

# WORKERS WORLD

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Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

MARCH 15, 2007

VOL. 49, NO. 10

50¢

## FROM PROTEST TO RESISTANCE

# Anti-war encampment to confront Congress

By Sara Flounders

During the week starting March 12, a Congress elected to end the war in Iraq is expected to vote to fully fund the war. Its support for the war is not hidden in some enormous package with hundreds of unconnected measures. It is a vote for a special supplement of \$245 billion directly for continuing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Congressional approval will leave millions of people feeling betrayed, frustrated and angry. Bush, whom many consider a war criminal, won't be the sole owner of the war in Iraq. There will be heavy criticism in Congress of Bush's tactics and of the war itself. By the Democratic Party leadership deciding to vote to fund the

war, the Iraq quagmire also becomes their war—not just Bush's war.

While this "debate" in U.S. ruling circles over how to proceed with the disastrous occupation of Iraq is carried on in Congress, will it be possible for the millions who oppose the war on Iraq to bring their own demands to the table?

The call for an encampment outside the Capitol starting March 12 opens an opportunity for just such an independent intervention representing millions of workers and oppressed people.

### Congress could act

The U.S. Constitution grants Congress the power to provide funds for government activities. Thus Congress can fund or refuse to fund a war. As a New York Times

editorial explained on March 4, "There is little dispute that Congress could, if it had the political will, end the war in Iraq tomorrow by using its power over appropriations to cut off funds to the troops."

For four years Bush's congressional critics have hidden behind the claim that Bush's lies in the build up to the war deceived them, and that's why in December 2002 they voted to give the president full authority to wage war. They claim they gullibly accepted the lie that Iraq was hiding and planning to use weapons of mass destruction.

The leaders of the Democratic Party would like to evade responsibility for their continued complicity with the war by drawing attention to a non-binding reso-

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**Sat., March 17,  
10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.—  
CUT WAR FUNDING  
kick-off rally at the  
Encampment in front  
of Congress, 3rd St. & the  
Mall, on West Side of Capitol.  
Short march on Constitution  
Ave. to ANSWER rally, 23rd St.  
& Constitution NW; there,  
MARCH ON PENTAGON  
begins at 2 p.m.**

For daily updates see [www.  
encampmenttostopthewar.  
blogspot.com](http://www.encampmenttostopthewar.blogspot.com)

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## FREEHOLD, N.J.

# Workers force racist official to apologize



Over 300 people rallied March 5 at the town hall in Freehold, N.J. Protesting the latest racist attacks on the Latin@ community, protesters demanded the resignation of Borough Councilman Marc LeVine.

Councilman LeVine founded the racist Web site PEOPLE, "Pressing Elected Officials to Preserve our Living Environment," in 2003, targeting Freehold's Latin@ immigrant population. LeVine posted comments in November alleging that Latina women are "promiscuous" after a lawsuit granted rights to day laborers to seek work in Freehold.

Supporters for the Latin@ residents came from as far as Long Island, N.Y., and various parts of New Jersey. "We have

come to Freehold five times to protest the outrageous treatment of your Latin@ residents," said Teresa Gutierrez of New York's May 1 Coalition. "Your racist policies make your town a disgrace."

The rally called for LeVine's resignation and also that of Mayor Wilson, who supports a proposal to restrict housing to documented residents only. One resident noted that Mayor Wilson's racist leadership set the tone for the polarization of the town.

"You say we don't pay taxes, but we do, but don't get them back! We pay Social Security as well, but someone else will get the pension!" said Rosa, a woman who says she is working at jobs other people won't do.

Some of the white residents complained that Freehold schools have 35 students per kindergarten classroom, and blamed the Latin@ residents.

"All the schools of this town, of this country, could be funded if there weren't billions of dollars going to an illegal war!" said Gutierrez.

LeVine, visibly shaken by the passion and size of the crowd, apologized for his remarks. The people didn't believe him, but chanted, "¡Sí, se pudo!" (Yes, we could do it!) in victory.

The May 1 Coalition sent a significant delegation, including Walter Sinche and Brian Barraza, who helped lead chants and also spoke.

—Report & photos by Heather Cottin

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# MICHIGAN

## LGBT communities fight discrimination

By Cheryl LaBash

Discrimination and even violence against the lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) communities is far too commonplace as it is against all oppressed people. Detroit and Michigan are no exception. The much beloved elder, Andrew Anthos, a 72-year-old openly gay man, who died on Feb. 23 from a brutal beating outside his apartment in Detroit, is a tragic example. But there is ongoing resistance in places that might seem unlikely.

