

MUNDO OBRERO

Arco iris para los Cinco Cubanos 12



Black History '07

4-5

The Panthers, police brutality and today's struggles

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

3

- Smithfield raids
- LA 8 victory

STATE REPRESSION

- Army vs. Watada 6
- Al-Arian on hunger strike 7
- Bush 'renditions' set back 11

LATIN AMERICA

8-9

- Venezuela moves ahead
- Rich-poor gap in El Salvador
- Support for Cuban 5
- Coke boycott

Mass protest demands:

Bring the troops home NOW!

Active-duty GIs, vets lead off D.C. march

By John Catalinotto
Washington

Anti-war forces poured into the U.S. capital on Jan. 27. It was the first national anti-war action since the elections in November showed that a large majority of the people oppose the occupation of Iraq. Demonstrations were also held in other cities around the country.

The D.C. mobilization, which gave a new impulse to the growing movement to end the U.S. occupation, was among the largest held since January and February 2003, when hundreds of thousands marched in Washington, New York and San Francisco desperately hoping their actions would halt the looming U.S. invasion.

Galvanizing opposition today was Bush's "surge" of 21,000 more troops to Iraq. More Iraqis were dying, more U.S. troops were getting shot out of their helicopters and more blood was being shed on the streets of Baghdad and Najaf even as the demonstrators made their way from the Mall to the Capitol.

Aware of all this, the crowd cheered loudly at any insult to Bush, Cheney or their cronies and any appeal to "Impeach Bush." One hand-made sign said simply: "Bush, go surge yourself."

The crowd scorned the Democratic Congress's plan for a "symbolic resolution" to express disapproval of the war. Protesters showed they want Congress to stop all funds for the war and occupation, no ifs, ands and buts, and will focus during the coming months on the struggle in Congress over funding.

The presence of many Iraq War veterans and active-duty GIs made it clear that this growing sector of the anti-war movement can play a big role in ending the occupation.

WW PHOTO: GLORIA VERDIEU

Most marchers came from the hundreds of community, local and state peace and anti-war organizations that mobilize under the umbrella of the national anti-war coalitions. A large number of the marchers had a sign or banner to hold. Some were hand-made, some were provided by the United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) coalition that initiated the protest, others by the other coalitions, national groups, unions, university student groups and community organizations on the march.

Unions that mobilized included Hospital Workers SEIU Local 1199 and the Professional Staff Congress from New York, many locals of the Communication Workers (CWA), the United Federation of Teachers, District Council 37 and United Auto Workers and Teamsters from Detroit.

Slogans throughout the march indicated there was near unanimity about what the U.S. should do regarding Iraq: get out and bring the troops home. Active-duty troops, recent Iraq veterans, families of troops and veterans of prior U.S. wars held an

Continued on page 6



PHOTO: ROBERTO MERCADO

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

As housing market falls

Foreclosures kill the dream

By Milt Neidenberg

Home ownership was once a dream come true for millions of workers. For many it is now becoming a nightmare.

It was reported Dec. 19 that “2.2 million households in the subprime market either have lost their homes to foreclosures or hold subprime mortgages that will fail over the next several years. These foreclosures will cost homeowners as much as \$164 billion, primarily in lost home equity.” (Center for Responsible Lending—CRL)

Many homeowners are trapped, especially those with adjustable mortgage rates and interest-only down payments. As home values fall, the equity they were counting on dries up, along with the homeowner’s ability to borrow and spend that has stimulated the economy in recent years.

Renters with poor credit, many of them workers from the oppressed Black and Latin@ nationalities, have been manipulated into taking subprime loans—interest-only mortgage payments and adjustable rate mortgages—to buy a longed-for home of their own and forego paying a landlord. But one of every five of these mortgages that originated in the last two years will end in foreclosure, says the CRL.

This rate is nearly double the projected rate of similar loans made in 2002 and “exceeds the worst foreclosure experience in the modern mortgage market,” which occurred during the 1980s. That’s when the savings and loan banks collapsed under similar lending practices. They were bailed out at a cost to the workers/taxpayers of about \$200 billion.

Racism and predatory lenders

Foreclosure means losing the equity in their homes and having to go back to paying exorbitant rents and facing potential eviction. Lenders will no longer make loans to applicants who do not earn enough to make payments at the highest interest rates possible under the terms of the loan.

The greed-driven financial and corporate institutions—snake oil profiteers, bankers, financial investors and real-estate brokers—garner huge fees and commissions from subprime mortgages.

Wheeling and dealing with people’s lives is considered routine under capitalism. “Mortgage companies, banks and investors have been aggressively marketing and trading the loans because their higher interest rates make them far more profitable than prime loans, even after taking into account greater default rates,” wrote the New York Times on Dec. 6.

Michael W. Perry, CEO of a California lender, said at a recent mortgage bankers’ convention: “We should all be proud as an industry. We have created an enormous amount of wealth for Americans.” Which ones? Themselves?

They didn’t mention the devastating impact on those who will be bankrupted by a dramatic increase in foreclosures.

High-cost, high-interest subprime loans are disproportionate in Black and Latin@ communities, as are predatory lending practices. Fifty percent of loans to African Americans and 40 percent to Latin@s are high-cost, according to a recent Home Mortgage Disclosure Act report. It had analyzed more than 6 million subprime mortgages from 1998 through 2004.

“For most people, owning a home is their best chance

to achieve sustainable economic security. Losing that home, in many cases, means losing life savings,” said CRL President Michael D. Calhoun in December. “Given the size of the subprime market today—nearly a quarter of all loans made this year—this epidemic of foreclosures will have a negative impact on the economy as a whole. ... Low-income home buyers have been at risk even when prices of housing are up. Thirteen percent of subprime home loans ended in foreclosure within five years. Prepayment penalties make them more risky.”

Another vicious form of racism is the housing crisis/foreclosure epidemic in the Gulf Coast region following Katrina. In New Orleans, out of 97,000 homeowners who applied for Louisiana’s “road home” Federal Emergency Management Assistance for rebuilding, only 8,300 received award letters.

As of December 2006 less than 100 had received checks. “Not a dime has gone to rebuild rental housing, although about one-half of the displaced population had lived in rentals. Protestors stormed through New Orleans to protest Housing and Urban Development plans to demolish 7,500 units of public housing—many hardly scathed by the storm—in favor of ‘mixed’ more expensive housing.” (Facing South blog)

The \$10 trillion bubble and capitalism

Housing is a multiplier industry. It impacts on banks and financial institutions, construction corporations and a myriad of related industries. The housing market—a \$10 trillion bubble that represents almost 80 percent of the \$13 trillion gross domestic product—is weakening fast. A hard landing—code word for a crash—could be in sight.

Home sales fell nearly 13 percent in August 2006 compared to the year before; home mortgage debt since 1987 has skyrocketed from \$1.8 trillion to \$8.2 trillion.

Caught in this maelstrom are a wide array of banks, private equity funds, real-estate investors and speculators who wheel and deal in the bond market that sets long-term interest rates—the leading cause of the rise in mortgage rates.

Over two-fifths of all private jobs created since 2001 have been in housing-related sectors. As the housing market slows, more layoffs will occur and wages and benefits will be downsized.

Compounding this debacle is the slowdown in the manufacturing sector and the auto industry.

The housing crisis contains the seeds of a general capitalist crisis. The \$10 trillion bubble can have a domino effect upon the multinational workers and the oppressed nationalities. Further social convulsions due to preemptive wars and debt will pit them against the predatory rulers of the empire. □

PIGGING OUT

Fringe-economy corporations lend or sell at exorbitant interest rates, like the subprime mortgage lenders mentioned above. But their CEOs earned big bucks in 2004. Sterling Brinkley, chair of EZ Corp, earned \$1.26 million; ACE’s Jay Shipowitz received \$2.1 million on top of \$2.38 million in stocks; Jeffrey Weiss of Dollar Financial Group earned \$1.83 million; Mark Speese of Rent-A-Center made \$820,000 with total stock options of \$10 million; and Cash America’s Daniel Feehan was paid almost \$2.2 million in 2003 plus \$9 million in stock options. (Forbes magazine)

This week ...



★ In the U.S.

- Mass protest demands: Bring the troops home now! 1
- Foreclosures kill the dream 2
- ICE arrests 21 workers at N.C. hog factory 3
- Victory at last for Los Angeles 8 3
- Jury convicts doctor’s killer 3
- Chicago & Denver: the war at home. 4
- Media seek to justify racist police killings 4
- New FIST chapter fights bigotry. 4
- A tribute to the Black Panther Party 5
- Rally supports arrested Panthers 5
- Army drops two charges against resister. 6
- FIST youth join protest 6
- Palestinian jailed in U.S. begins hunger strike 7
- Labor, youth expand Coke boycott 8

★ Around the world

- An ‘Operation Condor’ in the Middle East?. 7
- Lavender & red, part 88 8
- Aid to Chiapas 8
- Venezuelan Assembly gives Chávez broad powers 9
- El Salvador. 9
- U.N. occupation of Haiti intensifies. 11
- Canada to pay torture victim \$9M 11

★ Editorials

- The real cancer 10

★ Noticias En Español

- Su ayuda es necesaria para liberar a los cinco cubanos 12
- Solidaridad del Arco Iris para los Cinco Cubanos 12

Workers World
 55 West 17 Street
 New York, N.Y. 10011
 Phone: (212) 627-2994
 Fax: (212) 675-7869
 E-mail: editor@workers.org
 Web: www.workers.org
 Vol. 49, No. 5 • Feb. 8, 2007
 Closing date: Jan. 31, 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.

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

ICE arrests 21 workers at N.C. hog factory

Special to Workers World

In a move that mixed union busting with the enforcement of repressive immigration laws, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested 21 workers from the Tar Heel, N.C., Smithfield plant on Jan. 24.

The plant, the world's largest hog slaughterhouse, is an ICE target not simply because it employs such a large proportion of immigrant workers but because it has been the site of an intense worker and union struggle over the past months.

The workers have been demanding concessions, such as a paid holiday for Martin Luther King Day and union recognition, and have enforced these demands with wildcat walkouts and petition drives.

Over 500 first-shift Smithfield workers had refused to work on Jan. 15 in

their struggle to win a paid holiday on King Day. This benefit is still denied to many workers in the South. The workers only organized the work stoppage after the bosses refused to accept the results of their petition drive a week earlier, put together with the help of organizers in the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW).

It was mostly African-American workers who carried out the Jan. 15 job action, with the participation of over a hundred Latin@ and a few white workers. This followed a huge work stoppage on Nov. 16, when more than 1,000 mostly Latin@ workers walked out after the company fired 50 workers whose immigration papers couldn't be cleared.

Smithfield bosses then reinstated the 50 workers, agreeing to give them 60 days to verify their information. The Jan. 24

arrests came as the 60-day period ended. While spokespeople for the company deny collusion with ICE, it is apparent that the arrests of immigrant workers can have the effect of intimidating any who might join the struggle. The UFCW is fighting to secure these jobs and provide services to fired workers.

Throughout the U.S., the immigrant struggle seemed to suddenly materialize last spring with a series of demonstrations and walkouts protesting repressive immigration bills introduced in Congress. These actions culminated with last May Day's Great American Boycott when millions of immigrant workers across the country walked out to support immigrant rights. The action defeated the racist legis-

lation pending in Washington, but no law securing immigrant and worker rights has been passed.

Organizers say that to win these rights requires immigrant-friendly unions and workers' organizations that can unite workers of all nationalities and citizenship status to fight back.

