active-duty troops have the legal right to sign, protected by the Military Whistleblower Protection Act (DOD directive 7050.6).

The simple statement makes it clear that "staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home." Madden added, "Not one more of my brothers should die for a lie. This is not politics. It is our generation's call to conscience."

Hutto said that among the 1,029 signatures that the group has verified, 35 are from troops in Iraq.

Among the main supporters were at least a dozen members of the Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW). This group had up to now concentrated on organizing returning veterans of the Iraq occupation and getting them involved in the anti-war movement. The IVAW now also uses the appeal to reach out to active-duty personnel.

Jabbar Magruder of IVAW, still active in the National Guard in California, said he would be joining Madden and others on Jan. 16 to meet with Dennis Kucinich and other representatives in Congress and

present the signatures to them. Nancy Lessin of Military Families Speak Out and Michael McPherson of Veterans for Peace also had representatives supporting the new active-duty movement.

Phil Wilayto of the Virginian Anti-War Network (VAWN) spoke, along with Fabian Bouthillette of the Military Project in New York, which has been reaching out to National Guard troops at armories in the city.

"We must listen to the men and women" who are in the military and who are taking the courageous move of speaking out against the war, said David Cortwright, author of the book "Soldiers in Revolt." A year earlier, Hutto had read this book about the GI movement during the Vietnam War, which inspired him to begin the Appeal for Redress.

Before the conference ended, Hutto pointed out that before King made his famous April 1967 anti-war speech from Riverside Church in New York, King himself had come to a realization: if he were going to advise non-violence as a tactic in the movement for civil rights, he would have to start by insisting that the U.S. government—"the greatest purveyor of violence"—desist from its warlike foreign policy.

Hutto then introduced three active-duty GIs who read portions of King's April 1967 talk.

To see and sign the appeal, see www.appealforredress.org.

E-mail: jcat@workers.org

the country: 'NO TO RACISM & WAR!'



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

'Surge' of protest at Times Square

Activists from the immigrant rights, Katrina, and anti-war movement protested on Jan. 15 in Times Square in New York to denounce Bush's announcement of a "surge" of troops to Iraq, and to demand an end to funding for the war and an immediate return of all troops.

NEW YORK

The multinational rally was spirited, with chanting and a moving picket line that ended in a powerful rally.

—LeiLani Dowell

True peoples' commemoration denounces police brutality

On Martin Luther King Day, the temperature in Denver was forecasted to be in the teens. Early in the morning, when people were gathering to remember the great slain fighter who fought against war and racist repression, the temperature was in single digits and the ground was covered in snow, in what has been a near record of snowfall in the Denver metro area.

Communities United Against Police Brutality, a coalition of leftists from the Black, Mexican, Latin@, Arab and Asian communities, had called for a separate commemoration and feeder march to the city's benign rally and parade, that has for the last several years been sponsored by none other than State Farm Insurance—

an insurance company being sued for millions of dollars for refusing to pay out damages after hurricane Katrina.

The rally before the "Marade" drew nearly fifty people, while the city's rally drew hundreds more. The CUAPB event attracted a lot of attention and many community members dropped by to use the open mike. Many people followed behind the CUAPB banner, and when the rally got to its destination, at one point more than 100 people stopped to rally with the true peoples' commemoration and to condemn the rampant police brutality in the Metro area, the closing of schools and the building of a half-billion-dollar jail.

—Larry Hales

DENVER



DETROIT

WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH

'Money for human needs, not war!'

On Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Detroit said, "End the war in Iraq, now! Fund human needs! We won't go back—say no to racism!"

After an introductory rally at Central United Methodist Church, the blocks long demonstration marched past the Detroit International Auto Show to the Labor Arch monument and then back to the church. High school students read excel-

lent essays and poems prepared for the annual writing contest.

A leaflet with a petition on the back announced a demonstration at Senator Levin's office on Jan. 19 to kick off a "Not a Penny More for War" campaign. For more information contact the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War and Injustice at mecawi.org.

—Cheryl LaBash



WW PHOTO: GLORIA VERDIEU

New coalition offers alternative to militarized parade

By Gloria Verdieu
San Diego

The first annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Rally and Picnic to honor the 78th birthday of Rev. King was held at beautiful Martin L. King Park in the diverse working-class community of southeast San Diego. People brought all types of homemade dishes and food to put on the grill. Some said that this event reminded them of a big family gathering.

The event was organized by the King/Chavez Coalition for Justice and Unity, which was formed after last's years King Day Parade. A diverse group of community members came together to discuss what to do about the parade, which had been

SAN DIEGO

moved out of the community and had become disturbingly militarized and completely co-opted by corporate interests. The King Day Parade has turned into a tourist attraction that represents everything that Martin Luther King was against.

The community group then organized a contingent in the Cesar Chavez Parade that was held in March, and again witnessed the same type of militarization. The group later voted to name itself the King/Chavez Coalition for Justice and Unity.

This year's picnic and rally began with a recording of King's 1967 "Beyond Vietnam" speech. Then there was a drum call by young African drummers ranging in age from 4 to 18.

After the drummers were a number of speakers making the connections among struggles of all working people. Enrique Morones of Border Angels spoke on immigration and border issues.

The assemblage was honored with the presence of Minister James Haggard of the Christian Fellowship Church. Rev. Haggard knew Rev. King and was a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He recounted how King spoke out on Vietnam and U.S. militarism. Haggard noted that if King were

alive today, he would be speaking out against the Iraq war. He also commented on the correctness of making the connection between King and Chavez and on the need to unite the struggles of all nationalities. He praised the picnic, rally and the organizers for having a vision and acting on it.

Professor Pat Washington spoke on the criminal justice system. Professor Jesse Mills spoke about racism. Poetry was read by the African American Writers & Artists, the Common Collective and the Langston Hughes Poetry Circle. Sylvia Telafaro, president of AAWA, announced that Mumia Abu-Jamal had been made an honorary member of her organization and that every-

one should be involved in the struggle to free him. The Radical Cheerleaders performed several cheers that they do to disrupt and agitate in front of Minutemen at day labor hiring sites, and to support immigration and border rallies, LGBT rallies and other social justice events.

The rally also included speakers from FIST (Fight Imperialism Stand Together), the International Socialist Organization and Copwatch. There was a speaker from the San Diego Black Contractors who brought his group to this rally after concluding their own rally that addressed the issue of unfair work practices. Workers World organizer Bob McCubbin tied the issues together with his talk, which emphasized the need to intensify our struggle to end war, racism and poverty, to free the Cuban Five, Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, and all political prisoners. The rally concluded with a reading of "An Urge to Surge," an essay that Abu-Jamal wrote before Bush's speech on Jan 10.

People left with a good feeling about the event. Everyone agreed that it should become a yearly event. Organizers plan to return to this park in 2008, but to also have a march through the community to the park. □

BUFFALO

Bring the troops home!



The Buffalo/Western New York International Action Center put out a call to rally on the day after Bush announced the increase in troops to Iraq. Every antiwar organization in the area endorsed the demonstration, and more than 150 people gathered in the heart of downtown Buffalo at rush hour to voice their anger. All the local media outlets covered this demonstration, reflecting their realization that people really are furious and fed up. Passing motorists honked their support throughout the rally.

—Report and photo by Ellie Dorritie

'Only the mass of the people can stop this war'

U.S. crisis in Iraq: can't stay in,

The following is excerpted from a talk given by Fred Goldstein—Workers World newspaper contributing editor and Workers World Party (WWP) Secretariat member—at a Jan. 12 WWP forum in New York. A podcast of the entire speech, which also included an analysis warning about the threat of a U.S. war against Iran and about the Pentagon intervention in Somalia, is available for listening at www.workers.org.

I can't resist opening up about something that seems so obvious: capitalist democracy is democracy for the imperialists.

Everybody knows that the vast sentiment of the people in the election was to get the troops out of Iraq. That's how the Democrats swept in. But apparently the majority of the ruling class has not come to that conclusion yet. So in spite of the fact that the latest polls show that 67 percent of the people are against sending the troops in, this escalation, and 30 percent of the people are strongly against it, it's proceeding as the Bush administration is planning it.

That's why Lenin said that capitalist democracy is the best shell for hiding the capitalist class. It allows the people to have the feeling that they have a say in the matter when actually it's the capitalists and the imperialists who pull all the strings.

I would like to read to you something about Bush's troop escalation announcement by an eminent imperialist strategist—Zbigniew Brzezinski—who is a reactionary, an anticommunist in every cell of his body, and who was the architect of the Afghanistan counter-revolution.