Also on Feb. 23, John David Nemecek legally changed her name to Julie Marie Nemecek, an important step in her male to female transition. For 16 years Nemecek was a professor and assistant dean of adult education at Spring Arbor University as well as an ordained Baptist minister, spouse and parent of two children. SAU, a small, evangelical Christian school 75 miles west of Detroit, fired her for conduct it claims is "inconsistent with the Christian faith." A "We Support Julie Marie Nemecek" group has 145 members composed of students and faculty. On Feb. 12 a student-organized demonstration of support was held on a sidewalk near the campus.

SAU may lose a contract to share a new Lansing Community College facility because firing someone for being transgender violates Lansing's Human Rights Ordinance. Passed unanimously by the City Council in December 2006, it protects "sexual orientation, gender identification or expression" along with race, gender, height, weight, age, national origin, religion; marital, familial or military discharge status; and political orientation. According to "Between the Lines," SAU may have also violated the LCC equal opportunity and non-discrimination policies, further jeopardizing the lucrative contract. A March 6 arbitration hearing between Nemecek and SAU is scheduled before the EEOC on her gender discrimination case.

Lauren Spencer, a student at Michigan State University said: "Firing Julie Marie is an outrage and a sad day for the trans community and their allies. It is proof the public and private universities need to include gender identity and expression in their anti-discrimination policies." Spencer was the only student candidate for MSU Board of Trustees and ran on the Green Party Stop the War Slate. She is actively organizing a campaign at her university to expand the anti-discrimination policies. □



### BILLIONAIRE BASH VICTORY

Over 70 people gathered at the Workers World office in Solidarity Hall in New York on March 4 to celebrate Workers World newspaper's legal victory against the Renco Group and its owner, multi-billionaire Ira Rennert. The super-rich Rennert had sued WW for publishing the truth: that Renco was trying to pillage the pensions of workers at WCI Steel. The special honorees were lawyers from the media law firm Davis Wright Tremaine who prepared, argued and won the case in New York State Supreme Court. The celebration was also a fundraiser. Though the firm agreed to take the case pro bono, WW owes more than \$7,000 for court fees and legal research. If you want to affirm free speech, if you want to support a newspaper that prints facts and analysis never heard in the mainstream media, or if you just want to applaud the triumph of working-class truth over ruling-class lies, please send donations to Workers World newspaper, 55 W. 17 St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

—Minnie Bruce Pratt



Clockwise from bottom left, Leslie Feinberg, Martha Grevatt, Deirdre Griswold, LeiLani Dowell, Pam Parker, Milt Neidenberg, Monica Moorehead, Richard Kossali and Brenda Sandburg, Lawyers, at left, are Peter Karanjia, Robert Balin and Kevan Choset with glasses.

WW PHOTOS: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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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.

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## After new trial

# Howard Guidry sent back to death row

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Political activist Howard Guidry is back on Texas death row—after having won a federal-court appeal that ordered the Houston trial court to release or retry him.

Guidry won a new trial because Houston police had denied him the right to see an attorney when he was arrested for capital murder, and tricked him into signing what he later discovered was a confession of guilt.

Guidry's family, friends and supporters felt that finally justice would be done in the February retrial and Guidry would walk out of court a free person.

But according to Njeri Shakur, a leader of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement:

"Texas refused to let that happen. Using lie after lie and even paying two witnesses for testimony, Houston District Attorney Kelly Siegler, with the cooperation of a compliant retired judge, knowingly sent this innocent man back to death row. Because Howard had become politicized during his years on death row, they could not allow him to be free, despite his innocence."

During his decade on death row, Guidry educated himself, and studied with experienced political activists like Emerson "Young Lion" Rudd, Ponchai



Kamau Wilkerson and Harvey "Tee" Earvin. He joined the Panthers United for Revolutionary Education.

A little more than a year after arriving on death row, Guidry attempted to escape with six other men. When Workers World asked him why he would try to escape if he was innocent, he said: "I kept seeing the racism and the unfairness in the criminal justice system. I knew I was innocent but I learned that didn't matter. They wanted to kill me so I thought I had to take the chance of escaping."

In late 1999, Texas death row was moved to a new super-maximum prison where conditions went from bad to worse. The 400 men were put into a sterile environment of isolation and sensory deprivation. After being there just a few days, Guidry wrote to Shakur: "Sister, this new prison is terrible. The conditions are so bad that I fear it will totally destroy our minds and spirits and our will to live."

In early 2000, Guidry and another Panther activist, Wilkerson, decided drastic action had to be taken to try to call attention to the oppressive conditions. Risking their own lives, they took a guard hostage to call attention to the horrific conditions, and demanded to speak with community leaders.

Kofi Taharka, chair of the National Black United Front-Houston Chapter, S.H.A.P.E. Center Executive Director Deloyd Parker, and Shakur went into the prison that night. They met with Guidry and Wilkerson as well as the warden and discussed conditions. The hostage was safely released but conditions only slightly improved. Wilkerson was later executed.