On Feb. 3 and 4 a national conference in Los Angeles will discuss the Great American Boycott II to be held this coming May 1. The conference is being sponsored by the March 25th Coalition Los Angeles and many other organizations located wherever there are strong concentrations of immigrants.

For more information see www.smithfieldjustice.com □

In victory for abortion rights

Jury convicts doctor's killer

By Ellie Dorritie
Buffalo, N.Y.

It was a victory for everyone who has stood, marched and demonstrated for so many years for abortion rights. A jury in Buffalo on Jan. 25 swiftly rejected all of James Kopp's arguments that he had a right to murder doctors who provide abortions.

The jury took only a few hours to convict him on a federal law that can bring Kopp a sentence of life without parole for the 1998 killing of Dr. Barnett Slepian, an obstetrician-gynecologist who provided abortion services at a Buffalo clinic. That federal law on which Kopp was convicted, which contains penalties for violence against abortion providers, would never have existed without women's struggle in the streets.

This was the second trial for Kopp. In the first one, a non-jury County Court trial in 2003, he was convicted and sentenced to 25 years to life for Slepian's murder. That conviction came after Kopp admitted in a Buffalo newspaper interview that he had hunted down, laid in wait for, and killed the doctor by shooting him with a high-powered rifle at close range, in front

of the doctor's family.

The continuing struggle to defend women's rights in the 1990's forced the federal government to create stronger laws to protect abortion clinics from violent extremists like Kopp, who is suspected of also shooting several other doctors. Women insisted that more severe penalties go on the books. This second conviction, on the federal charges, now makes it likely that Kopp will never leave prison.

Kopp chose to have a jury hear the trial on federal charges, and also chose to act as his own lawyer, in order to get more time to use the court as a platform. He claimed that Slepian's death was an accident, and that he was justified in shooting him. But his attempts to mobilize public opinion and to persuade the jury failed completely.

This was an affirmation of the strength of pro-choice views in Buffalo, where resounding defeats were dealt to the fanatical Operation Rescue and James Kopp's mentor, Randall Terry. In 1992 and 1999, defenders of women's rights turned out by the thousands here to physically protect clinics that provided abortions and other reproductive services against attempted blockades. □



The Los Angeles 8 and supporters in 1987.

WWW.COMMITTEE4JUSTICE.COM

Victory at last for Los Angeles 8

By John Catalinotto

Justice delayed may be justice denied, and in the 20-year-old case of the Los Angeles 8 it was denied with a vengeance. But a strongly worded Jan. 30 decision by Judge Bruce Einhorn to dismiss charges against the remaining two defendants was still a victory.

The immigration court in Los Angeles "finds that the government has failed to carry its burden of proving respondents deportable based on clear, unequivocal and convincing evidence. Therefore, the proceedings against [Khader] Hamide and [Michel] Shehadeh are terminated."

Judge Einhorn wrote in the decision that "the attenuation of these proceedings is a festering wound on the body of these respondents, and an embarrassment to the rule of law."

A release from the LA 8 said, "This is a clear recognition by the court of the suffering of the respondents and their families unjustly for more than 20 years. Moreover, it is recognition that the government has nothing against the respondents except that it does not like their political views."

"On behalf of the LA 8 and their families, a big thank you and gratitude to each and everyone who helped us in any way to make this win possible," said Michel Shehadeh.

The LA 8 first consisted of seven Palestinian men and one Kenyan woman. In 1987, armed FBI agents raided their southern California homes in the middle of the night and arrested them. The arrests culminated a long witch-hunt-type investigation.

Initially, the charges against them

were based exclusively on the McCarran-Walter Act of the Red-scare era: that the eight supported the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and had raised funds and passed out literature that aided that Marxist group.

Decisions in the case have already had a significant legal impact, both progressive and regressive. Based on the case, in 1988 a federal district judge made a progressive ruling that the McCarran-Walter Act was unconstitutional because it denied immigrants their First Amendment rights.

On the reactionary side, a Supreme Court opinion that came about as a result of this case stated, "An alien unlawfully in this country has no constitutional right to assert selective enforcement as a defense against his deportation." This was exactly what the lawyers for the LA 8 had argued.

In 1987, no one—citizen or not—could be prosecuted for association with an organization, regardless of the group's relationship with the U.S. government. Yet the case proceeded—first based on the PFLP's Marxist character, then on the FBI's assertion that the PFLP intends "destruction of property," and, still later, on the government's accusation that the PFLP intends to do violence and assassinate leaders of states.

While the LA 8's supporters consider this latest decision a victory, they warn, "It is not over yet. The government most likely will appeal the decision; there is no indication that they will let this go despite all the legal and political embarrassment. Therefore, we have to stay alert and ready to move forward in supporting this important case whenever and for whatever needed to end this injustice." □



In 1992 and again in 1998 Buffalo United for Choice drove Operation Rescue out of town. Photo from cover of pamphlet "The Lesson of Buffalo."



A TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY

By Larry Hales

Oakland is one of the poorest cities in California as well as the entire country. It holds the dubious distinction of having been dubbed the second most violent city in California after Compton, near Los Angeles. Both cities are predominantly communities of color, primarily Black and Latin@ people.

Oakland has a poverty rate of over 18 percent; 27.9 percent of its youth under 18 live below the poverty line. In Compton the poverty rate is much higher. The per capita yearly income in 2000 was \$10,389, with 28 percent of the population living below the poverty line; 35.6 percent of youth under 18 live below the poverty line.

Crime heavily affects both cities. Both areas are impoverished and the residents of color suffer from police repression, occupation and brutality. The “answer” given to the conditions from which despair arises is not different from what is happening in inner city areas across the country, where the poor and people of color have lived since “white flight” began over 30 years ago.

That “answer” is to build luxury homes and condos, retail shops and other amenities that tailor to middle-and upper-middle class whites who want to move back into the city centers. Poor people and people of color are pushed to the fringes of metropolitan areas in a “liberal” form of ethnic cleansing.

Oakland, of course, has a rich history of struggle. It conjures up in the minds of most Black people an era of great militancy and revolution—when the realities of ghetto life, of the Vietnam War’s toll on

the whole country and the national liberation and revolutionary movements around the world contributed to the rising fervor in the U.S.

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, founded in 1966 in Oakland, was a group so dangerous to the U.S. ruling class that FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover labeled it “the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States.”

The BPP was a vanguard organization fighting for self-determination for the Black nation in the U.S., but evolved over its short existence to adopt a thoroughgoing anti-imperialism, as a way for humanity to free itself from the cycles of war and oppression.

The founding document of the BPP was the Ten Point Platform and Program, which stated as the first desire and goal:

- We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community. And,
- We believe that Black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

The Ten Point Platform and Program also called for “land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace” and wanted exemption of Black people from military service that used Black people to “fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like Black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America.”

Rebellions and survival programs

The BPP was founded by the great revolutionary leaders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale and was initially established to expose and fight against police brutality in Oakland.

By 1967 there had been over 100 rebellions in cities across the U.S. Many took place in some of the poorest, most oppressed and repressed cities. The rebellions were an outgrowth of the social conditions and the many contradictions rooted in capitalist society. The antagonisms that exist between the rulers and the workers and nationally oppressed were being displayed.

The BPP was partly molded after the

Continued on page 5

CHICAGO & DENVER:

The war at home

By Eric Struch
Chicago

The struggle against the war at home—against racism, police brutality and the destruction of housing and social services—is intensifying in U.S. cities. A Jan. 19 meeting of the Chicago branch of Workers World Party bore witness to that fact.

Its two featured speakers were Larry Hales, a Denver activist against police brutality and contributing editor of Workers World newspaper, and Willie “JR” Fleming, chair of the Cabrini-Green chapter of the Hip-Hop Congress (HHC) and activist with the Coalition to Protect Public Housing.

Police brutality is rampant in Denver. Hales said, “Denver has the least arduous investigative process in cop shootings” of any large U.S. city. He spoke about the savage beating of Loree McCormick-Rice and her young daughter by a racist off-duty cop employed as a grocery store security guard. Hales and Workers World Party have been active in the struggle alongside Communities United Against Police Brutality, a grassroots organization founded to commemorate African American revolutionary Robert Williams.

The heart of the Black community has been in northeast Denver, in the Five Points neighborhood, originally an Irish

and Jewish neighborhood. As African Americans migrated west to California, many decided to sink permanent roots in Five Points. There were so many jazz clubs that it became known as “the Harlem of the west.”

Hales related that during the early 20th century, when Denver mayor Ben Stapleton made no attempt to conceal his membership in the KKK, African Americans suffered racist attacks if they crossed Race St., the border that divided Five Points and white Denver.

The national composition of Denver has changed since then—15 percent of the city’s population is African American and 35 percent is Latin@. But the racism toward African Americans and other people of color has not changed.

Recently the city has pushed a so-called “broken windows” policing, first practiced in New York under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. People are subject to racist profiling and sent to jail for small infractions like turnstile jumping or loudly played radios. At the same time, social spending is cut and schools closed.

Police brutality rampant

Willie “JR” Fleming spoke about the movement for justice in Chicago for Ellis

Continued on page 11

MILWAUKEE

Media seek to justify racist police killings

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee

On Jan. 12 a Milwaukee police officer shot David Boone dead in a predominantly Black neighborhood in the city’s North side.

Eight days later, Adam Quinonez, a student at the Career Youth Development Inc. alternative School of Excellence, was also shot dead in a barrage of cop bullets. Quinonez would have graduated in June.

In a rare occurrence, details of Boone’s killing made the front page of the Jan. 13 statewide edition of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the biggest commercial newspaper in Wisconsin.

Usually police brutality and killings are buried in the Metro section, if reported at all. But Milwaukee received international exposure after the savage police beating of Frank Jude Jr. and the acquittal of the white cops who beat him. Milwaukee police killed five Black men in 2005 and the Journal Sentinel and reactionary politicians need to appear concerned about the Black community.

This doesn’t stop them from relentlessly demonizing and criminalizing the victims of police murder and brutality, mostly Black and Latin@. The pattern is institutionalized nationwide: Make the victim the aggressor, or killable, in order to justify wholesale racist occupation and police terror in oppressed communities, instead of spotlighting the social and economic semi-apartheid conditions there.

With Boone it only took the Journal Sentinel three sentences in its breaking article on this police killing to demonize the victim. It reported that various arrest warrants tied to sexual assault of children had been issued Jan. 5 for Boone.

The U.S. historical record in relation to Black men charged with sexual assault should give progressives and revolutionaries pause regarding police versions of this killing. The Journal Sentinel went on to report, “Online court records indicate Boone is a felon, but details were not available.”

Thus, even before any details were provided, the Journal Sentinel had attempted to portray Boone as expend-

able. The newspaper tried hard to link Boone’s alleged attempt to escape from the police to his criminal charges, without ever acknowledging that Boone may have simply been trying to escape police terror.

The official description of the killing was familiar: Boone charged at the officer, tried to take his gun and then ran off. The cop claims that, after giving chase, he cornered Boone in an alley and, afraid Boone might use “deadly force,” shot him.

The cops aren’t saying how many shots were fired or where Boone was hit. Boone had no weapon—except maybe his bicycle, or his Blackness in the minds of the cops. The newspaper quoted no community witnesses.

The cop who killed Boone is on paid administrative leave pending an internal police department “investigation.” A police order delayed public release of the medical examiner’s report.

Recently retired Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann has been accused by many in the oppressed communities of covering up hundreds and maybe thousands of cases of police brutality and murder during his tenure.

Two days after being killed, Boone was criminalized and demonized yet again in the Journal Sentinel. The paper published accusations of sexual assault—even though Boone had never been convicted of any of these charges.