In an [op-ed column] in the Jan. 12 Washington Post entitled, "Five Flaws in the President's Plan," he wrote, "The speech reflects a profound misunderstanding of our era. America is acting like a colonial power in Iraq. But the age of colonialism is over. Waging a colonial war in the post-colonial age is self-defeating. That is the fatal flaw of Bush's policy."

Well, it's rare when we agree, not only with the substance of what an imperialist strategist says, but with the formulations. It's very rare that someone like this speaks truth, class truth, to say this is a colonial war.

All the Pentagon commanders in Iraq were required to watch the movie "Battle of Algiers" in the early stages of the war, because it showed that no amount of torture, military repression, kicking down doors, going into neighborhoods, isolating them, worked once you lost the population and they were ready to fight to the end on an anti-colonial basis.

There's a lot more he didn't say: It's a war for oil, for bases, for strategic position. But the fact that he would say something so stark shows a level of fear and desperation on his part—high anxiety, you might say.

This phrase is meant to throw a block in the way of Bush and his grouping and say, "Stop, stop." But Bush isn't about to listen.

It is the agony of imperialism, U.S. imperialism, that they cannot leave and they cannot stay.

But the temptation is to take another shot at it, to find a way to keep from having a huge strategic defeat. What the Bush administration is doing is buying time. We don't know if they have a plan for a lot more troops. They're fully committed and they have something up their sleeve.

Losing hearts and minds

All the Pentagon commanders in Iraq were required to watch the movie "Battle of Algiers" in the early stages of the war, because it showed that no amount of torture, military repression, kicking down doors, going into neighborhoods, isolating them, worked once you lost the population and they were ready to fight to the end on an anti-colonial basis.

The Pentagon had the same experience in Vietnam. They had "pacification" programs, strategic hamlets, tiger cages, torture. They had the Phoenix Program where

they assassinated 15,000 cadres, presumably of the National Liberation Front. But they lost the population because they were fighting a colonial war.

The new commander in Iraq, Gen. [David] Petraeus, is the great hero of the military establishment because he brought "counterinsurgency" up to date. He wrote the post-Vietnam manual for Iraq. Some of the things he wrote sound good on paper, like that the number one mistake is overemphasizing killing and capturing the enemy, rather than securing and engaging the populace.

Yet only the other day, the Pentagon sent F-16s and Black Hawk helicopters right into Baghdad and pulverized a neighborhood. And they're about to send soldiers into 22 neighborhoods to break down doors. They have A-10 fighter planes that shoot 5,000 rounds [a minute] that they used in Fallujah and in Baghdad.

What happened to Petraeus's doctrine? They already tore it up. They're planning to succumb to the temptation of going in after having been straight-jacketed by Rumsfeld—this is the way they look at it. Rumsfeld was fired because he wanted to stay in Iraq and he didn't want to escalate the war.

Factions in the military who were straining at the bit to send in more troops have regained some of their command authority. These are the forces that Bush is relying on. He's got very little support elsewhere.

[Sen. John] McCain, an arch-militarist, is supporting Bush. McCain's father, an admiral, was a commander in the Pacific. John Warner, [the ranking Republican on] the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is giving tepid support. [Sen.] Lindsey Graham is supporting Bush all-out. These are the arch-militarists. They are aligned with the factions in the military who wanted to escalate with more troops.

This is an overthrow of the Rumsfeld doctrine, which says, "Shrink the ground forces." The defeat of the Rumsfeld doctrine is very important, because he was trying to use the most modern technology available to reduce the necessity for large drafted armies to fight oppressed peoples. If he could have succeeded, it would have been a great boon to imperialism.

Rumsfeld was a student of the

Vietnamese war, and the conclusion he drew was, "We must be able to win from the air, from the sea." But it didn't work out. He held on to his doctrine to the end, and he had to be fired.

Now the Pentagon's misfortune is that they can't put another 50,000 troops in there—they haven't got them. So the rules have suddenly been changed. It used to be that the most reservists could serve was 24 months in five years. That restriction has been lifted. And every unit that's been to Iraq is now subject to recall.

That's a sign of desperation. The U.S. imperialist military is vulnerable because the reserves didn't sign up for this. So while the military hawks got their way, they have limited forces on which to draw.

But Bush is going ahead. If you saw the Senate hearings yesterday with Condoleezza Rice, Republicans and Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee, they were aghast. They're capitalist politicians. However, merged with personal ambition and politicking was a genuine dismay at the plan.

Some of these politicians are senior politicians—like [Joseph] Biden, [Chuck] Hagel and so on—who are in the upper echelons of the political establishment and circulate in the ruling class. They've been to Iraq, and back and forth in the advising; they're close to the situation. They're aghast.

The Democrats are in a position to do something to stop the war, but they haven't made any move. They act as though their hands are tied. Part of this is political strategy for the year 2008: Be against the war, but make sure that you look like you're not anti-military, and don't do anything that looks like it's going to hurt the troops.

But what makes that political strategy acceptable to the ruling class? It means that there's no significant coming together of any section of the big bourgeoisie that is confirmed in its conviction that this has got to stop now to cut its losses. That's what the vacillation of the Democrats means.

When the Vietnamese Tet Offensive took place in 1968, the big bourgeoisie said, "We've got to find a way to end this." The Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF)—which was a guerilla peasant army

Naval armada moves into position

Bush gang 'surges' toward war on Iran

Continued from page 1

political blog The Washington Note, wrote that, "Washington intelligence, military and foreign policy circles are abuzz today with speculation that the president, yesterday or in recent days, sent a secret Executive Order to the secretary of defense and to the director of the CIA to launch military operations against Syria and Iran.

"The president may have started a new secret, informal war against Syria and Iran without the consent of Congress or any broad discussion with the country.

"Some are suggesting that the Consulate raid may have been designed to try and prompt a military response from Iran—to generate a *casus belli* for further American action."

Some Washington analysts viewed Bush's speech as a thinly veiled threat to

conduct "hot pursuit" operations across Iraq's borders with Iran and Syria. "There is an ominous element here," said William Arkin of the Washington Post. "When the president pledged to 'seek out and destroy the networks supporting our enemies in Iraq,' to me that means the threat of strikes on targets in those two countries."

Comparisons to Vietnam War

A significant section of the ruling class and political establishment are very worried that Bush's actions will only magnify the disaster for U.S. imperialism, but they have no program of what to do. The Bush policy is the polar opposite of the recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton bi-partisan Iraq Study Group, which had advocated salvaging a desperate and losing war with diplomatic overtures to Iran and Syria.

Washington media speculation on the

plans to unleash a war on Iran became the topic of public debate when Sen. Joseph Biden, the new chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told Secretary of State Rice during a Jan. 11 hearing on Iraq, "I believe the present authorization granting the president to use force in Iraq does not cover that [an attack on Iran] and he does need congressional authority to do that."

Rice did not rule out entering Iran or give a position on whether the Bush administration would need congressional approval.

Sen. Chuck Hagel, a Republican and a Vietnam veteran, told Rice, "No one in our government can sit here today and tell Americans that we won't engage the Iranians and the Syrians cross-border.

"When our government lied to the American people and said, 'We didn't cross the border going into Cambodia,' in fact, we did," Hagel said, referring to

the Vietnam War. "So, Madam Secretary, when you set in motion the kind of policy that the president is talking about here, it's very, very dangerous."

On Jan. 14, on ABC's "This Week," Bush National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley refused to rule out the possibility of an attack on Iran or say whether he agreed with the position of Biden and Hagel on congressional authorization.

The danger is not only that the Pentagon will goad or provoke Iran into a response. There is a growing possibility of a staged pretext similar to the fraudulent Gulf of Tonkin incident in Vietnam. In 1964 an alleged attack on huge U.S. warships by a Vietnamese PT boat was used by President Lyndon Johnson to demand authorization from Congress to vastly expand the war in Vietnam.

On Jan. 14, with tensions heightening, Xinhua News published an official denial

but won't get out

that started out shooting bows and arrows at U.S. aircraft in the 1950s—marched into Saigon after having infiltrated the whole city. They smuggled weapons in and at the command everybody stormed Saigon and the U.S. Embassy. When the imperialists saw that, they said, “We better rethink this situation.”

So they sent Clark Clifford, a big corporate lawyer and one of the “wise men” of the establishment, as an emissary to Lyndon Johnson, the Democratic president, to tell him: “You can't run for president again.” And he resigned.