While awaiting a new trial for almost a year, Guidry was in the Harris County Jail in downtown Houston, where he was able to meet and become friends and comrades with many of the city's activists.

His political poetry was read at local poetry slams and on the Pacifica radio station. His message for the annual commemoration on the anniversary of Shaka

Sankofa's (aka Gary Graham) execution was read on June 22 at the NBUF's office.

Guidry wrote a commentary on July 4 entitled "What to the Prisoner is Your Fourth of July?" that was widely disseminated. His taped greeting was played to the crowd of hundreds at the annual Texas March to Stop Executions in Austin last October.

Guidry became a part of the revolutionary movement for social change from his cell at the county jail. It is widely believed that this is the real reason why the ruling elite of Houston and Texas unjustly returned him to death row.

Hours after his new death sentence, Guidry told Workers World: "Please thank all the comrades for their support. I appreciate it. And tell them that this is not over. I remain strong and I will walk out of here, just not today. We have more reasons for appeal now and eventually I will win. Until then I will continue to fight from the inside, but I will get out."

Go to [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) to read more on Guidry's case. □

## Stop the racist frame-ups—again!



From left to right: Kathleen Cleaver, Panama Alba, Soffiyah Elijah & Iyaluua Ferguson at March 2 forum.

PHOTOS: ROBERTO MERCADO

## CHICAGO

# Highest officials tied to prisoner torture

By Eric Struch  
Chicago

Flint Taylor, lawyer of cop torture survivor Darrell Cannon, announced on Feb. 14 the addition of Mayor Richard M. Daley, former Mayor Jane Byrne and State's Attorney Richard "Dick" Devine as defendants in a lawsuit that up until now only included former police Commander Jon Burge. At the press conference where the announcement was made, Taylor said, "The mayor has done nothing about a pattern of torture—a shameful episode in the history of this city." (AP, Feb. 14) Taylor also represented Leroy Orange, another survivor of Burge's Area 2 Violent Crimes Division torture squad.

Cannon was taken by the cops to the far South Side, where they "put a shotgun in his mouth and shocked him with an electric cattle prod" in order to obtain a confession, according to an AP report. (Feb. 14) Cannon's suit is one of five pending suits in U.S. District Court dealing with the conspiracy of silence at Area 2.

Burge used torture techniques ranging from beatings with telephone books to suffocation with typewriter covers, handcuffing arrestees to radiators, electric shock and mock executions. He was responsible, according to an official report released last summer, for the torture of more than 100 African-American men throughout his 33-year career. (Workers World, Aug. 14, 2006)

Burge was finally fired in 1993 for the torture of Andrew Wilson, which ended his 3-decade-long reign of terror against the African-American community. Then-police Superintendent Leroy Martin initially refused to take action against Burge, but relented after being subjected to pressure by forces in the African-American

community. Burge now lives in comfortable retirement in Florida and receives a \$3,403.71 per month Chicago Police Department (CPD) pension, paid for by Cook County taxpayers.

During Daley's 1981 through 1989 tenure as state's attorney alone, more than 50 African-American men came forward and reported being tortured by Burge or one of his cronies. Daley never investigated a single one of these serious allegations. Richard Brzeczek, who was CPD superintendent at the time, presented Daley with a medical report authored by Dr. John Raba that documented the wounds sustained by Wilson under Burge's torture. He still refused to order an investigation.

Taylor's complaint on behalf of Cannon says that Daley, Byrne (who was mayor at the time) and Devine knew about Burge and "the pattern and practice of torture and abuse at Area 2, the cover-up of that abuse and the wrongful prosecutions and convictions which resulted there from." The newly named defendants "failed to intervene to stop defendant Burge and his Area 2 coconspirators from continuing their coercive interrogations and torture tactics." (AP, Feb. 14)

Dick Devine was assistant state's attorney during Daley's reign as state's attorney, and represented Burge in Wilson's 1989 federal civil suit. Since becoming SA in 1996, Devine has used his office to aggressively fight torture survivors' appeals. According to a study recently released by Developing Government Accountability to the People, between 2001 and 2005 the city of Chicago paid out \$100 million to settle 864 civil suits, which accused the cops of improper searches, false arrest and excessive force. Many complaints focused on paramilitary

Continued on page 5

A determined crowd of 300 supporters gathered at the New York Community Church on March 2 to defend eight Black activists, former/current political prisoners and former members of the Black Panther Party. Herman Bell, Ray Boudreaux, Richard Brown, Henry W. (Hank) Jones, Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom), Richard O'Neal, Harold Taylor and Francisco Torres, the eight ranging in age from 50 to 70, were arrested Jan. 23 and charged with conspiracy for an incident that occurred over 35 years ago—the death of a San Francisco policeman.