All this is aimed at deflecting anger and possible rebellions in response to the many horrific crimes of the police. The Milwaukee ruling establishment has a long history of promoting fear and racist ideology aimed especially at white workers to divide from the oppressed nations, their true allies in the fight for economic justice.

Fighting police terrorism and supporting self-determination for oppressed nations within the United States must be a central component of all working-class struggles. This is particularly imperative in the anti-war movement, as some of the most vicious facets of the domestic war are waged through state repression against the oppressed—whether that violence comes in the form of bullets or the people’s empty bellies. □



Help us e for Black History Month

The popular “Marxism, Reparations and the Black Freedom Struggle” pamphlet will be expanded into a spine book with color plates in time for February’s Black History Month, but we need your financial help to make it a reality.

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

Major sections in the new book include:

- I. Introduction—Black liberation & the working-class struggle
- II. The material basis for reparations in the U.S.
- III. Brief overview of racist oppression and heroic resistance
- IV. What Hurricane Katrina exposed to the world
- V. Africa: A battleground against colonialism & for sovereignty
- VI. Justice for the Caribbean
- VII. A salute to women revolutionaries
- VIII. Why fight back is inevitable
- IX. Black labor and class solidarity

Funds are needed right away to help get this book published & distributed to high schools, college campuses, libraries, union halls and elsewhere.

Acknowledgements will be made in the book to those who contribute \$50 or more to this effort. Make checks out to WW Publishers and put in the subject line: “Reparations book”. Send your donations to WW Publishers, 55 W. 17th St., 5th fl., NY, NY 10011.

Continued from page 4

Deacons for Defense and the armed self-determination struggle opened up by the great revolutionary Robert F. Williams, in that it asserted the right of the oppressed to defend themselves with arms against the oppressor.

Huey P. Newton would call attention to the fact that the Vietnamese people and the Black masses were fighting the same oppressor and that the struggles of the two were linked.

Many organizations that mirrored the sentiment of the BPP began to develop from other oppressed nationalities, like the Latin@-based Young Lords. Support groups of the BPP were formed by white revolutionaries and other Panther allies.

The groups that mirrored the Panthers were not simply attracted to the militancy of the Panthers. They took inspiration from the many programs established by the BPP to look after the health and well-being of Black communities, such as the free breakfast program.

There were 35 such initiatives and they came to be known as survival programs. They were not attempts to reform the system, but examples of what is possible for humanity. They were humane programs and necessary alternatives to the system, as the government of the capitalist rulers did not provide these services.

The programs were of great pride in the communities in which they flourished and were provided for under the slogan "survival pending revolution." Some would denigrate the Panthers for organizing these programs, not understanding that the immediate needs of the people had to be met while fighting for revolutionary change.

The Free Breakfast for Children Program fed thousands. The federal government eventually co-opted the idea, while attacking the Black Panther Party's program as being a communist agenda. While capitalist propaganda made communism out to be the great evil, imperialist aggression, an objective outgrowth of capitalism, inflamed the whole world and rained down bombs, death and destruction from Oakland to Southeast Asia.

Eventually, the brutal assault of the federal government broke the back of the BPP. Members were hunted down, framed up and imprisoned, and systematically assassinated.

The FBI created Cointelpro, an insidious program contrived to destroy national liberation and civil rights movements in the U.S., socialist and communist parties and anti-war groups. One of its main targets was the Black Panther Party.

Cointelpro was used to infiltrate the Panthers, pit members against one another, bribe, cajole, plant evidence and use every mechanism under the sun to keep the U.S. rulers' tenuous stranglehold on workers and the oppressed from being cast off.

It is believed by many that the FBI also introduced heroin into Black communities, not far-fetched considering the toll the drug took on oppressed communities.

Though the original BPP no longer exists, its history provides lessons and examples for today's struggle. The U.S. capitalist rulers have become more militarily adventurist abroad and conditions of life are becoming more intolerable for the masses at home.

What will give the movements of the workers and the oppressed a boost of energy and deepen the people's understanding of the intransigent antagonism of a common enemy? It is the theory of what is possible when the workers seize real power, based on the theories of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin along with other great socialist revolutionaries and national liberation fighters.

And, for the oppressed Black nation, a shining example was the heroic Black Panther Party for Self Defense. □

SAN FRANCISCO

Rally supports arrested Panthers

By Judy Greenspan
San Francisco

On the same day that U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced that people do not have a constitutional right to challenge their imprisonment, eight former Black Panther Party leaders and community activists were indicted for something that happened over 35 years ago—the killing of a San Francisco policeman.

But if a Jan. 28 support rally is any indication, the Bay Area progressive community will not tolerate this outrageous attack on the Black liberation movement.

On Jan. 23, after a two-year witch hunt by local, state and federal police, six former Bay Area Black Panther Party organizers were arrested: Richard Brown, Richard O'Neal, Francisco Torres, Ray Boudreaux, Hank Jones and Harold Taylor.

Two well-known political prisoners, Herman Bell and Jalil Muntaqin (Anthony Bottom), part of the New York Three who were falsely accused and convicted of killing two New York City policemen, have also been accused and indicted. John Bowman, the ninth target of the two-year-long grand jury witch hunt, died in December.

Why did the government indict this group of Black freedom fighters now? Why has the government relentlessly pursued these activists more than 35 years after the alleged "crime" was committed?

On Jan. 28 a local activist media collective, Freedom Archives, premiered their latest exposé of racism and injustice in this country, "Legacy of Torture: The War Against the Black Liberation Movement." The new DVD documents the torture of several of the arrested activists—Bowman, Jones, and Taylor—at the hands of the New Orleans Police Department in 1973.

Several of the men were incarcerated for refusing to testify before a grand jury. The video also captures the level of police brutality, assassinations and abuse suffered by the Black community during the 1960s and 1970s.

According to the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR), a group devoted to exposing human rights abuses against progressive organizations and individuals, 13 Black activists were arrested in New Orleans in 1973 and tortured for several days in a manner similar to today's torture at Guantánamo Bay and



PHOTO: SCOTT BRALEY 2006

Five of the indicted Panthers are on cover of new DVD, "Legacy of Torture: The War Against the Black Liberation Movement." From left, Hank Jones, John Bowman (deceased), Ray Boudreaux, Harold Taylor and Richard Brown.

Iraq's Abu Ghraib.

In "Legacy of Torture," Bowman, Jones and Taylor graphically describe being stripped naked and beaten by slaps and blunt objects; probed by cattle prods in their genital areas; and nearly suffocated by plastic bags being placed over their heads and wet wool blankets wrapped tightly around their bodies.

The government failed in the early 1970s to bring any of these men to trial for the killing of San Francisco policeman John Young. In fact, California courts deemed all the coerced false confessions from New Orleans inadmissible due to the physical abuse and torture suffered by the men.

Brown, who has spent the last 30 years working with young people in this city's African-American community, denounced the government's violence against the Black liberation movement in an interview with the SF Bay View newspaper. "I was named as a participant in 1971 in the murder case. All Panthers were targeted. If we were doing something constructive, we were singled out. They killed Bunchy Carter, arrested and imprisoned Geronimo [Pratt]. It was just our turn. We were next on the list," Brown stated.

Soffiyah Elijah, a New York-based attorney who has defended many Black freedom fighters, spoke briefly at today's

program, which drew so many people to the Roxie Theater that the film had to be shown twice. "In the wake of 9/11 and the Patriot Act, the government is now resurrecting its Cointelpro actions. Homeland Security is merely an extension of that effort," Elijah said.

Cointelpro was the domestic government program used to undermine, disrupt and assassinate the leadership of domestic liberation movements, revolutionary organizations and progressive groups in this country that were protesting government policies in the 1960s and 1970s.

John Bowman says in "Legacy of Torture," now dedicated to his memory: "I am sick of these people trying to destroy our community." The support at today's program echoed this sentiment as hundreds of people signed up to become involved in the defense effort.

A large crowd attended John Bowman's memorial at the African American Art and Culture Complex following the film showing. A bail hearing for the imprisoned Black activists is scheduled.

For more information about how to support these activists or purchase a copy of the new video, write to cdhrsupport@freedomarchives.org or visit www.freedomarchives.org. "Legacy of Torture" is available at www.leftbooks.com.

New FIST chapter fights bigotry

By Caleb T. Maupin
Cleveland

Baldwin-Wallace College, a small liberal arts school near Cleveland, has recently been the site of major racist attacks. Two Black students living in an all-girl dormitory opened their door one afternoon to find the N-word scribbled on it. As a result, the college held a "forum" and publicly denounced the action.

The very next day, the same epithet, followed by the word "lover," was scrawled on the door of the resident assistant, who reported the attack. The term has long been used by racists to characterize white people who defend people of color.

The college again publicly denounced the act with statements, but the attacks went on. They dropped the racial language but repeated verbal abuse of the resident assistant, using a word insulting women and telling her to "Get out."

A few of the young women living in the dorm transferred to other colleges out of

a desire not to be forced to tolerate this kind of bigotry.

The Black Student Alliance, a strong organization at Baldwin-Wallace, took action. Members of the alliance called the media. Soon local television crews were interviewing the leaders of the BSA, who called for justice.

The BSA at Baldwin-Wallace College has a strong history of defiance. In years past, it won a cultural center and additional funding for students of color on campus after a sit-in at the president's office.

The recent attacks provoked loads of outrage around the campus, but it soon simmered down. However, the attacks against the resident assistant continued.

The college administration repeatedly promised to put in video cameras to catch the perpetrators, a promise that never materialized.

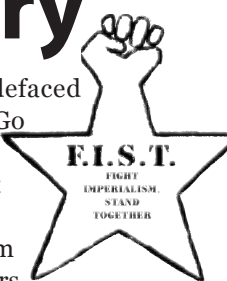
This is not an isolated incident at Baldwin-Wallace. Students organizing for the World Can't Wait campaign often found their literature and postings

crumpled up or defaced with phrases like "Go Bush!" or "Bomb the —!"—using a racist term for Muslims.

Recently a dorm where many members of the LGBT community lived had homophobic words painted on the wall.

In light of all this, several students at Baldwin-Wallace have decided to start a chapter of Fight Imperialism Stand Together (FIST).

Explaining their goal, they say, "We hope to bring together the struggles of people of color and the LGBT community, as well as the many other students from the working class on campus. We hope to show that unity is key to defeating racism, sexism, homophobia and classism. We hope to show the students that their real enemies are not people with a different skin color, nationality or sexual identity, but rather those who inhabit Wall Street and Washington, D.C." □



Watada trial starts Feb. 5

Army drops two charges against resister

By John Catalinotto

Lt. Ehren Watada will face two fewer charges when he is brought before a military court-martial on Feb. 5 in Ft. Lewis, Wash. The Army dropped two of four charges of "conduct unbecoming an officer"; as a result, it also dropped subpoenas against two reporters, which had stirred up considerable protest regarding freedom of the press.

Watada still faces a heavy charge of "missing movement" for his refusal of conscience to deploy to Iraq, as well as two charges of "conduct unbecoming" based on anti-war statements he made during public speeches. If found guilty, he could

be sentenced to four years' confinement.

While courts-martial are stacked against defendants even more than trials in civilian courts, the Army too has to weigh the political consequences of dealing a harsh sentence to a popular junior officer for refusing to fight an unpopular, ugly war.