The big bourgeoisie was saying, “We gotta get out of here.” There was a lot of maneuvering. Nixon came in and decided to take the U.S. troops out, keep the air war going and supply the puppet troops. But that wasn't going anyplace either. So finally they voted to cut the funds in 1973. The puppet regime fell apart and the NLF, within two years or less, actually marched in and took over the country, drove out the final remaining imperialist forces and took over the country.

So, if the bourgeoisie decides that they want to cut their losses, you'll see the Democrats suddenly getting a backbone. But they're not there yet.

Remember the Iraq Study Group?

Practically nobody remembers the Iraq Study Group. For two months they were the headline; they were the saviors. “The Iraq Study Group is coming!”

The Iraq Study Group was a prestigious political grouping of bipartisan imperialist politicians and political operatives, headed by James Baker, who was an aide to Bush's father. He was the architect of the stealing of the 2000 election in Florida.

When they came, Cheney ate them for lunch.

It's clear now that while the ruling class was hoping that they would come up with some magic solution, there is none. That became apparent when they made their report, and the bourgeoisie saw that.

It's not true that they can't fold and withdraw. They certainly can. And they will have to do that, eventually. It has to get worse for them before they will begin to contemplate it seriously.

When Bush floated his plan to send 20,000 or 30,000 troops to Iraq, Brent

Scowcroft had an op-ed piece in the New York Times in favor of sending additional troops to Baghdad. Scowcroft was the national security advisor of Bush's father. He is a general in the Air Force and a consultant in a big bourgeois consulting firm for giant corporations. Scowcroft was so much against this war that Bush Jr. would not let him in the Oval Office, wouldn't even talk to him. But the other day, Scowcroft said it would be an unparalleled strategic defeat if the U.S. was to be pushed out of Iraq.

The faction of the military that is with Bush plays a role in this. Actually, Bush was desperately trying to find the military grouping that would support him. He had a lot of trouble with [Gen. John] Abizaid, the commander of U.S. Central Command there; he had a lot of trouble with [Gen. George W.] Casey, who was in charge of the troops; and probably a lot of others. You remember the parade of retired generals who went a few months ago saying this is a disaster? So there were many sections of the military who felt that they were pushed into a really bad situation, and they wanted out of it.

It's not like the military want to leave and take a loss. They always want to fight—that's what they do. That's the division of labor in capitalist society between the ruling class and the capitalist state. The military, part of the capitalist state, is not the same as the ruling class. They have their own role in capitalist society, which is to be aggressive in pursuit of imperialist interests, and not to be troubled and burdened so much by political constraints.

Now some of them think it's too late in Iraq. But there's plenty who want to go and see what they can do.

Lessons of Vietnam

U.S. imperialism spent 13 years in Vietnam trying to hold the communists back from taking over. But it was also at a time when they were trying to destroy the Chinese Revolution. Their presence in Vietnam was to some extent an attempt to set up a beachhead against China. It was part of a broader strategic idea of conquering Asia, which they have never, ever forgotten.

General [Douglas] MacArthur, the commander of the Pacific during World

ers, fast frigates, guided missile destroyers and submarines, all equipped with “Tomahawk” cruise missiles.

The Jan. 15 Guardian newspaper in London described the war plans that Central Command has developed. The Pentagon has plans to strike more than 10,000 targets in the first day of a war. “It won't be limited to attacks on a few weapons factories,” says the Guardian. Central Command and Strategic Command planners have been identifying targets, assessing weapon loads and working on logistics for an attack for more than a year.

U.S. wars in Iraq have led to the death of over 2 million Iraqis and devastation in what was the most modern and developed country in the region. Their plans for Iran are equally horrendous.

U.S. policy has been hostile to the sovereignty and development of this rich region. Iranians will never forget the 25

The Democrats are in a position to do something to stop the war, but they haven't made any move. They act as though their hands are tied. Part of this is political strategy for the year 2008. ...

But what makes that political strategy acceptable to the ruling class? It means that there's no significant coming together of any section of the big bourgeoisie that is confirmed in its conviction that this has got to stop now to cut its losses.

War II, had warned them after the Korean War—when they were fought to a standstill—never to fight another land war in Asia. But they did it anyway, because the temptation of super profits and the beachhead against China was pulling them in as a class—their great dream of conquering one-quarter of the human race.

But after the Tet Offensive, they gave up the idea—for the moment.

Here's the difference with Iraq: [While] Vietnam never “belonged” to them, the Middle East, as far as they're concerned, is their “property.” [Anglo-U.S.] imperialism has been there for 150 years.

Iraq once belonged to British imperialism. The Iraqis threw them out. Now the U.S. imperialists went in to take it back. They yielded to the temptation of the collapse of the USSR, and they spelled it out in a doctrine that said preemptive war is permissible and regime change is the order of the day.

The neo-cons sold it to the ruling class.

There wasn't one significant dissent in the ruling class about invading Iraq. They all had misgivings about the diplomacy of it, and the alliances that were being ruptured. But when they thought they could get it back, they were all for it.

All their strategic thinking [involves] the Middle East. You control that, you control the oil flow and a good part of the economic arteries of Japan and Europe. Certainly China needs oil. You control all of this, in addition to being in a strategic military situation, to go in both directions, east and west.

So, Iraq is a strategic defeat for them. Both sides are right—the ones who say you can't walk out and the ones who say you can't stay there. That's their problem. That's their agony.

We've no confidence in any imperialist politician to stop this war. The ruling class doesn't even want to stop it. Only the mass of the people can stop this war, and that's the only ones we have any faith in. □



USS Stennis, part of the naval armada deployed off the coast of Iran.

by the local Fars news agency in Iran of reports that the Iranian Navy had clashed with U.S. battleships in Gulf region waters.

A senior official of the southern Iranian province of Hormuzgan termed such rumors “psychological war” against Iran by enemies. Many Iranian cell-phone subscribers had received spurious messages about a military clash between Iranian and U.S. battleships in Gulf waters.

10,000 targets in Iran

As of mid-January, the U.S. had deployed two full carrier groups to the Persian Gulf. Each carrier carries more than 80 combat aircraft, including F/A-18 Hornets, F-14 Tomcats, SH-60 Seahawks, S-3B Vikings, E-2C Hawkeyes and EA-6B Prowlers, capable of flying more than 150 airstrikes a day. In addition, each carrier group includes guided missile cruis-

years of brutal dictatorship under the CIA-installed Shah after the 1954 overthrow of the democratically elected Mossadegh government.

Crisis for U.S. collaborators

The attacks and the danger of wider war have created a crisis for both Kurdish and Shiite puppet forces in Iraq. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, who is Kurdish, called for the release of the Iranian diplomats held in Erbil. He said they had been working in a liaison office issuing travel permits for the local population and that

the office has functioned for many years with the approval of Kurdish regional authorities and the knowledge of the Iraqi government.

In a second U.S. raid, staged later in the day, U.S. troops attempted to abduct more Iranians from inside the perimeter of Erbil airport, but were surrounded by Kurdish peshmerga troops. An armed clash almost broke out.

The greatest fear of U.S. collaborators and of the corrupt and unpopular regimes in the region is that a wider war would bring their total ruin. □

Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five

U.S. lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans activists launch initiative



Fernando González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández and René González.

By Leslie Feinberg

A call for Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five is winging its way around the planet. On Feb. 6, lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) activists working with the New York Committee to Free the Cuban Five issued the statement calling for a new trial and freedom for the five Cubans held in U.S. prisons.

The only "crime" of the Cuban Five is that they had infiltrated CIA-backed mercenary commando groups operating out of the U.S. in order to monitor and halt terrorist plots against Cuba.

The Rainbow Solidarity call concludes, "The Cuban people have the right to self-determination and sovereignty. The U.S. must stop targeting Cuba with its economic blockade and CIA-trained, funded and armed attacks by mercenary 'contra' armies operating on U.S. soil. These are all illegal acts of war. We call for a new trial and freedom for the Cuban 5!"

Within hours after the call for Rainbow Solidarity with the Cuban Five went out, close to 200 individuals and organizations that fight oppression based on sexuality, gender expression and sex had signed on, many adding enthusiastic comments. Most exciting to organizers was how many of the signers immediately volunteered to help send out the call.

Endorsers came from across the U.S. and around the world: Mexico, Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Costa Rica, New

Zealand, Ireland, Wales, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Germany, Canada, Australia, Belgium, Portugal and Spain.