Watada, who entered the military with patriotic motives and found himself lied to and deceived regarding the Iraq war, has publicly argued that "to stop an illegal and unjust war, the soldiers can choose to stop fighting it." The Army is trying to punish him for saying these words at a Veterans for Peace national convention

Continued on page 10



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Active-duty GIs Jonathan Hutto and Liam Madden, organizers of the 'Appeal for Redress'

FIST youth join protest

By David Hoskins
Washington

Scores of youth and student activists from around the country joined the FIST (Fight Imperialism Stand Together) contingent at the Jan. 27 mass anti-war convergence on Washington, D.C.

FIST protested alongside thousands of other young people in a youth feeder march that began with a rally at the Smithsonian and ended in a united march around the Capitol.

Activists from over half a dozen cities, including Cleveland, Philadelphia, New York, New Brunswick, N.J., Raleigh, N.C., and Washington, joined the FIST contingent.

FIST activist Namibia Donadio organized about a dozen students from Rutgers University to attend the march, including several members of the Central and South American Alliance on campus.

Raleigh FIST organizers Peter Gilbert, Dante Strobino and Ben Carroll brought more than 80 students and working young people from the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill triangle in North Carolina. Local activists from the newly refounded Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) also participated in the youth feeder march.

The youth distributed FIST leaflets, fly-



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

ers for the Feb. 17 national day of actions called by the Troops Out Now Coalition and the March 17 united march on the Pentagon, and copies of Workers World newspaper to thousands of young people from around the country.

Many FIST members participated in a youth breakaway march. This bloc, made up mostly of anarchists and FIST cadre, engaged in a non-permitted march to a military recruiting center in the heart of D.C. to protest the lies that military

recruiters tell young people and students, especially the working poor and people of color, in order to enlist them in imperialist wars such as those now raging in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After being violently dispersed from the recruiting center by police, the protesters continued to march through the streets, eventually meeting up with more FIST cadre who joined them on their march back to the Capitol.

The non-permitted march blocked traf-

fic as police issued warnings over loudspeakers for demonstrators to return to the sidewalks. Car drivers and their passengers, however, honked and cheered the protesters on, often raising a clenched fist in the air to demonstrate support for ending the war.

Observers on the sidewalk clapped and shouted words of encouragement and several took time out to resist the police orders and march in the street themselves. □

Mass protest demands: Bring the troops home now!

Continued from page 1

honored place at the front of the march. They were even stronger with the demand to end the occupation now and bring the troops home.

Despite their anger at Bush and the continuing tale of horror from Iraq, the mood of the marchers was up, perhaps aided by the surprisingly warm weather after a day of arctic temperatures in the Northeast and Midwest. People told Workers World they were lifted by the size of the crowd and were encouraged to go on struggling against the war.

Iraq veterans, families, active-duty GIs

Families of GIs in Iraq and those who lost a child there, veterans of the Iraq War, relatives of resisters and current active-duty GIs crowded the stage, bringing a fresh breath of resistance to the movement.

Bob Watada, the father of resister Lt. Ehren Watada (www.thankyoult.org), spoke on behalf of his son. The young

lieutenant is facing court-martial starting Feb. 5 in Ft. Lewis, Wash., following his refusal to ship out to Iraq. Lt. Watada, a zealous officer, says he had read up on Iraq in order to lead his troops properly, and in his reading discovered that the Bush administration had promoted the war with a pack of lies.

A new lift to the movement came from Navy Petty Officer Jonathan Hutto and Marine Sgt. Liam Madden, the active-duty organizers of the "Appeal for Redress." This anti-war statement had been signed by over 1,200 active-duty GIs, National Guard and reservists as of Jan. 29. (www.appealforredress.org)

Hutto led the crowd, chanting "No justice! No war! More death, no peace! More imperialism, no peace!" and said, "We come here today on behalf of 1,223 active-duty members of the United States military, reserve members, National Guard members who are using their constitutional rights to speak out against this war, an imperialist war, a war for profit, not for people, a war for death, not for people, a war against the

working class, not for justice."

Madden pointed out that "women didn't win the right to vote by voting and African Americans didn't win civil rights by voting." He went on to urge the people to stay in the streets. The contribution of the active-duty GIs was a shot in the arm to the march.

Celebrities, elected officials

Actor Jane Fonda, the leading celebrity activist during the Vietnam War, especially in the movement supporting GI resistance, rejoined the anti-war struggle after a 34-year absence from protests. She had been attacked mercilessly by the right-wing since that time. She told the audience she had not wanted to add notoriety to the movement, but that now, "Silence is no longer an option."

Actors Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon spoke, with Sarandon standing up for the veterans abandoned by the Bush administration after they've finished their tour in Iraq.

A small number of Democratic Party rep-

resentatives in the House spoke or showed their faces, most demanding that their party's protest go beyond the "symbolic." Rep. John Conyers (Mich.) was there, also Jerry Nadler (N.Y.), who introduced a bill cutting off funding except to bring the troops home. Dennis Kucinich (Ohio) came out against any funding for the war.

Rep. Maxine Waters (Calif.) raked Bush and Dick Cheney over the coals: "[Bush] says he is the decider. He's not. He's the liar."

While the organizers gave no central focus to the growing danger of a U.S. military attack on Iran, one contingent of marchers raised this important issue. Ardeshir Ommami of the Iranian-American Friendship Committee told Workers World that by threatening Iranian nationals in Iraq, "George Bush's intention is to provoke the Iranian government and people with the intent of expanding the war from Iraq to Iran. I was shocked to see the president say on television that 'we are going to kill the nationals of another country.'"

Continued on page 7

LEBANON

An 'Operation Condor' in the Middle East?

By Bill Cecil

Is the Bush regime paying death squads to murder protesters in Lebanon? At least six Lebanese died in the last week in January in rightist gang attacks on students at the Arab University of Beirut and on striking workers.

Is this Washington's answer to the mass democratic movement that has mobilized millions of Lebanese against the U.S.-backed regime of Prime Minister Fuad Siniora?

On Jan. 10, the British Daily Telegraph revealed that the CIA "has been authorized to take covert action against Hezbollah as part of a secret plan by George Bush to help the Lebanese government." Bush's "finding" directs the "CIA and other U.S. intelligence agencies to fund anti-Hezbollah groups in Lebanon and pay for activists who support the Siniora government."

The plot was reportedly cooked up in Washington before Christmas after talks between Bush's deputy national security adviser Elliot Abrams and Saudi Arabian prince Bandar Ibn Sultan. That was after 2 million people—nearly half of Lebanon's population—rallied in Beirut Dec. 10 to demand a greater voice for opposition parties in Lebanon's government.

Abrams was Reagan's assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs in the 1980s, when U.S.-trained death squads slaughtered tens of thousands in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. Abrams also arranged Saudi funding for terrorist operations against Nicaragua after the Boland Amendment cut off direct U.S. aid to the contras.

'Democracy' or secret government?

Details of the Lebanon plan's "existence" are "known only to a small circle of White House officials, intelligence officials and members of Congress," the Telegraph reported. So much for democracy in the United States. "The secrecy of the finding means that U.S. involvement in the activities is officially deniable."

In December the Toronto Globe and Mail reported that the U.S. was secretly building up Lebanon's Internal Security

Forces, a paramilitary force directly controlled by Siniora. Arms acquired in East Europe were being shipped to Lebanon via the United Arab Emirates. The Pentagon is also shipping equipment directly to the ISF.

In his State of the Union speech Jan. 23, Bush accused "Hezbollah terrorists backed by Iran and Syria" of "seeking to undermine Lebanon's legitimately elected government." Bush is no more honest about Lebanon than he was about Iraq.

Hezbollah foiled Israeli invasion

Hezbollah is not a terrorist organization. It is a political party that enjoys broad support not only among Shiites, Lebanon's largest and poorest group, but among many Christians, Druse and Sunnis as well. It led the freedom struggle that drove Israel's brutal U.S.-funded occupation forces out of South Lebanon in 2000.

In July 2006 Hezbollah-led forces repelled Israel's U.S.-backed attempt to reconquer South Lebanon. Over 1,000 Lebanese civilians—women, children and men—were killed and thousands more maimed by U.S.-made munitions in last summer's Israeli attack.

Lebanese children are still being killed or maimed by the 1.4 million U.S.-made cluster bomblets that litter South Lebanon. On Jan. 29, the Bush regime admitted to Congress that Israel's use of cluster bombs "may have violated U.S. guidelines." On the same day the Jerusalem Post reported that Israel plans to purchase thousands of "smart bomb" kits—Joint Direct Attack Munitions—from the Boeing Corp.

In a speech Dec. 7 Hezbollah General Secretary Sayid Hassan Nasrallah revealed evidence that officials in the Siniora government had asked the U.S. to give Israel the go-ahead to attack South Lebanon, where the vast majority of people support the Opposition. In one scandalous episode, the Lebanese ISF served tea to invading Israeli troops.

Hezbollah's work is not only military. It builds hospitals, clinics, schools and libraries and provides social services for

Lebanon's poorest and most oppressed. It has provided relief funds to hundreds of thousands of Lebanese whose homes were destroyed by Israeli bombs and missiles.

Today Hezbollah is allied with the largely Christian Free Patriotic Movement and Marada parties, the Druse-based Democratic Party and Movement for Unity and leftist forces such as the Movement of the People, the Popular Nasserist Movement, the People's Democratic Party and the Lebanese Communist Party. Together, they make up a broad movement to demand political reform and early democratic elections.

This movement has united Lebanese across sectarian lines in a protest campaign that recalls the civil rights movement in the United States.

The ruling classes in the U.S., Britain and France, on the other hand, have united with the absolute monarchs of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, Egypt's president-for-life Mubarak and the apartheid regime in Tel Aviv to crush this movement.

In a speech at Israel's Herzliya Institute Jan. 22, Democratic presidential hopeful

John Edwards echoed Bush's war threats against Hezbollah, Syria and Iran.

General strike against Siniora

On the very day of Bush's State of the Union address, the majority of Lebanon's workers took part in an opposition-backed general strike that shut the country down. They were protesting Siniora's Wall Street-backed plan to privatize health care, electricity and telecommunications, impose a huge sales tax and end fuel subsidies.

Gunmen from Samir Geagea's openly fascist Lebanese Forces, the Future Movement of millionaire real estate speculator Saad Hariri, and Walid Jumblatt's misnamed Progressive Socialist Party opened fire on strikers blocking roads in Beirut, the Shouf and North Lebanon. Three people died and hundreds were

Continued on page 10



WW PHOTO: J. DUNKEL

Palestinian jailed in U.S. begins hunger strike

By Dianne Mathiowetz

On Jan. 22, Dr. Sami Al-Arian began a hunger strike.

Al-Arian is an esteemed professor, Muslim leader and Palestinian activist currently held in a federal prison. He has been the target of an unrelenting U.S. government campaign of physical deprivation, legal harassment and psychological torture.

Over a year ago, after a six-month trial, a Florida jury acquitted him and his co-defendants of sensational and biased charges of being "terrorists." Yet Al-Arian remains in prison under the most horrific conditions.

His arrest on Feb. 20, 2003, in a pre-dawn raid at his home in Tampa, Fla., was announced by then-Attorney General John Ashcroft at a national press conference and declared a victory in the "war on terrorism."

For more than two years before his trial was scheduled, he was held at a maximum security federal prison in solitary confinement, denied regular contact with his family, with limited legal consultation

and medical care and restricted ability to practice his religion.

Despite a steady torrent of prejudicial media accounts and the expenditure of millions of dollars to make the government case against Al-Arian, on Dec. 6, 2005, 12 jurors found no evidence to convict him of more than 90 possible charges, including the most serious ones that carried life sentences. His two codefendants were completely exonerated. The jury deadlocked 10-2 in favor of acquittal on some minor charges against Al-Arian.