Signers span political spectrum

Early U.S. signers span a broad political spectrum. They include Teresa Gutierrez, a long-time leader in the struggle to free the Cuban Five; former political prisoner and leading prison abolitionist Angela Y. Davis; Leslie Cagan, who is national coordinator of United for Peace and Justice; LeiLani Dowell, national coordinator of FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together); Stephen Funk, the U.S. Marine who was the first imprisoned Iraq War conscientious objector; Bev Tang, organizer for Anakbayan, the youth group of Bayan; Gerry Scoppettuolo, co-founder GALLAN (Pride At Work, Boston); Lani Ka'ahumanu, BiNET USA; Atlanta community activist Pat Hussain; Camille Hopkins, director of NYTRO (New York Transgender Rights Organization) of Western New York; transgender activist Moonhawk River Stone; and Jesse Lokahi Heiwa, Queer People Of Color Action.

Activists Barbara Smith and Margo Okazawa-Rey signed on. The two were among the founders of the Combahee River Collective, a group of Black feminists of all sexualities who issued a historic 1977 statement against the "interlocking" system of "racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression."

Former political prisoners Laura

Whitehorn and Linda Evans added their names.

Playwright and performer Imani Henry and performance artist Holly Hughes endorsed. So did renowned lesbian cartoonist and graphic novelist Alison Bechdel and many political writers, including Minnie Bruce Pratt, Matt/ilda a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore, Eileen Myles, Sarah Schulman and Catherine Ryan Hyde.

Organizations signed on, including the Audre Lorde Project—a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit and Transgender People of Color center for community organizing, focusing on the New York City area; FIERCE!—a community organization for Transgender, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Queer, and Questioning (TLGBTSQQ) youth of color in New York City; QUIT! (Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism); Trans Action Canada; LAGAI-Queer Insurrection; Stonewall Warriors, Boston; and Queers Without Borders, Hartford, Conn.

In addition, people of conscience across the United States and around the world of all nationalities, ages, sexes, genders and sexualities are adding their names, as well, to this call.

Organizations that are not exclusively LGBT signed on in the spirit of unity, including Anakbayan-Los Angeles; Bayan-Southern California; All India Anti-Imperialist Forum; Latin American Solidarity Committee, task

force of the Western New York Peace Center; VIRTUAL u.s. Peace Academy at Seattle, Wash.; and The United Peoples, Denmark.

'Your help is needed!'

Less than a week after the initial call circled the globe, the Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five published its web page on the New York Committee to Free the Five web site. Visit: www.freethethefive.org/rainboweng.htm

The introduction to the initiative and the call itself are up there in English, Spanish, simplified and traditional Chinese.

The introduction and call have now also been translated into Farsi, Portuguese, German and French and will be posted soon. More translations are planned for the Web site, including into Tagalog, Japanese, Korean, Italian and a video version in ASL (American Sign Language).

Readers are encouraged to visit the web site at www.freethethefive.org in order to add their names and to help spread the news to others to do likewise. For more information on this struggle also visit: www.freethethefive.org.

Those with ideas for widening and deepening the initiative are urged to e-mail organizers at rainbowsolidarity4cuban5@gmail.com.

As the web appeal concludes: Your help is needed to free the Cuban Five! □

NY meeting to free the Cuban 5

By Teresa Gutierrez
New York

As part of recent worldwide events in solidarity with the Cuban Five, hundreds of supporters gathered in New York City to call for freedom for these U.S. political prisoners. On Jan. 13, several groups and individuals sponsored an event that featured speakers, music and food in the auditorium of SEIU/Local 1199 in Times Square.

The highlight of the event was a presentation by Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz.

Ambassador Malmierca Díaz gave a stirring but sobering presentation on the case of the Cuban Five. He explained why the Cuban government was forced to send



Leslie Feinberg, an initiator of Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five, with Ambassador Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz.

people to Florida to monitor U.S.-sponsored terrorists' activities against Cuba. More than 3,000 people have died as a result of this terrorism and more than 2,000 have been injured.

"Cuba has the right and the duty to



WW PHOTOS: TERESA GUTIERREZ

Co-facilitators Ben Ramos and Kathy Carlson.

defend itself," said Malmierca Díaz. He said it is the Revolution's moral duty to protect the institutions that have been built for the people.

There have been many outstanding declarations pointing out the unfair and unjust trial of the Cuban Five and many in favor of freeing the Five. These include, the ambassador said, the UN Arbitrary

Detentions Report and the ruling by nine of the judges from the 11th Circuit of Appeals. But today, he said, there is "a new situation." Legal options are almost exhausted.

It is now ever more important for everyone to continue to demand justice for the Five. Their families are denied visas to visit them, Ambassador Malmierca Díaz reminded the crowd.

"Nothing or nobody will make the Five give up" he said. The work to free the Five must continue. "Your work in spreading the truth is vital."

The event was sponsored by the Venceremos Brigade, Popular Education Front for the Cuban Five, New York Committee to Free the Five, Pastors for Peace and many other organizations. □

1970s Cold War gay-bashers condemn Cuba

By Leslie Feinberg

Bob McCubbin, a young gay male leader in Workers World Party during the rise of the early gay liberation movement, recalls, "By having regular articles in Workers World, attending gay protests, producing and distributing flyers addressing lesbian and gay issues, giving extra visibility to gay comrades, organizing branch meetings on related issues, and doing outreach to the lesbian and gay communities, we were successful in attracting many lesbian and gay youth to our ranks in the early and middle 1970s.

"But this work was not without difficulties," McCubbin says. He remembers, in particular, how a stream of articles in the big-business media opened up a campaign

against Cuba. Many of the articles focused on the imperialist charge that gay and lesbian Cubans were being mistreated on the island after the 1959 revolution.

The reality is that the Cuban Revolution—which seized state power on an island in which class society, colonialism and imperialism had woven prejudices and repression against same-sex love tightly into the fabric of life—has made tremendous advances for men who love men and women who love women, as well as the struggle against racism and sexism.

The U.S.-led blockade is designed not only to economically strangle the Cuban

population, but to keep an understanding of what a revolution can achieve in terms of social progress from lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people living in the imperialist citadel.

The imperialist propaganda machine doesn't care a whit about the lives of gay and lesbian Cubans. They want to crush the revolution and re-enslave the entire population.

But first, it is impossible to skip over the staggering hypocrisy of U.S. imperialism and its media propaganda machinery. They don't care a whit about lesbian and gay, bisexual and trans lives. They want to crush the revolution and re-enslave the entire population.

Their political duplicity was obvious on the domestic front. In the 1950s, these Cold War capitalists had escalated a state witch hunt against every expression of homosexuality and transgender under the guise of a "Lavender Scare."

Same-sex love was still illegal across the United States. Gay men, lesbians and all gender-variant people faced police raids and entrapment, prison, torture, forced institutionalization, rape and lynchings, loss of jobs, homes and loved ones. (See Lavender & Red series, parts 26-28, www.workers.org.)

But by the 1970s—while cops were still raiding bars after Stonewall and same-sex love was still illegal—the imperialists suddenly became champions of gay rights,

Continued on page 10



Latin America continues to move left

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

From Jan. 11 through 15 three leftist Latin American presidents were sworn in. This surely made the White House more nervous about this region of the world.

VENEZUELA initiates new stage of revolution

Early on Jan. 11, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez was sworn in at the National Assembly after having won a landslide election on Dec. 3. Ironically, this was the same day that, in the north of the American continent, U.S. President George W. Bush would announce his new policy for more death and destruction in his war on "terrorism" and Iraq.

Several of Chávez's speeches point to a new stage of the Bolivarian Revolution that will intensify the development of his proposed "Socialism of the 21st Century" in Venezuela. These included a call for the formation of a Unified Socialist Party of Venezuela, a new party that would coalesce all the pro-revolution groups existing in the country; the nationalization of important sectors of the economy, including telecommunications, electricity and the Central Bank—which up to now has been an autonomous entity—and several other measures intended to move toward the construction of a socialist society.

Sandinistas back in office in NICARAGUA

After being sworn in, Chávez flew to Nicaragua to attend the inauguration of



Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, Bolivian President Evo Morales and Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa chat while U.S. puppet Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez sits wringing his hands.

President Daniel Ortega. After a lapse of many years, in a completely new situation in the country, the Sandinista Front for National Liberation was back in office on Jan. 11, represented by Ortega. The Sandinistas, who had tried earlier to bring revolutionary change to Nicaragua, had been forced out in 1990 after a contra war sponsored by the U.S. that cost billions of dollars of damage, followed by Washington's direct intervention in Nicaragua's elections in support of an opposition it had created.

In fact, the World Court in 1988 actually ruled that the U.S. should pay Nicaragua some \$12 billion to \$17 billion in reparations for the damage of the con-

third-party countries for torture by proxy. CCR President Michael Ratner pointed out, "Five years ago, the Bush administration brought the first detainees to Guantánamo hooded and shackled in an attempt to create an offshore penal colony free from the rule of law and hidden from the eyes of the world."

More than 750 men have been imprisoned at Guantánamo. All detainees have been denied access to a court of law and an AI report issued in summer 2005 detailed a pattern of systematic torture at the Guantánamo facilities.

Extra-judicial intimidation

Senior Pentagon official Charles D. Stimson said in a recent radio interview that he was unhappy with the fact that lawyers at several of the nation's top firms were representing the Guantánamo prisoners, and called on the firms' corporate clients to end their business ties with the firms.

New York University law professor Stephen Gillers has called Stimson's comments "prejudicial to the administration of justice." Reports in the New York Times identified an immediate backlash from lawyers, legal experts and bar association officials.

The U.S. government's use of intimidation tactics to pervert the legal process for justice was echoed by Bush administration allies at the Wall Street Journal in an editorial by Robert L. Pollock. In a move eerily reminiscent of the McCarthy era anti-communist witch hunts, Pollock's editorial provided a list of law firms, alongside a quote from an anonymous government official demanding that "corporate C.E.O.'s seeing this should ask firms to choose between lucrative retainers and representing terrorists." □

tra war—a ruling Washington ignored.

The Nicaraguan masses have suffered terribly—first during the U.S.-contra dirty war and then, after the pro-U.S. regime was installed, by neoliberal economic policies dictated from Wall Street.

Indicating Nicaragua would take an anti-imperialist route, Ortega on his inauguration day signed on to ALBA, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas. ALBA is the anti-FTAA program for Latin American integration and trade that emphasizes solidarity over profits and has already set up wide areas of cooperation among its members, especially in health and education. There are now four countries in ALBA—Cuba, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

ECUADOR: Indigenous leaders show confidence in Correa

In Ecuador on Jan. 14, in a simple and moving ceremony in the heart of the Indigenous Zumbahua province of Cotopaxi, the leaders of the community invested President Rafael Correa with their authority and their confidence for the direction of a new and progressive Ecuador. Correa, an economist from the progressive Alianza País (Country's Alliance), won the highest office in runoff elections against pro-U.S. magnate Álvaro Novoa.

Several Indigenous leaders interviewed on Ecuavisa TV that day stated the need for the socialist development of Ecuadorian society. At Correa's request, the inauguration in the Indigenous community—a day earlier than Correa's "official" inauguration in parliament—was attended by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and Bolivian President Evo Morales.

Excerpts from Correa's speech at his Indigenous inauguration show the direction of his government. Besides calling for a Constitutional Assembly—something that the more progressive Latin American governments are pursuing in order to turn back imperialism's neoliberalist grip on their economies—his speech also shows a genuine interest in the well-being of the masses of people:

"This way we start this crusade called Country's Alliance, that is more than a campaign slogan but is hope: the homeland returns, and with her, the jobs return, justice returns, the millions of sisters and brothers expelled from their own homeland in that national tragedy called migration, return. ...

"This is the hope of a few, spread like a brushfire and turned into the hope and will of all Ecuadorians who on Nov. 26, 2006, wrote the heroic quest in our country and initiated a new history. Today, the homeland is already for all. ...

"However, the struggle is just beginning. The 26th of November was not a final point; it was a starting point. The Citizen's Revolution has just been initiated and nobody can stop it, as long as we have a united people ready to make the change."

President of Iran visits

At a time when the Bush administration has announced an ominous strategy that targets the sovereign country of Iran, preceded by the illegal capture by U.S. troops of five Iranian diplomats in the Kurdish region of Iraq, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is visiting Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela to further bilateral relations.

Bilateral trade agreements between Nicaragua and Iran were signed for the first time. Ahmadinejad also attended Correa's inauguration on Jan. 15, an unprecedented event in international relations and diplomacy. An agreement signed with Venezuela is aimed to help African nations as well. □

Protesters demand: close Guantánamo

By David Hoskins

On Jan. 11 prominent anti-war mom turned activist Cindy Sheehan and others marched in Cuba to demand that the U.S. torture center at Guantánamo Bay be permanently closed. The mothers of a prisoner held at Guantánamo and of a New York City firefighter killed on 9/11 were among the protestors.

At a conference on the eve of the protest Sheehan identified "George Bush and his administration" as "enemies of humanity." She also referred to the crimes at Guantánamo as "horrific" and "unspeakable."

The event was given front-page coverage in the Cuban Communist Party's daily newspaper, Granma. The Guantánamo facility is unlawfully located on a part of Cuban territory occupied by a U.S. naval base. Cuban authorities have previously referred to the U.S. center as a "concentration camp."

The protests coincided with similar events held in Washington and London. The new U.N. Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon, has also called upon U.S. officials to shut down the infamous detention center.

The Center for Constitutional Rights and Amnesty International co-sponsored the demonstrations in Washington. The aptly named Witness Against Torture Protest began at Upper Senate Park and marched to the Supreme Court and then to the U.S. Federal Court. Approximately 100 dissidents were arrested inside the federal courthouse for protesting conditions at Guantánamo.

On the steps of the Supreme Court, organizers demanded that those held at Guantánamo not be sent to other detention facilities, secret "black sites" or to

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA

Right-wing destabilization plans thwarted

By Craig Conway

A massive popular uprising in Cochabamba, Bolivia, appears to have thwarted right-wing destabilization plans by provincial governor Manfred Reyes Villa, a member of a right-wing opposition party. Reyes Villa tried to submit a second referendum on autonomy for the province of Cochabamba, the first having been defeated by popular vote.

The right-wing opposition to Bolivian President Evo Morales is pushing regional autonomy as a way to weaken Morales' government and disrupt efforts to nationalize vital natural resources and institute progressive social policies.

Cochabamba had a referendum on autonomy in July 2006 that was defeated. When Reyes Villa announced yet another referendum on this issue last week, the peasantry and social movements opposed to autonomy were outraged at the governor's inability to accept the prior referendum. They protested, demanding Reyes Villa's resignation.

The local government responded with tear gas and police violence. Fascist gangs came out on the street and there were vio-

lent confrontations that resulted in two deaths and hundreds of injuries.

The social movements then mobilized peasants, trade unionists, cocaleros (coca leaf growers), students, teachers and others. More than 20,000 people marched in Cochabamba demanding Reyes Villa's resignation. Roads were blockaded by people demanding an end to the autonomy issue, effectively cutting off the city of Cochabamba from the rest of the country. An angry crowd lit the Governor's Palace on fire.

The Morales government intervened to mediate between the social movements and Reyes Villa, who was conveniently staying in a La Paz hotel. Reyes Villa, under pressure from the masses in the streets, agreed to cancel the autonomy referendum and submit to a recall referendum.

The social movements responded positively to the cancellation and removed the blockades; but the progressive sectors of Cochabamba want Reyes Villa to resign. As this goes to press, the social movements are still protesting in the streets of Cochabamba, demanding the governor leave office immediately. □

\$1 trillion, \$2 trillion ...

Common sense and science both tell us that, at some point, quantity turns into quality. Add heat to water and for a while nothing much happens. But eventually it starts to disappear—the splashy, splashy liquid is evaporating, becoming a gas. Go the other way and cool it down and, sure enough, at a very definite point the free-running liquid turns into hard, brittle ice.

When it comes to social phenomena, the point of dramatic change may be harder to predict, but it happens, sooner or later. Take something like the amount of money that the Bush administration's war and occupation of Iraq is costing.

It's a staggering amount—no one can pinpoint it for sure. Estimates run from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion. The higher figure comes from a Nobel laureate in economics, Joseph Stiglitz.

You have trouble imagining a trillion dollars? Join the club. Even a billionaire would have difficulty visualizing how much goods and services could be bought with a trillion dollars, and something tells us that if you're reading this editorial, you're not a billionaire. (If you are, you're probably trying to figure out how to sue us—or worse.)

This is a very fluid sum, because the war and occupation are still going on and, incredibly, the government seems to be preparing to widen the war to other countries in the region. So \$1 trillion or \$2 trillion may soon have to be revised upwards.