The government lawyers argued against releasing Al-Arian on bail over these petty matters and instead claimed they would retry him on the unresolved charges. Although the Bush regime had suffered a humiliating defeat in court, Al-Arian was nevertheless returned to his grim prison cell with no date set for a new trial.

This use of legal extortion, a common device used by prosecutors across the land, led to an arrangement in which he pleaded guilty to a minor charge and agreed to an expedited deportation. The federal lawyers specifically included in the agreement that he would not be called to

testify in any other cases. Many of his supporters believed that his innocence had been firmly established and that his wife and five children would soon be reunited with their husband and father.

However, in May 2006 the Florida trial judge rejected the jury's findings, ignored the plea agreement, declared Al-Arian "a liar" and "a terrorist," and sentenced him to the maximum time on the minor charge.

The U.S. government has since moved Al-Arian around the country from prison to prison, often in the dead of night, leaving his whereabouts unknown to his family and legal team.

In another violation of the plea agreement, he was brought to testify in Virginia before a grand jury hearing evidence about "terrorist" activities. When he cited his agreement with federal prosecutors in Florida and refused to testify, he was called in contempt of court and sentenced to additional jail time.

When that grand jury's term expired and another one was impaneled, he was once again called to testify this January.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 6

What next?

Many participants said they saw this demonstration as the beginning of a struggle, not the end of it. The Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC), while leading chants from the side of the march, was distributing leaflets calling for two further actions this winter.

On Feb. 17 it plans nationally coordinated local actions aimed mainly at senators and representatives to demand they refuse to fund the war, and to turn the money instead toward social services.

On March 17 TONC is building for the March on the Pentagon, called also by the ANSWER coalition, but will continue to raise demands that Congress refuse to fund the war, possibly supported by direct action at the Capitol.

TONC spokesperson Larry Holmes told Workers World, "We are encouraged by the turnout today, which we see as a terrific beginning to launch a campaign to involve the African American, Latin@ and all the immigrant communities and all workers in a struggle to take the \$130 billion earmarked for a war of oppression and use it to provide social services for the population at home."

E-mail: jcat@workers.org

Colonial period in Cuba

Bodies shackled and repressed

By Leslie Feinberg

Colonialism, and later imperialism, brought anti-homosexual and anti-trans laws and state repression to Cuba. The deep bite of the knotted lash of oppressor ideology backed it up.

For over 300 years, Spanish colonialism shackled the laboring population of Cuba, literally claiming ownership of the lives, labor and bodies of millions.

The enslaved toilers were from the Indigenous peoples of the island, decimated by the colonialist forces that washed up on their shores, and also African peoples—survivors of mass kidnappings from their homelands and of the Middle Passage holocaust.

Using Bibles as well as bullets, those who bled the labor of the enslaved class literally “laid down the law”—reshaping and regulating every aspect of life for the enslaved class, including economic structure, kinship recognition, marriage, organization of the sexes, sexuality and gender expression.

Colonial terror, under the banner of religious law, enforced the brutal remodeling of economic and social life among peoples from diverse societies that the colonialists, and later imperialists, sought to conquer and exploit.

The following historical footnote under-



Luisa Capetillo

lavender
&
red #88

scores the importance the colonial occupiers placed on eradicating the “pecado nefando”—the “nefarious sin” of same-sex love and/or gender/sex variance.

In order to petition Havana’s town council in 1597 for his freedom, an enslaved man argued that he had “rendered a valuable service by discovering and denouncing those who had committed the ‘pecado nefando.’” (Alejandro de la Fuente, *Law and History Review*)

Santería was one form of resistance to colonial cultural imperialism. It used the trappings of Roman Catholicism to shelter African religious beliefs and rituals—which make room for very different sex/gender expression.

Havana: cross-dressing labor leader arrested

In the mid-1600s, the Spanish Captain General who ruled over the rural and urban enslaved population sentenced 20 “effeminate sodomites” to be burned to death.

Others were exiled to Cayo Cruz, a small

island in Havana Bay, which was thereafter referred to in Spanish by an anti-gay slur.

Historian Amara Das Wilhelm added, “Similar disparaging attitudes toward homosexuals were expressed in a 1791 Havana newspaper article entitled ‘A Critical Letter About the Man-Woman,’ which condemned the effeminate sodomites that apparently thrived in eighteenth-century Havana.” (The Gay and Lesbian Vaishnava Association online)

U.S. imperialism militarily occupied Cuba for four years, beginning in 1898. From 1902 until the 1959 Cuban Revolution, Wall Street ruled by establishing dictatorships to squeeze the island’s economy in its fist, restructuring Cuba for exploitation as a giant sugar plantation.

Laws against same-sex love and gender variance and state repression continued to be used as a cudgel for economic, social and political control.

Cross-dressing Puerto Rican labor organizer Luisa Capetillo was arrested in Havana in July 1915 for wearing men’s clothing.

Capetillo was a single mother, a revolutionary, and a much-loved and respected labor organizer.

After supporting the 1905 farm workers’ strike in the northern region of Puerto Rico, she became a reader in a tobacco plant, an industry whose workers were among the most politically conscious. She also spoke in public about the needs of working women, including the right to sex education. She strongly believed that sexuality was not the business of the church or the state.

As a full-time labor organizer after 1912, Capetillo traveled extensively, particularly



www.freethefiveny.org

to Havana, Tampa and New York because they were hubs of the tobacco workers’ movement.

In Cuba, Capetillo actively supported a sugar cane workers’ strike organized by the Anarchist Federation of Cuba.

The Cuban government tried unsuccessfully to deport her as an agitator.

Then it focused on her wearing of a “man’s” suit, tie and fedora in public to charge her with “causing a scandal.”

Capetillo fought the charge, arguing in court that no law prevented her from wearing men’s garb, and that such clothing was appropriate for the changing role of women in society, and that she had worn similar clothing in the streets of Puerto Rico and Mexico without state intervention.

Capetillo won her court battle—the judge ordered the charges dropped. News of her victory spread in articles in all the major newspapers in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Historian Aurora Levins Morales concluded, “The incident received massive press coverage, and Capetillo used it as an opportunity to attack conventional morality, with its rigid sex roles, and women’s imprisonment within it.”

In 1938, the Cuban Penal Code—the “Public Ostentation Law”—was enacted. This law mandated state penalties for “habitual homosexual acts,” public displays of same-sex affection and/or gender-variant dress and self-expression.

Next: Gambling, narcotics, prostitution industries in pre-revolutionary Cuba.

EL SALVADOR

Pact with U.S. deepens rich-poor divide

By Heather Cottin

In the 1980s, the Salvadoran armed forces, directed by Washington and armed with U.S. weapons costing \$1 million a day, pursued a scorched-earth policy of torture, murder and destruction against the forces of El Salvador’s revolutionary front, the Faribundo Martí Front for National Liberation (FMLN).

On the Lempa River, the government plundered the mangroves, destroyed villages, massacred civilians, burned houses, defoliated the fertile fields and trees and forced the peasants out of the region, from where they were dispersed to refugee camps. An infamous massacre took place on the Lempa River in 1981 at El Mozote. It was later discovered that 794 people, most of them children, had been killed in an eight-day government onslaught there.

There was no victory in that war, just a peace accord in 1992 that stopped it.

Today the river flows quietly. The FMLN has repatriated hundreds of people living along its banks. FMLN organizers are developing dairy, fishing, agricultural, educational and reforestation projects. There is running water, housing and community centers that protect people from the rising river during hurricanes. Free potable water is also trucked in.

Youth centers, a radio station and an artists’ collective help create a high state of political consciousness. The people are creating their own futures—and they are socialists.

But elsewhere in the country, neoliberalism rules. The San Salvador airport is the most modern in Central America. The port at La Unión will be the most modern in all Latin America. In El Salvador today, 85,000 workers in 229 maquiladora factories sew 634 million garments valued at over \$1 billion a year—for export to the U.S.

The ARENA party, the same party responsible for the deaths of 75,000 people during the war, has established Free Trade Zones under the U.S.-designed Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). Under this agreement, union organizers are barred or fired and there are no union contracts in the maquilas.

With a minimum wage of 60 cents an hour, 80 percent of the people live in abject poverty, even according to ARENA’s own reckoning. Schools are not free, there is little public health care, and malnutrition and illiteracy are common.

Agriculture generates 6 percent of foreign exchange today, as opposed to 80 percent in 1978. Prices have gone up since CAFTA-DR created a new dollarized economy.

El Salvador’s coffee agriculture has collapsed. Rural maquiladoras are now permitted to pay 44 cents an hour. Economic desperation has created a constant flow of men and women out of the country. The ARENA government has effectively gotten rid of 25 percent of El Salvador’s population since 1980.

The remittances that emigrants send home to their families amount to 17



Women leaders of a dairy collective on the Lempa River.

WWW PHOTO: HEATHER COTTIN

percent of the gross domestic product. “Money sent home by roughly 2.5 million Salvadorans working in the United States is the main driver of El Salvador’s tiny economy,” wrote Reuters on Jan. 17. It comes to \$3.32 billion, a 17 percent increase over 2005 and the equivalent of 90 percent of the country’s trade deficit.

The governments of the U.S. and El Salvador know that remittances alleviate the social pressure, provide money for the economy and act as a safety valve for those who are dissatisfied.

U.S. capitalists have outsourced the entire apparel industry to countries like El Salvador, closing down garment factories in the U.S. Workers here and there are suffering.

Meanwhile, the U.S. corporate media and politicians push anti-immigrant racism. The same capitalist economic forces that have made life so difficult in

El Salvador—and around the world—are pulling down the level of U.S. workers while promoting anti-immigrant propaganda to deflect mass anger away from the ruling class.

In neighboring Nicaragua, the FSLN, a left front that in 1979 had toppled the U.S.-supported dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza, won the recent national elections. On his first day as president, Daniel Ortega announced that Nicaragua was joining ALBA, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, which will help Nicaragua integrate its economy with Venezuela and other Latin American countries.

In El Salvador, they are organizing in every province. The FMLN says, “We need socialism.” And they have started along the Lempa River.

In January, Heather Cottin attended the Sao Paulo Forum, which was held in San Salvador.

Heeding demands for social justice

Venezuelan Assembly gives Chávez broad powers

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

In a public, open-air ceremony in central Caracas's Plaza Bolívar, the National Assembly of Venezuela on Jan. 31 announced it was approving special powers—called the Enabling Law—that will allow President Hugo Chávez to make major changes in this South American country.

Cilia Flores, president of the National Assembly, said Chávez will now have 18 months in which to enact new laws that “will benefit the people, those who were excluded their whole lives. They are laws for inclusion and social justice.”

This development is part of what Chávez has called the path to Socialism of the 21st Century in Venezuela. The special Enabling Law is primarily a response to the demands of the masses, who have gained a great deal of political consciousness and want a better life with social and economic justice. The fact that the changes are within the constitutional and legal system does not make them less revolutionary.

The contradictions in the land of the Bolivarian Revolution could not continue unresolved. The political awakening and awareness by the masses of their own power was on a collision course with private ownership and control of the means of production.

Efficiency! No more corruption! These have been the demands of the rural and urban poor. Chávez once considered a “third way” between socialism and capitalism. But he has always been in tune with the masses, listening and responding. He now says these laws are necessary to speed the process of building socialism in Venezuela, to “dismantle the bourgeois state and build the revolutionary process.”