The war is now almost four years old, so it has been draining the Treasury at the rate of around \$1 BILLION A DAY—more or less, depending on which estimate you choose. By comparison, the National Cancer Institute's budget is just \$6 billion a year.

New Orleans and its levees could be completely rebuilt better and safer for about what the war costs in a month.

You get the point. We could have universal health care, good schools, subsidized housing, and everything else that is needed to lift the entire population out of poverty if this money, which comes from the taxes of working people, were spent on human needs instead of on a doomed attempt to deliver world empire to the super-rich of this country.

How much bigger does this massive theft of the wealth created by the working class have to become before the political climate passes the threshold of rebellion, before quantity turns into quality?

Actually, that's what the more realistic of the billionaires are asking themselves. How much time have they got left before they'll have one hell of a fight on their hands—not just in Baghdad but right here, in their soft underbelly? When does disgust, disillusionment and anguish among the people turn into a commitment to organize for profound and irreversible social change? The money and blood keep piling up, piling up. □

EU, Morocco repress African immigrants

Starting on Dec. 23 the Moroccan government, acting on behalf of the European Union, rounded up between 380 and 400 people from Sub-Saharan Africa who were recognized as immigrants or asylum-seekers by the United Nations, held them in Rabat and then took them by force to the Algerian border by bus.

The authorities frequently confiscated or destroyed these people's identification documents. Police often beat, injured or humiliated the people, including injuring pregnant women and women with young children. The imperialist governments of the European Union, while not directly participating in the abuse of the immigrants, have urged Morocco to crack down on those trying to arrive in Europe.

On Dec. 26 people from the Elin Association, which assists immigrants, contacted some of the people in Rabat and then went to the desert region near Oujda on the Algerian border.

On the university campus of Oujda, the Elin group met a numerous group of deportees who showed marks of the physical and psychological suffering inflicted on them. The majority of deportees, some of whom had already undergone deportations to the desert, were from Congo, the Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Mali. They asked the Elin activists to bring before the government authorities the truth



about the rights of the immigrants being violated. They demanded their rights and to be treated with dignity.

—John Catalinotto

On 34th anniversary of legal abortion

Fight for reproductive rights continues

By Sue Davis

The year 2006 marked a critical victory for women's reproductive rights. A grassroots mobilization was able to overturn a right-wing attempt to make abortion illegal in South Dakota.

Despite that victory, on the 34th anniversary of the Jan. 22 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, the struggle to defend and advance the right of all women to control their bodies and their lives—regardless of age, race, economic circumstances, place of residence, marital status or sexuality—continues on many fronts.

The biggest potential threat to legal abortion in 2007 comes from a Supreme Court decision due this spring. The justices will rule on the legality of the so-called Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. The Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 in 2000 that the same exact bill was unconstitutional because it did not include exceptions to save the life of the woman.

But legislators thumbed their noses at that in 2003. They hoped Bush would appoint anti-abortion justices before the court reviewed it again. The appointments of Chief Justice John Roberts in 2005 and Justice Samuel Alito in 2006 did just that.

Eve Gartner, senior staff attorney at the Center for Reproductive Rights, who helped argue the case against the bill on Nov. 8, 2006, stressed that Congress shouldn't be making medical decisions. A CRR brief cited leading practitioners who stated that the dilation and evacuation (D&E) procedure, which is the proper medical term, is "significantly safer for patients," especially for women with cardiac conditions and uterine cancer. (Planned Parenthood podcast, Nov. 8, 2006)

However, if the Supreme Court upholds the vaguely worded bill, it could be used to deny access to all abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy. Although 91 percent of abortions in this country take place during that timeframe, often young women who have not received adequate sex education or don't have access to birth control do not become aware of a pregnancy until later. Forcing young women to carry unwanted pregnancies would be a grave injustice.

"We have to begin mobilizing now in case the Supreme Court upholds this reactionary bill," Kris Hamel, founding member and organizer of DANFORR (Detroit Action Network for Reproductive Rights), told Workers World. "Legal abortion was won when women took to the streets in the early 70s. The only way we can defend and expand reproductive rights for all women is by direct action."

Currently on trial in Buffalo on federal charges is James C. Kopp, who pled guilty in 2003 to state charges of murdering abortion provider Dr. Bernard Slepian in cold blood in 1998. If convicted of a federal law forbidding forceful interference with reproductive services, Kopp could be sentenced to life without parole, superseding the state sentence of 25 years to life.

"The trial gives Kopp and his supporters an opportunity to roll out their propaganda to encourage violence against abortion providers," Ellie Dorritie, an organizer of successful clinic defense in Buffalo in 1992 and 1999, told Workers World. "Those who provide abortion and contraception services continue to be pioneers in defending women's rights even today. The only virtue of the trial for those who support women's rights is we get an opportunity to affirm that." Dorritie noted that Buffalo clinic defense put Randall Terry, Kopp's mentor, and Operation Rescue out of business.

Opposing a Bush appointee in the Department of Health and Human Services is also on the agenda. In a blatant slap at women's rights, Bush put Eric Keroack, a known opponent of abortion, birth control and sex education, in charge of Title X, a \$283 million program that provides family planning services to nearly five million poor women. Planned Parenthood and other groups are pressuring HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt to replace Keroack with a qualified, unbiased health care professional.

The National Network of Abortion Funds, which helps poor women—who are disproportionately young, rural and women of color—pay for abortions, has initiated the "Hyde—30 Years Is Enough!" Campaign, which has been joined by many other groups. NNAF points out that the Hyde Amendment, which became law in 1977, forbids federal funding for abortion, with the only exceptions being rape, incest and danger to the life of the woman. Women in 16 states do have access to state Medicaid funding, while only two states fund abortions for undocumented women.

NNAF, which coordinates 109 grassroots organizations in 43 states, notes that poor women often go without food, risk eviction and pawn their possessions to raise money for an abortion. Women on public assistance are in a double-bind: they can't afford an abortion, which may cost \$500 to \$2,000, and they can't receive financial support after childbirth because the so-called welfare "reform" law punishes them for having a child while receiving assistance. □

Cold War gay-bashers condemn Cuba

Continued from page 8

anywhere except on their own soil.

The big-business spin made it seem as though the Cuban Revolution was a well-spring of anti-gay prejudice.

"Absent the persistent and pervasive climate of anti-communism," McCubbin stresses, "such attacks would have been laughable, emanating as they did from a country where gay-baiting was an indispensable political tool and where scarcely a week went by without the murder, somewhere within the country, of a transgender person.

"But since the anti-Cuba propaganda campaign was relentless and did have a negative effect on many people, including many lesbian and gay youth, we felt a serious responsibility to answer and challenge these articles, and we did, just as we conscientiously defended the other socialist countries, and in particular the Soviet Union, from the steady stream of anti-communist attacks.

"So we were often challenged by progressive youth, gay and straight, 'You support Cuba?' The more serious listened carefully to what we had to say in Cuba's defense, but we were also badmouthed

frequently by anti-communist elements in the gay movement."

An understanding of the Cuban Revolution, and the hand it was dealt by imperialism, is as important today as it was then. It demonstrates what a revolution can achieve, even when surrounded and under siege by imperialism.

The truth to begin with is this: Communists did not bring anti-homosexual prejudice to the Americas. The development of class societies and colonialism did.

Next: *Arrival of colonialism in the Americas—the real "Apocalypse."*
E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org

Africans denounce U.S. attacks on Somalia

By Deirdre Griswold

What possible excuse can the U.S. imperialist government and the corporate media give for sending the most modern and destructive war fleet to the coast of Somalia, an impoverished country in Africa of about 10 million people, and then viciously bombing its villages with planes that fire thousands of rounds a minute?

From President George W. Bush's lips to the print and electronic media, the rationale given is that the Islamic Courts Union, which had come to power with popular support in most of the country, was harboring "terrorists" from Al-Qaeda—where have we heard that before?—and so the Pentagon was justified in taking a sledgehammer to the country.

The subtext to this story is also becoming familiar. The U.S. is supposedly coming to the aid of "Black Africans" who are Christians—in this case the present government of Ethiopia—against "Arabs" who are Muslims. This blatant attempt to pit the peoples of Africa against each other along ethnic and religious lines is also the strategy of those who covet Sudan's oil and have pressed for Western intervention in Darfur.

But many Africans are not buying it. Articles have appeared in papers and



Jan. 13--Somalis in Helsinki, Finland, protest the U.S. bombing attacks on their country.

online sites across the continent not only protesting the air strikes in Somalia but also criticizing governments that do Washington's bidding.