The Enabling Law allows Chávez to legislate in 10 areas, including the transformation and development of institu-

tions, infrastructure, transportation science and technology according to a new social and economic model; reorganizing security and defense; and changes in territorial divisions in order to better serve the communities. One important aspect of these laws is the pursuit of more citizen participation.

Since 2005, the National Assembly has been 100 percent pro-Chávez; the opposition, based in the country's elite, has refused to participate in the elections.

The U.S. government had criticized the anticipated new powers. Tom Casey, a deputy spokesperson for the State Department, said they were a “source of concern.” Venezuelan legislators, on their web site, rebuffed the U.S. accusation and suggested it should instead deal with its genocidal war against Iraq: “Mister Casey, the only truly strange thing in the world is that a government that says it defends ‘democracy’ has turned into one of the horsemen of the Apocalypse, of death.”

Taking back control

The parts of Chávez's plan that most worry the U.S. government and Wall Street are proposed nationalizations and a new Constitution. “What was privatized, let it be nationalized,” said Chávez. The Venezuelan central bank, the electric company and the telecommunications firm CANTV, which were sold to outside investors, largely from the U.S., will be returned to state control. PDVSA, the Venezuela-owned oil company, will take over the Orinoco oil field.

This field contains one of the largest crude oil reserves in the world. But the oil is very heavy, almost solid, necessitating a great amount of resources and investment for its extraction. The government will continue to allow some private investment, but will take a controlling majority of the shares. At present, ConocoPhillips,

Chevron, ExxonMobil and BP all have large holdings in Orinoco heavy-oil projects. Their percentages will decline as PDVSA takes over the majority of the shares.

The Venezuelan process is very fluid. It is not clear yet whether the state will compensate private owners when it nationalizes.

Chávez has said that in the case of CANTV, in which Verizon holds 28.5 percent of the shares, “Of course the state will pay, how can it not pay?” But it “will pay when the law so decides and in the form that the State decides. And I will tell you something, CANTV was a gift, now they better not say that it has to be paid by international price standards.”

This was a reference to the sweetheart deal the U.S. company got from the previous Venezuelan government when it sold off CANTV, as well as a response to threatening remarks by U.S. Ambassador William Brownfield.

Chávez added that CANTV has a debt to its workers and retirees, as well as “technological debts” to the state.

For many years, the Venezuelan media has been controlled by the pro-imperialist right wing. When the government decided not to renew the broadcasting license of the furiously racist station RCTV, based on its inaccurate and insulting programming that violated Venezuelan media laws on social responsibility, there was an uproar in the U.S. The corporate media here accused the government and Chávez in particular of being dictatorial and suppressing the freedom of expression.

These are the same voices that never objected when RCTV supported the 2003 military coup against Chávez that failed when the people mobilized by the hundreds of thousands in his support.

The ‘five motors’

Chávez calls his five proposals to fuel the revolutionary change the “five motors.”

These are the Enabling Law; a thorough and profound reform of the Constitution; economic, moral, social and political education called “the great national period of ethics and enlightenment”; a new distribution of the political, economic, social and military power that will entail some political re-division of the country; and the revolutionary explosion of People's Power, where Communal Assemblies and Councils will take control of the communities and will participate actively in the national direction.

The “explosion” of the people's councils is viewed by Chávez as the most important element in the whole process, but one that requires the other four motors. For the development of the education component, on Jan. 28 he inaugurated 25 centers of Socialist Formation and allocated \$5 billion to help the Communal Councils with their projects.

Cooperation and trade with Iran

Venezuela is greatly expanding its trade and cooperation with other developing countries, particularly through the program called the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America (ALBA). Especially important is its recent pact with Iran, especially when U.S. imperialism is threatening Iran with the possibility of war.

When Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad recently visited Latin America for the inaugurations of Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, he also visited Venezuela. Both countries agreed to establish a \$2 billion fund to help developing nations, particularly those under U.S. pressure.

The revolutionary changes being attempted in Venezuela need the support of all progressives, particularly in the United States, the source of its greatest danger. □

Pastors for Peace brings aid to Chiapas

More than 10 tons of humanitarian aid gathered by Pastors for Peace for the people of Chiapas, Mexico, came through Houston on Jan. 13. The caravan was greeted with a community dinner hosted at the SHAPE (Self-Help for African People through Education) Community Center by Sisters of SHAPE, the Cuba Solidarity Committee and the International Zapatista Action Movement (MAIZ), and attended by members of Nuestra Palabra, a program on Houston's Pacifica Radio, and other local activists. Three caravan members spoke of the solidarity needed in Chiapas from the

world community.

When the bus got to Houston, a human assembly line was formed to load all the locally gathered aid onto the little yellow school bus headed for Chiapas. MAIZ activists had held several garage sales and collected dozens of boxes of humanitarian aid as well as over \$500 in cash for the trip.

The evening before it arrived in Houston, the caravan went to New Orleans and dropped off aid to people there still recovering from Hurricane Katrina.

—Gloria Rubac



PHOTO: JOHN HERRERA

Labor, youth expand Coke boycott

By Martha Grevatt
Cleveland

Since October 2004, UAW Local 122 in Ohio has not served Coca-Cola products in its hall. This action followed a discussion by a number of union officers and activists with Luis Cardona, an exiled representative of Sinaltrainal, the food workers' union in Colombia.

Thousands of members of Sinaltrainal and other Colombian unions have been assassinated by right-wing paramilitaries in collusion with foreign corporations. Nine Coke workers have been murdered; Cardona personally witnessed the murder of Isidro Gil on the premises of the company in 1996.

In 2003 Sinaltrainal called for an international boycott of all Coca-Cola products. The boycott has been endorsed by a number of labor organizations, including the American Postal Workers Union, Service Employees International, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, UNISON, the largest union in Britain, and VERDI, a 4-million-member union in Germany. Student activists have convinced 30 college campuses in the U.S. and around the world to stop serving



Coke products.

The issue came up for Local 122 of the UAW again when some members wanted to resume serving Coke at the hall. This prompted boycott supporters to draft a formal resolution on the issue, stating clear support for the boycott and pledging to win support from other UAW bodies. The UAW nationally has not yet embraced the Coke campaign.

The resolution passed unanimously at the local's January membership meeting. It was also well received the next day at a meeting of the UAW Community Action Project Council, comprised of elected delegates of many UAW locals.

Meanwhile, on Jan. 20, student activists from a dozen Ohio campuses met at a day-long teach-in sponsored by the Inter-Religious Task Force in Cleveland. March 1 has been declared an all-Ohio day of action to support the Coke campaign. □

The real cancer

A promising drug for fighting cancer is found. It has already been proven relatively safe. Laboratory and animal tests have shown it kills cancer cells and shrinks tumors.

You would think the drug companies would fall all over themselves to do the clinical trials necessary for the drug to be prescribed to cancer patients. Right?

Wrong.

This may be the biggest scandal to hit the medical world in years. Yet so far, all the commercial U.S. media have stayed away from reporting on it.

An article in the Jan. 20 issue of *New Scientist*, a highly reputable British magazine, gives the details. Researchers at the University of Alberta in Canada have discovered that the drug dichloroacetate (DCA) killed lung, breast and brain cancer cells cultured outside the body. "Tumors in rats deliberately infected with human cancer also shrank drastically when they were fed DCA-laced water for several weeks," says the article.

DCA is not a new drug. It has been used for years to treat mitochondrial disease. It is cheap and has limited side effects. Scientists decided to try it on cancer cells because it affects the metabolism of cells, the way they use energy. This is a different approach than the chemotherapy drugs now in use, which are toxic and kill off both cancerous and normal cells.

What has scientists especially excited is that DCA has the potential of working against all types of cancers, including secondary cancers caused when cells break off and migrate to other parts of the body.

So what's the hitch?

The article explains, "The next step is to run clinical trials of DCA in people with cancer. These may have to be funded by charities, universities and governments: pharmaceutical companies are unlikely to pay because they can't make money on unpatented medicines."

An editorial in the same issue of the magazine lays it out even further. Entitled "No patent? No thanks," with the streamer, "There's an anti-cancer drug with huge potential, but no backers," it explains how the profit motive is

slowing down what could be a fantastic medical breakthrough.

DCA is "cheap, does not appear to affect normal cells, we know its side effects, and it should work on all cancers," says the edit. "But there's a hitch: it's an old drug and so cannot be patented. No pharmaceutical company is likely to fund costly clinical trials without some exclusive rights to make the drug."

It points out that many other drugs that could treat diseases affecting poor people in developing countries are also left on the shelf without the proper testing, and for the same reason: there's not enough profit in it.

The editorial even predicts that drug companies may try to manufacture and patent new drugs similar to DCA and get them on the market soon—but they will be "hugely expensive." It concludes, "It would be a scandal if a cheap alternative with such astonishing potential were not given a chance simply because it won't turn a big enough profit."

There it is in a nutshell. The problem with the whole medical industry is that it's not an industry to promote health, it's an industry to promote profits. In fact, the more sick people there are, the more money there is to be made. Pharmaceuticals make up one of the most profitable industries in this country, raking in hundreds of billions every year.

In the U.S., where the medical industry is the most advanced technologically, it's also the most expensive and the least efficient when the cost is measured against the general health of the people. That's why 47 million people here have no health coverage.

There are many reasons to be for a revolutionary socialist reorganization of society. First and foremost are the need to end poverty, exploitation, war and the oppression of people just because of their nationality, sex or gender expression.

But issues like cancer and the messed-up environment, which can affect anyone, should make it clearer than ever that all humanity will benefit mightily when the parasitic billionaire class that currently stifles true progress is toppled from its seat of power. □

Palestinian jailed in U.S. begins hunger strike

Continued from page 7

Standing by the terms of his agreement, he continued to refuse to answer. Judge Gerald Lee denied any motions from Al-Arian's lawyers about the legal standing of the plea agreement and sentenced him to jail for the duration of the grand jury's term—which extends past his April 2007 release date from the Florida trial.

So Al-Arian has begun a hunger strike.

He is a diabetic and his health has suffered greatly during the harsh conditions of his almost four-year incarceration. Nevertheless, he has steadfastly maintained his support for the Palestinian people and their right to struggle against occupation.

Like the many detainees at Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib and other torture hellholes, Al-Arian's human and civil rights have been systematically denied by the U.S. government and its agents.

His supporters have issued an urgent plea asking everyone concerned about the

abuse of governmental power by the Bush administration to contact the following officials and demand Dr. Sami Al-Arian's immediate release: Judge Gerald Lee, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, Rep. John Conyers and Sen. Patrick Leahy. More information can be found at www.freesamialarian.com. □

Watada trial starts Feb. 5

Army drops two charges against resister

Continued from page 6

last summer—powerful words, but protected under the Constitution.

Watada's case has been closely supported by the growing anti-war movement. His father, Bob Watada, spoke to the massive rally in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 27. That same day Watada's mother, Carolyn Ho, addressed the protest in San Francisco. Lt. Watada himself was one of the main speakers to over 1,000 people at the Seattle protest, where he received a prolonged ovation.

In Seattle, Watada ended by comparing the U.S. occupation of Iraq to what it would have been like if Britain or France had intervened in the U.S. Civil War: "What if they killed President Abraham Lincoln, put the South in charge of the country and changed the Constitution to benefit French and British companies?" he said. "If we truly believe in democracy we must listen to what the Iraqis want." (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Jan. 28)

Subpoenas on journalists lifted

To prosecute the case against Watada, the Army had attempted to subpoena two reporters—independent journalist

Sarah Olson of Oakland, Calif., and Greg Kakesako of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin—and force them to testify concerning the lieutenant's words. Watada is from Hawaii and his parents are well-known public figures there.