Here are a couple of examples culled from English-speaking sources.

Issa Shivji from Tanzania writes in the publication *Fahamu* that "an American Air Force AC-130jet...bombed a site in Somalia near the Kenyan border. The excuse was the usual one—to destroy alleged Al-Qaeda agents who, the Americans have constantly propagandized, are part of the Union of Islamic Courts. The planes flew from an American air base in another African country, Djibouti.

"This is a very, very ominous turn of events. Africans have constantly warned of the American military design on the

Eastern seaboard. Yet, our 'leaders' have thoughtlessly been currying favor with this vicious military power. In the horn, the heavily militarized Ethiopia has become their 'on the scene agent,' doing the dirty work of the American warmonger."

Tajudeen Abdul-Rahem writes in the *East African Standard* of Nairobi that "flattery and endorsement by the West" give some African leaders "the illusion that they are players at the global stage and they line up behind the West's geo-political and economic interests, including fighting wars for President George W. Bush. [Ethiopian President Meles] Zenawi is using Bush's doctrine to affirm his alliance and justify his narrow national and sub-regional security concerns. But as intelligent as he is, why can he not learn from his Washington friends in Afghanistan or Iraq? It is easier to occupy a country than govern it. Why does Zenawi think that Somalia will forever remain weak militarily? If a country with nearly 100 percent Muslims wants to be governed Islamically, what is undemocratic about that?"

There is also opposition from African-American media in the United States. For example, Glen Ford, executive editor of *Black Agenda Radio*, said in a commentary that "The United States has brought its Global War Against Terror to Somalia.

... That nightmare future reached the capital of Somalia this past week, as the U.S.-backed Ethiopian army escorted the puny forces of the foreign-organized so-called Somali transitional government into Mogadishu and other major cities. For the previous six months, the capital had known its longest period of relative peace in 17 years, after Islamic forces drove out the warlords—criminal gangs, really, based on cash and family connections. But Islam is a red flag to Washington, even when it promises to bring peace to a 99 percent Muslim country. The Americans find that kind of peace, unacceptable.

"Ethiopian rule is unacceptable to the vast majority of Somalis. American troops serve as advisors at all levels of Ethiopia's army. The Americans are also embedded in the armed forces of Kenya, to Somalia's south, and Washington maintains a huge base in Djibouti, the French enclave on Somalia's northern border. The Americans had Somalia surrounded, and late last month assured their Ethiopian clients that it was time to move in, and put in place a government favorable to Washington. ...

"It is a war, and a world view, that bears no relationship to reality—which is why the entire American planetary criminal project is bound to collapse."

E-mail: dgriswold@workers.org

Detroit anti-war movement protests U.S. bombings & occupations of Iraq and Somalia

WSU Law School's United Nations forum targeted in protest

By Abayomi Azikiwe

Two demonstrations were held in Detroit on Jan. 11 against the rising tide of U.S. militarism in Iraq and Somalia.

Jan. 11 had been designated a day of action around the country to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the opening of the torture camps at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, as well as an opportunity for opponents of U.S. militarism to speak out against the Bush administration's plans to send 25,000 more troops to Iraq.

In addition to the escalation of the war in Iraq, the Bush administration has embarked upon a bombing campaign in the east African nation of Somalia that has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians. AC-130 Hercules aircraft have been utilized to destroy communities in the areas around Ras Komboni, where the U.S. claims al-Qaeda fighters responsible for the bombing of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998 are taking refuge.

At the Wayne State University Law School, a forum took place featuring permanent representatives of U.N. Missions from Iraq, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice (MECAWI) called for a picket line outside the event to express opposition to the puppet Iraqi regime's representative on campus.

The presence of the Ethiopian ambassador to the U.N., Dawit Yohannes, provided a focus for protesting the role of the government of this Horn of Africa nation in carrying out the imperialist program of the Bush administration. Ethiopia invaded Somalia in December at the aegis of the United States, bombing its airport and causing the dislocation of tens of thousands of Somali civilians.

After the conclusion of the picket line outside the WSU Law School, members of MECAWI and others went into the auditorium where the forum was being held. This event, co-sponsored by the University's Center for Peace and Conflict Studies,

the Detroit Council on World Affairs and Humpty Dumpty Institute, attempted to restrict debate and discussion by refusing to allow members of the audience to speak and direct questions to the ambassadors.

Audience participants were asked to write their questions on index cards and pass them to the forum's moderators. Critical questions related to the ongoing occupation of Iraq, the U.S.-backed occupation of Somalia and the bombing of that nation were ignored.

Members of the audience including MECAWI representatives began to shout out questions and statements in opposition to the Bush administration's policies in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. The Ethiopian and Kenyan ambassadors then attempted to justify their pro-U.S. actions in east Africa. According to Yohannes: "We are in Somalia based on our own interest. The U.S. has taken a firm anti-terrorism position and we support this."

When members of MECAWI pointed out that most people viewed Ethiopia's action as part and parcel of U.S. policy in the region, the sponsors of this forum sought to silence the activists. One woman, who had begun to shout about the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis that have been killed since the beginning of the U.S. occupation, was asked to leave.

MECAWI member Derrick Grigsby asked Yohannes direct questions about allegations of an al-Qaeda presence in Somalia. "How do we know what you are saying is the truth? The U.S. can label someone al-Qaeda and then justify their murder," Grigsby said.

MECAWI pointed out that the Bush administration has repeatedly lied about terrorist threats and weapons of mass destruction to provide a rationale for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Only the ambassador from Bangladesh, Iftexhar Ahmed Chowdhury, conveyed an appreciation for questions asked by MECAWI representatives.

Two members of MECAWI then continued to shout out critical questions and



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

statements related to recent events in Iraq and Somalia. After the forum, MECAWI approached the Kenyan ambassador, Z.D. Muburi-Muita, and handed him a copy of a press statement that condemned U.S. involvement in the Horn of Africa and Iraq. The statement was also handed to the Iraqi Ambassador, Talib Hamid Al Bayati, as well as to Mr. Yohannes.

MECAWI members expressed to the Kenyan and Ethiopian ambassadors an extreme displeasure with their governments' military and political alliance with the Bush administration in carrying out the occupation of Somalia and the bombing of civilian areas inside the country. They informed the ambassadors that the overwhelming majority of people within the United States opposed the war in Iraq and that they were aware that both the African Union and the Arab League had called for Ethiopia's military withdrawal from Somalia.

Another anti-war demonstration was held at Hart Plaza in downtown Detroit later that day. Activists gathered to demand the closure of the Guantánamo

Bay camps that were established five years ago. These camps have engaged in the brutal torture of Muslim detainees who have been denied the right to due process.

Activists at the demonstrations circulated leaflets for an upcoming annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Rally and March. MECAWI, which initiated the annual MLK Day March four years ago, is calling for a mass demonstration outside the offices of U.S. Senator Carl Levin (D-Michigan), chairman of the Armed Services Committee, on Jan. 19. MECAWI will demand that not one more penny be spent on the occupation of Iraq.

"We are calling for the complete unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from Iraq," a MECAWI representative stated. MECAWI will host a citywide mass meeting on Feb. 17 on the Iraq war, in an effort to further mobilize people to attend the national march in Washington on March 17.

For more information on MECAWI, visit www.mecawi.org.

Abayomi Azikiwe is the editor of the *Pan-African News Wire*.

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

Cuba enseña a leer al mundo

Por Cheryl La Bash

Traducido para *Rebelión y Tlaxcala*
por Chelo Ramos

En sólo 45 años, una revolución socialista transformó Cuba de una empobrecida colonia de Usamérica en un poder educativo internacional. En 1961, el analfabetismo en las áreas rurales de Cuba era del 42 por ciento. En 2006, la UNESCO premió a Cuba por su programa internacional de alfabetización.

El 22 de diciembre de 1961, la Revolución cubana culminó con éxito la fase inicial de la campaña nacional de alfabetización que enseñó a leer y escribir a casi un millón de cubanos, muchos de ellos en aisladas áreas rurales. En menos de un año, un ejército de 268.420 voluntarios-maestros, jóvenes recién graduados y estudiantes de secundaria básica y preuniversitario- sentó las bases que darían origen a los médicos, hospitales y escuelas de medicina que hoy Cuba comparte con el mundo. Más de la mitad de los brigadistas eran mujeres; 100.000 eran jóvenes de entre 10 y 19 años.