The Army decided to drop the subpoenas on Jan. 29 after a campaign to defend the right of the media to report on cases of dissenters had begun to pick up support from the National Press Club, the Society of Professional Journalists, PEN American Center, Military Reporters and Editors, and many individual writers and journalists.

In a statement, Olson said, "This should be seen as a victory for the rights of journalists in the U.S. to gather and disseminate news free from government intervention, and for the rights of individuals to express personal, political opinions to journalists without fear of retribution or censure. I am glad the growing number of dissenting voices within the military will retain their rights to speak with reporters. But I note with concern that Lt. Watada still faces prosecution for exercising his First Amendment rights during public presentations."

E-mail: jcat@workers.org

LEBANON

'Operation Condor'?

Continued from page 7

injured, but the strike was not broken. In a press conference, Free Patriotic Movement leader Michel Aoun showed photos of masked gunmen attacking strikers in North Lebanon.

On Jan. 25, a conference of "international donors" convened in Paris under U.S. and French auspices raised \$7 billion to prop up the debt-ridden Siniora regime. The same day, pro-Siniora gangs invaded the campus of the Arab University of Beirut and murdered two students. A Shiite man bicycling through the neighborhood was also gunned down by goons from Jumblatt's PSP.

Opposition supporters rushed to the campus and drove off the attackers before the army intervened to clear the streets. Al Manar television, which the Bush regime has banned in the United States, released pictures of snipers on rooftops firing at protesters.

The stakes in Lebanon go beyond Washington's desire to prop up a banker-friendly regime in a country with a \$45 billion debt. For the White House and the Pentagon, Lebanon is a pawn in their plans for wider war in the region.

The Bush regime hopes Iraq's new

hydrocarbon law, drafted by U.S. contractors, will give oil corporations a lock on Iraq's vast oil reserves. If the U.S. bombs Iran's oilfields, the value of Iraqi oil could double. But getting that oil to market in the West requires reactivating old pipelines that run to the Mediterranean through Syria and Lebanon.

The Iraqi Resistance is unlikely to allow U.S. firms to ship oil through the southern port of Basra. To loot Iraq, Big Oil needs to impose subservient regimes on Syria and Lebanon. As the mass movement that has arisen in Lebanon shows, that's not likely to happen.

In a speech Jan. 30 to hundreds of thousands of Muslims gathered in southern Beirut to mark the Shia festival of Ashura, Nasrallah warned that the U.S. aims to instigate sectarian civil war in Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq.

"George Bush wants to punish you because you have triumphed and, in the American era, you are not allowed to keep your heads raised." But, he added, "We are people who refuse humiliation and disgrace. Lebanon has been and always will be the graveyard of invaders."

Bill Cecil was in Lebanon in November and December covering the growing people's movement there.

Subscribe to Workers World newspaper

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Workers World Newspaper

55 W. 17 St. 5 Fl., NY, NY 10011

212-627-2994

www.workers.org



U.N. occupation of Haiti intensifies

By G. Dunkel

Ever since the coup-kidnapping of the popular president of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, on Feb. 29, 2004, this Caribbean country has been occupied. First it was troops from the United States, France and Canada. Then a U.N.-sanctioned and commanded force, mainly from Latin America and called Minustah, took over and provided a cover for this imperialist intervention.

Minustah stands for the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti, but its intervention has meant “death, terror and lawlessness for the people of Haiti,” as a statement from Fanmi Lavalas, Aristide’s political party, puts it.

Even the U.S. State Department, in documents recently obtained by the Haiti Information Project (HIP) about a U.N. raid in Cité Soleil in July 2005, admits that the U.N. troops used “excessive force,” which is like a butcher calling a slaughterhouse worker bloody.

These attacks have continued. According to residents of Cité Soleil, cited by HIP, U.N. forces attacked in the early morning of Dec. 22, 2006, killing more than 30

people, including women and children. Yet they claim to be “peacekeepers.”

The National Commission on Justice and Peace, sponsored by the Roman Catholic bishops of Haiti, published a report on Jan. 23 acknowledging that 539 people died from “armed violence” in October, November and December. The deaths are concentrated in “the poor communities of Martissant, Grande Ravine and Bolosse, the southern suburbs of Port au Prince and in Cité Soleil to the north,” according to the commission’s report. “In November and December [2006] Minustah and the Haitian National Police (PNH) became more active in the struggle against gangsters; their actions created victims, which in no way means their victims were bandits,” the report continues.

The day after the report was published, 300 U.N. soldiers in 20 armored personnel carriers, with bulldozers and helicopters, raided Cité Soleil and demolished a “gang’s hideout that had been used for criminal attacks against Minustah posts,” was the version given by U.N. spokesperson Col. Abdesslam Elamarti, speaking to Haiti’s AlterPress service. Haiti en Marche reported that five residents of Cité Soleil

were killed in this attack.

After centuries of Western hostility to this Black republic, most people in Haiti are desperately poor. Even though Haitian police, who are commanded by U.N. officers under a deal struck with the previous, un-elected government, have flooded the streets of Port au Prince, parents are so afraid of kidnapping that they did not send their children to school after the winter holidays, according to Haïti-Progrès (Jan. 17 to 23).

A number of Haitians living in the United States who usually go home for the holidays didn’t this year out of fear of being kidnapped for ransom in Haiti. Some have told this reporter that they feel the cops are involved, along with gangsters. There have been press reports that police uniforms have been found in the possession of kidnapers.

Henri Laforest, brother of well-known New York activist Ray Laforest, was recently shot through the heart after leaving a bank in Haiti. It is not clear whether the motive was robbery or political.

Political activists are also angry that there are still political prisoners who have not even been charged, although they were

arrested as much as two years ago. Some of the most prominent political prisoners, like Sò Ann (Anne Auguste) have been released, but hundreds more are still in jail. Fanmi Lavalas members who were fired because of their political affiliations still haven’t been rehired.

Most importantly, Aristide is still in exile in South Africa, while the gangsters and mass murderers who carried out the coup against him, with the financial and organizational support of the U.S. government, are walking around Port au Prince. The people of Haiti want their president back.

Given the U.N.’s occupation of Haiti, which is just a thin cover for the role of the United States, France and Canada, and its worsening economic situation, the Haiti Action Committee has called an internationally coordinated day of protests. For information on these protests, call 510-483-7481 in the U.S.

In New York, Fanmi Lavalas and other groups in the Haitian community have called a major demonstration on Wednesday, Feb. 7 in front of the United Nations from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Call 718-469-2078 for more information in the New York metropolitan area. □

In blow to Bush ‘renditions’

Canada to pay torture victim \$9M

By Beverly Hiestand

At last there has been an official repudiation of Washington’s policy of “extraordinary rendition”—capturing people and sending them to other countries to be tortured. This blow to the Bush regime comes not from the U.S. but from Canada, however.

The Canadian government has admitted that it acted illegally when it cooper-

ated with Washington in the deportation of a Canadian to Syria, where he was tortured and imprisoned for nearly a year.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on Jan. 26 publicly apologized to Maher Arar, a 36-year-old software engineer born in Syria, and his family. Harper announced that Arar would be compensated \$8.9 million for Ottawa’s role in allowing the U.S. to deport him.

The compensation follows a judicial

finding that Canadian police had falsely accused Arar of being an Islamic extremist linked to al-Qaeda. The compensation is the highest in Canadian history and the first relating to the torture of a citizen overseas. (Globe and Mail, Jan. 26)

While traveling to Montreal from Tunisia on a Canadian passport, Arar was detained by U.S. authorities at New York’s JFK airport on Sept. 26, 2002. He was chained and shackled by U.S. authorities for 11 days of interrogation and told he would not be admitted to the U.S.

A week later a Canadian consular officer visited Arar and said he thought he would be returned to Canada. However, four days later Arar was deported to Syria, where he was housed in a three-by-six-foot cell, interrogated and tortured over several months until he confessed—falsely—to terrorist training in Afghanistan. Although he was visited on occasion by the Canadian consul, the ambassador and visiting members of Parliament, it was never in private and he was afraid to talk freely.

After much public pressure, his case was investigated in Canada. In October 2003 he was freed by the U.S. and returned home. Finally, three years later on Sept. 18, 2006, he was exonerated of any wrongdoing.

The Canadian inquiry found that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police investigators had given inaccurate, unfair and overstated evidence to U.S. authorities. The judge also noted a pattern of investigative practices that included officials accepting and relying upon information that might be the product of torture.

Left unanswered was the question of why the U.S. government sent Arar to Syria.

The Canadian government’s settlement also removed Arar’s name from its list of potential terrorists. However, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff have told Canadian officials that Arar is still on their watch list. Stockwell Day, Canada’s public safety minister, after traveling to Washington and viewing a confidential file concerning Arar, said that it contained “nothing new” to justify blocking him from entering the U.S.

Maria LaHood, Arar’s U.S. lawyer, said the Bush administration is still not coming clean and is keeping him on a watch list to protect its position in a lawsuit he has filed. Even Prime Minister Harper has said, “We simply have a U.S. government that won’t admit it’s wrong.”

Since his return to Canada, Arar, who is studying for his Ph.D. in a computer-related field, has been unable to find a job in his discipline. He is unable to travel to numerous countries. His career has been destroyed. He has depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, and has expressed great difficulty in making a new life for himself and his family in British Columbia.

“I have a stressful life every single minute. I’m tired. Every day, the cloud is still over me. I’m not like a normal family father any more. It’s very hard for people to understand what I’ve been going through, unless they come and live with me, and see it all.” (Globe and Mail, Jan 26)

This case and increased awareness of U.S. seizure and rendition to torture centers in other countries have raised the ire of people around the world, who are pressuring their governments.

A European Union parliamentary committee has called on Italy to apologize for allowing the U.S. to use Rome as a stop-over base for the flight that took Arar to be tortured. The EU legislators urge “speedy compensation” for people subject to rendition.

Its proposed legislation urges member countries to condemn this practice as an illegal instrument used by the U.S. It calls for the payment of restitution by member countries that have allowed CIA planes to use their airports to refuel en route to secret prisons. Scores of these CIA “ghost planes” are alleged to have passed through Italy, Britain, Germany, Sweden and other European countries. The European Parliament will vote on it next month.

These efforts further isolate the U.S. government for its anti-terrorism policies and continue to strip away what little international support the U.S. drummed up for its imperialist war in the Middle East. □

Chicago & Denver: The war at home

Continued from page 4

Woodland, Jr., a 13-year-old shot by police in the near-north side public housing development called Cabrini-Green.

Community members responded swiftly to the shooting with a large demonstration in front of the local police station; the cops attacked them, too. Fleming and the Hip-Hop Congress, who organized the initial protest, then kept the heat on the Chicago Police Department (CPD) with two additional demonstrations, at the Chicago Board of Trade and the Federal Reserve Bank.

The result of the community’s decision to raise the level of struggle was significant. The Chicago Police Department was forced to change its procedures so that charges brought against officers will now remain in that accused officer’s personnel file forever.

The struggle against police brutality in Chicago had also been taken up by Alderwoman Arenda Troutman of the 20th Ward, which includes some of the most oppressed African American neighborhoods in the city. Troutman intended to introduce legislation on Jan. 10 to create an independent citizen review board over the CPD. On Jan. 8 federal agents with dogs broke into her home, smashing a window and forcing their way in, to arrest her for “corruption.”

Fleming highlighted the racist hypocrisy surrounding the corruption charge against the popular African American politician. He pointed out that Chicago’s

City Hall under Mayor Richard M. Daley is a nest of corruption—that’s how the Democratic Party conducts business on a day-to-day basis.