Fidel Castro explicó la importancia del largo alcance de la campaña de alfabetización que redujo el analfabetismo del 42 por ciento al cuatro por ciento: "la Revolución Cubana está realizando esta campaña de alfabetización, porque es justo brindarles esa oportunidad a los que, por razones sociales y económicas, no tuvieron oportunidad de aprender a leer y a escribir hay que ayudarlos, hay que persuadirlos de que sí pueden estudiar. Había numerosos casos de personas que tenían dificultades en la vista, y desde

el principio se acordó facilitarles gratuitamente el examen de la vista y los espejuelos. No puede existir ningún obstáculo, ni existe. Es una campaña que lleva sus beneficios directamente a las clases más humildes. Esa es una gran injusticia que la Revolución viene a rectificar. Al mismo tiempo es de vital importancia para el futuro de la patria. No puede concebirse progreso sin educación. La educación es indispensable, si es que queremos realizar los grandes proyectos en el campo de la ciencia y en el campo de la economía que la Revolución tiene delante para elevar tanto cuanto queramos nuestro estándar de vida."

En 2006 la UNESCO otorgó a Cuba el Premio de Alfabetización Rey Sejong por "la labor dirigida al progreso de las posibilidades individuales de las personas y del potencial de la sociedad con la utilización del método cubano de alfabetización en más de 15 países." Aunque otros países fueron galardonados por su trabajo interno de alfabetización, el Instituto Pedagógico Latinoamericano y del Caribe (IPLAC) de la República de Cuba recibió el único premio por ayudar a otros países.

Recientemente, el método cubano "Yo sí puedo", combinado con la voluntad política de la Revolución bolivariana de Venezuela, erradicó el analfabetismo en ese país, al enseñar a leer y escribir a 1,5 millones de personas en dos años. En Ecuador varios alcaldes indígenas han adoptado el método.

Según la UNESCO, Cuba ha puesto en marcha los programas de alfabetización en distintos contextos sociales y cultura-

les que cubren todos los estratos sociales, lo que incluye a los pueblos originarios, a los habitantes de áreas urbanas y rurales, a los reclusos, a las personas con necesidades educativas especiales, a los emigrantes y a las minorías étnicas, al mismo tiempo que presta especial atención a la educación de la mujer.

Bolivia, con el apoyo de Cuba y Venezuela, pretende erradicar el analfabetismo para el año 2008. Tanto en las áreas urbanas como en las rurales, los pueblos Aymara y Quechua están aprendiendo a leer y a escribir en sus propios idiomas. Un informe presentado a la XIV Cumbre del Movimiento de Países No Alineados reveló que actualmente 2,3 millones de personas de 15 países, entre ellos México y Nueva Zelanda, están estudiando con este programa. Gambia, Nigeria, Granada, San Cristóbal y Nevis, y la ciudad española de Sevilla, han pedido a Cuba el envío de asesores para comenzar a aplicar el método.

Si bien la movilización de masas para la campaña nacional de alfabetización comenzó el 15 de abril de 1961, la preparación comenzó antes. El 5 de enero de 1961, el joven negro Conrado Benítez García, uno de los primeros maestros voluntarios, y el campesino Heliodoro Rodríguez Linares, fueron asesinados y mutilados cerca de Trinidad, en la costa sur de la provincia cubana de Sancti Spiritus. Las brigadas de jóvenes alfabetizadores que en homenaje a Conrado Benítez llevarían su nombre, comenzaron a movilizarse apenas unos días antes de la invasión de Playa Girón dirigida por la CIA, invasión planificada originalmente para el área de Trinidad.

En 1961, el año escolar cubano terminó antes y no se reinició en el otoño sino en diciembre, cuando finalizó la campaña nacional de alfabetización. A través de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC) 30.000 trabajadores se movilizaron para ayudar en la campaña sin perjudicar la producción. En 1961, Fidel Castro dijo a los miembros de la CTC en la provincia de la Habana "el imperialismo hace planes de educación para cumplirse, según dicen, en 10 años que, desde luego, con seguridad que no lo van a cumplir. La Revolución Cubana va a demostrar que esa tarea se puede realizar en un año."

Cuarenta y cinco años después, en un país que gasta miles de millones para ocupar Iraq y Afganistán, las palabras de Fidel siguen vigentes. Mientras los distritos escolares de Usamérica tratan de cumplir los mandatos de la Ley No Child Left Behind sin disponer de presupuesto para ello, en Detroit la tasa de analfabetismo es del 47 por ciento. En un informe fechado 15 de diciembre, el Departamento de Educación señaló que "la Evaluación Nacional de Alfabetización de Adultos (NAAL) dada a conocer hoy por el Centro Nacional de Estadísticas de Educación (NCES), ha encontrado pocos cambios en la capacidad de los adultos para leer y entender oraciones y párrafos o para entender documentos como solicitudes de empleo". La Encuesta Nacional sobre la Alfabetización de Adultos encontró que entre el 21 por ciento y el 23 por ciento, o entre 40 y 44 millones de adultos usamericanos mayores de 16 años se encuentran en el estado más bajo de alfabetización; de ellos, 21 millones no saben leer.

Disensión de soldados de EEUU lista para ser pública

Por John Catalinotto

El primer intento de expresión masiva de disensión por parte de soldados de las fuerzas armadas EEUU está prevista para el 15 de enero, día festivo que reconoce el cumpleaños de Martin Luther King, Jr., en una base naval en Norfolk, del estado de Virginia.

El marinero Jonathan Hutto, quien creció en Atlanta bajo la fuerte influencia del movimiento para los derechos civiles de la población africana americana de esa ciudad, es vocero de las tropas que desde finales de octubre, han estado recogiendo firmas de cientos de efectivos para una petición contra la guerra "Un Llamado a la Rectificación".

Hutto dijo a Mundo Obrero (Workers World) el 8 de enero que "miembros del grupo Veteranos de Irak en Contra de la Guerra (IVAW), Familias Militares Denuncian y otros grupos opuestos a la guerra y activistas que han sido organizador@s desde hace tiempo sobre la disidencia de soldados, vendrán para apoyar a los soldados, marinos e infantería de marina que van a estar publicando su llamado al Congreso de los EEUU —un llamado protegido como derecho de los efectivos militares para poner un alto a la guerra".

El llamado, que se encuentra en www.appealforredress.org dice:

"Como americano patriota, orgulloso de servir uniformado a la nación, respetuosamente urjo a mis líderes políticos en el Congreso apoyar una pronta retirada de todas las fuerzas militares y bases de Irak. Quedándonos en Irak no va a funcionar y no merece el costo. Ya es hora de que las tropas de los EEUU vuelvan a casa".

La conferencia de prensa publicará la solidaridad de las tropas activas con el sentimiento compartido por un 70 por ciento de la población, de que la guerra y la ocupación de Irak deben terminar, y lo harán como parte de la conmemoración del papel jugado por el Reverendo King en la lucha en contra de la guerra y el racismo.

EEUU vs. Primer Teniente Watada

La vista antes del juicio en el caso de los EEUU en contra del Primer Teniente Ehren Watada comenzó el 4 de enero en el Fuerte Lewis, de Washington mientras una manifestación de más de 100 de los partidarios de Watada se reunía para un mitin y una vigilia en un puente sobre la carretera cerca de la entrada del fuerte.

Watada es el primer oficial en rehusar



WW FOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

De izquierda a derecha, veterano Michael McPherson y marineros Jonathan Hutto y David Rogers.

servir en Irak, llamándole su responsabilidad el rehusar participar en un crimen de guerra por participar en una guerra ilegal de agresión.

Miembros de IVAW que apoyan a Watada habían llegado desde varios puntos del país para erigir el "Campamento Resistencia" al otro lado de la carretera de la entrada del lado del fuerte, con planes para quedarse allí hasta el final de la corte marcial del Teniente Watada.

Watada está acusado no solamente de "perder el movimiento militar" a Irak, sino de haber hecho declaraciones que fueron

consideradas como "conducta inapropiada de un oficial". En la vista, según el comité de defensa de Watada, el Juez Teniente Coronel John Head dictaminó que al acusar Watada con violaciones por lo que dijo, "los fiscales estaban permitiendo que un jurado militar considerara sus motivos de rehusar el mandato para desplegar".

Los partidarios de Watada planean manifestaciones coordinadas para el 5 de febrero, día en que su corte marcial está pautada para comenzar. Para más información vea a www.thankyoult.org. □