These struggles with the police are occurring as the Cabrini-Green community is being gentrified, with residents displaced by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the real estate speculators in whose interest it acts. The CHA has demolished 25,000 units of public housing. But because families often live doubled up in these units, this figure does not accurately represent how many people have actually been displaced or made homeless.

Fleming put this process into perspective by describing the CHA’s actions as “urbanized cleansing,” noting that housing is a human right, according to the UN Charter. He sees the fact that 150,000 people are on a waiting list for public housing in Chicago as a crime against humanity.

Fleming linked deep cuts in social services at home to increased spending for U.S. imperialism’s neo-colonial war against the Iraqi people, saying: “You take care of your family first. Why focus on Iraq when there’s a housing crisis at home?”

Another approach to human needs came through in Fleming’s description of his work with the Venezuelan consulate to implement Mission Miracle in Cabrini-Green. Through this program for poor and working-class communities, the Bolivarian revolutionary government of Venezuela provides free laser eye surgery to those in need. □

M★NDO OBRERO

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

Su ayuda es necesaria para liberar a los cinco cubanos

Yo y otr@s activistas lesbianas, gay, bisexuales y trans que trabajan con el comité de Nueva York para liberar a los Cinco Cubanos, le exhortamos firmar el siguiente llamado y ayudar a circularlo ampliamente. Los Cinco Cubanos son presos políticos retenidos por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos por el "crimen" de intentar detener ataques terroristas desde los EEUU contra Cuba. Las cortes estadounidenses negaron recientemente la decisión para convocar a un nuevo juicio. Con este llamado esperamos renovar la energía para aumentar la indignación por el señalamiento y el encarcelamiento continuado de estos presos políticos.

Como dijo Alice Walker, "La historia de los Cinco Cubanos es una de valor, de grandes sacrificios y de amor. Es una historia que perdurará... el tratamiento que han recibido es vergonzoso; el silencio alrededor de este tratamiento lo es aun

más. ¿Dónde está... la gente con valor suficiente para insistir que los presos no deben ser sometidos a torturas?" (Letters of Love and Hope: The Story of the Cuban 5)

Pocas horas después de que saliera el llamado de la Solidaridad del Arco Iris con los Cinco Cubanos, centenares de individuos y organizaciones que luchan contra la opresión basada en la orientación sexual, la expresión del género y del sexo, firmaron inmediatamente con mucho entusiasmo.

Además, personas con conciencia a través de los Estados Unidos y alrededor del mundo, de todas las nacionalidades, edades, sexos, géneros y sexualidades, están agregando sus nombres también a este llamado.

Junt@s, con el espíritu de una unidad genuina, estamos edificando un Arco Iris de Solidaridad para los Cinco Cubanos que está recorriendo el planeta.

Ahora debemos llegar a centenares de millares más para ejercer una presión de gran alcance sobre el gobierno de los EEUU para liberar a los Cinco. Una vez el llamado sea firmado por much@s, lo enviaremos al Procurador General de la nación para demandar un nuevo juicio y la libertad para los 5.

Envíe por favor su nombre, organización, identificación (es importante que precise si la organización endosa o si es solamente para la identificación suya) y ciudad, estado y país: a transgenderwarrior@gmail.com. Y por favor, circule este llamado ampliamente, animando a tod@s a quienes les importe la justicia, para que lo firmen.

Para el fin de semana del 13 al 14 de enero esperamos tener la página web de la

Solidaridad del Arco Iris lista en tantos idiomas como sea posible para l@s firmantes en línea en www.freethethefivey.org. También pondremos una petición de muestra en línea con el llamado de modo que usted pueda descargarlo para distribuirlo masivamente. Por favor póngase en contacto conmigo si acaso usted puede ayudar a traducir esta introducción y el llamado a otros idiomas.

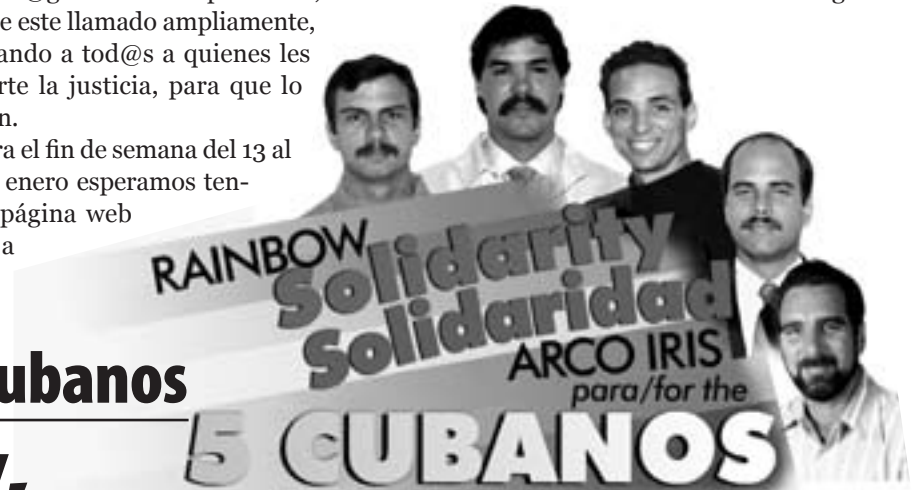
Trabajando junt@s, podremos ayudar a los Cinco Cubanos.

¡Libertad para los Cinco!

Leslie Feinberg

Solidaridad del Arco Iris para los Cinco Cubanos

Activistas lesbianas, gay, bisexuales, y trans lanzan iniciativa



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

Por Leslie Feinberg

El llamado del Arco Iris para la solidaridad con los Cinco Cubanos está recorriendo el planeta. El 7 de enero activistas lesbianas, gay, bisexuales y trans (LGBT) que colaboran con el comité de Nueva York para liberar a los Cinco Cubanos publicaron la declaración que llamaba a un nuevo juicio y la libertad para los Cinco Cubanos prisioneros en cárceles estadounidenses.

El único "crimen" de los Cinco es que infiltraron a grupos mercenarios que operaban desde los EEUU con la ayuda de la CIA con el fin de vigilarlos y detener planes terroristas contra Cuba.

El llamado de Solidaridad del Arco Iris concluye diciendo "El pueblo cubano tiene el derecho a su autodeterminación y soberanía. EEUU debe detener el ataque que tiene contra Cuba a través del bloqueo económico y de los ejércitos "contra" mercenarios entrenados por la CIA y que operan en suelo estadounidense. Esos son actos ilegales de guerra. ¡Llamamos a un nuevo juicio y la liberación de los 5 Cubanos!"

A las pocas horas de salir el llamado para la Solidaridad del Arco Iris con los Cinco, cerca de 200 personas y organizaciones que luchan contra la opresión basada en la sexualidad, la expresión del género y del sexo habían firmado, muchas de ellas añadiendo comentarios entusiastas. Lo más excitante para l@s organizador@s fue ver cómo much@s de l@s firmantes inmediatamente se hicieron voluntari@s para circular el llamado.

Los endosos vinieron de todo los

EEUU y de alrededor del mundo: México, Brasil, Hong Kong, India, Costa Rica, Nueva Zelanda, Irlanda, Gales, Italia, Dinamarca, Finlandia, Japón, Alemania, Canadá, Australia, Bélgica, Portugal y España.

Firmantes provienen de toda la gama política

Desde temprano, l@s firmantes en los EEUU vinieron desde toda la gama política. Incluían a Teresa Gutiérrez, quien por mucho tiempo ha sido líder en la lucha para liberar a los Cinco; la ex-prisionera política y abolicionista de prisiones, Angela Davis; Leslie Cagan, quien es coordinadora de "United for Peace and Justice"; LeiLani Dowell, coordinadora nacional de FIST (Luchemos Contra el Imperialismo, Unámonos); Stephen Funk, el marino estadounidense que estuvo preso por ser objetor de conciencia por la guerra de Irak; Bev Tang, organizadora de Anakbayan, grupo juvenil de Bayan; Gerry Scoppettuolo, co-fundador de "GALLAN-Pride at Work" en Boston; Lani Ka'ahumanu, de BiNET USA; la activista comunitaria en Atlanta, Pat Hussain; Camille Hopkins, directora de NYTRO, organización para los derechos de trans en NY; activista trans Moonhawk River Stone; y Jesse Lokahi Heiwa del "Queer People of Color Action".

Las activistas Barbara Smith y Margo Okazawa-Rey firmaron. Las dos eran parte de las personas fundadoras del Colectivo Combahee River, un grupo de feministas negras de todas las sexualidades quienes en 1977 publicaron una declaración histórica en contra del

sistema (interlocking) de opresión racial, sexual, heterosexual y clasista".

Las ex prisioneras políticas Laura Whitehorn y Linda Evans añadieron sus nombres.

Imani Henri, autor y artista y la artista Holly Hughes, endosaron. También lo hicieron la renombrada cartonista lesbiana y novelista gráfica Alison Bechdel y muchas figuras del ámbito del literato político, incluyendo a Minnie Bruce Pratt, Matt/ilda alias Matt Bernstein Sycamore, Eileen Myles, Sarah Schulman y Catherine Ryan Hyde.

Muchas organizaciones firmaron, incluyendo el "Audre Lorde Project", un centro de personas de color lesbianas, gay, bisexuales, de dos espíritus y transgéneros que enfocan el organizar en las comunidades de la ciudad de Nueva York; FIERCE!, una organización comunitaria para jóvenes trans, lesbianas, gay, bisexuales, dos espíritus, "queer", y "questioning" de color en Nueva York; "QUIT" (por las siglas en inglés traducido como Queers socavando el terrorismo israelí); "Trans Action Canada"; LAGAI-Queer Insurrection; Stonewall Warriors, Boston; y Queers Without Borders, Hartford, Conn.

Adicionalmente, personas con conciencia a través de los Estados Unidos y a través del mundo de todas las nacionalidades, edades, sexos, género, y sexualidades están añadiendo sus nombres también a este llamado.

Organizaciones que no son exclusivamente LGBT firmaron bajo el espíritu de unidad, incluyendo Anakbayan-Los Angeles; Bayan-Sur de California; All

India Anti-Imperialist Forum; Latin American Solidarity Committee, task force of the Western New York Peace Center; VIRTUAL u.s. Peace Academy en Seattle, Wash.; y The United Peoples, Denmark.

'Se necesita su ayuda!'

En menos de una semana después de que el llamado inicial circulara alrededor del planeta, la Solidaridad del Arco Iris para los Cinco Cubanos publicó su página de Internet en el portal del Comité de Nueva York para Liberar a los 5 Cubanos. pueden verlo en : www.freethethefivey.org/rainboweng.htm.

La introducción a la iniciativa y al llamado están en inglés, español, chino simple y tradicional.

La introducción a la iniciativa y al llamado han sido traducidos al farsi, portugués, alemán y francés y serán añadidos próximamente a la página. Se espera que más traducciones sean añadidas, incluyendo al tagalog, japonés, coreano, italiano y una versión de video en lenguaje por seña.

Exhortamos a l@s lector@s a visitar el portal www.freethethefivey.org para que añadan sus nombres y ayuden a difundir esta noticia para que otras personas hagan lo mismo.

Aquellas personas que tengan ideas de cómo ampliar la difusión de esta iniciativa les urgimos a enviar un mensaje a l@s organizador@s a rainbowsolidarity-4cuban5@gmail.org.

Como concluye el llamado en la web: ¡Se necesita su ayuda para liberar a los Cinco Cubanos! □