California courts dismissed this charge against the Panther Eight in the 1970s because of stark evidence that the defendants had suffered physical abuse and torture from New Orleans police during their original arrests. The state's alleged new evidence is the same set of coerced confessions thrown out as inadmissible at that time.

At the forum, in a film documentary, "Legacy of Torture: The War Against the Black Liberation Movement," Bowman, Jones and Taylor describe their torture at the hands of police using cattle prods, slapjacks, suffocating plastic bags and wet wool blankets.

The Eight's attorney, Gitanjali Gutiérrez, from the Center for Constitutional Rights, compared the treatment of her clients as Black political prisoners to the victims of the U.S. "war on terrorism" who are suffering deprivation and torture at the infamous Guantánamo Bay Prison.

A distinguished panel of speakers eloquently argued for support for the Eight. The panel included former Black Panther Party leader Kathleen Cleaver, now a senior lecturer for Emory University; Soffiyah Elijah, the deputy director of the Criminal Justice Institute at Harvard Law School; Iyaluua Ferguson of the Jericho Movement, an organization that struggles for amnesty and freedom for U.S. political prisoners; and Panama Alba, a former member of the Young Lords Party, who is with the National Congress of Puerto Rican Rights. Representatives from the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and National Lawyers Guild were in attendance.

The forum mobilized support for Francisco Torres at his March 6 New York City extradition hearing and for a contingent of former political prisoners and supporters at the upcoming March 17 anti-war march in Washington.

—Anne Pruden



## Little-known

# Strategic roles of Black workers, women in Flint sit-down strike

By Martha Grevatt

The 70th anniversary of the Flint, Mich., sit-down strike, celebrated Feb. 11, is an occasion to celebrate not only the struggle's well-known aspects but some of the lesser-known.

Over 300 women sat down initially, but the male United Auto Workers' leadership did not allow them to stay inside the plants. Nevertheless, women were absolutely indispensable.

In their traditional role they kept the men alive, cooking for the hundreds and sometimes thousands of their co-workers and loved ones inside the plants. They set up first-aid stations, and child care for women picketers.

Pat Wiseman, who initially sat down with the men, refused to cook. Instead she became a picket leader outside. She never missed a day. She later helped negotiate the first UAW contract with General Motors.

Genora Johnson organized the Women's



Emergency Brigade, which proved pivotal when police attacked. The New York Times reported that strikers had a "large supply of blackjacks ... whittled down so that they can be swung or jabbed readily." In fact the clubs had been whittled down by the Women's Brigade to fit their smaller hands.

When tear gas was fired into the plants, women smashed the windows to allow the gas to escape.

Norman Bully, who would procure food donations from supportive farmers and deliver it to the kitchens, remarked years later: "God, all the women. The Women's Brigade was something." The Women's Emergency Brigade was rescued from obscurity by the 1979 documentary "With Babies and Banners."

All of GM's Flint operations were strictly Jim Crow. Only a few hundred Black workers were employed in all the plants combined. They were segregated, and only allowed to use certain exits.

Many Black workers, including Communists like J. D. Dotson, picketed outside the struck plants. They not only stood up

to the cops, the National Guard, vigilantes, and the "Black Legion"—a Northern version of the Ku Klux Klan—but they took on their employer when jobs for African-Americans were particularly scarce. They also had to deal with the backwardness of some of the white picketers.

Roscoe Van Zandt, who sat down at Chevrolet 4, is the only Black worker known to have participated inside. The first night he stayed to himself, but by the next day, because he was older, the workers had voted that he should take the only bed in the plant.

When they marched out on Feb. 11, still patriotic to the government that had fired on them, it was Van Zandt who was chosen to carry the U.S. flag.

Van Zandt later spoke to Black churches about the strike and the UAW. It is unfortunate that, despite a number of books and films about the sit-down, relatively little information about the particular bravery of workers like Van Zandt and Dotson has been preserved for future generations.

Go to [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org) for the first installment. There will be more to come about this historic event. □

## ON THE PICKETLINE

by Sue Davis

### Pro-union legislation passes in U.S. House

The House of Representatives passed the Employee Free Choice Act by a vote of 241 to 185 on March 1. Supported by the entire organized labor movement, the EFCA is designed to promote union organizing by requiring employers to recognize and negotiate with unions after a majority of employees sign cards saying they want union representation. That process, known as card check, often moves very quickly—just a matter of two to four weeks. Currently, the process usually bogs down when employers refuse to recognize the union on the basis of signed cards and insist instead on a secret-ballot elections. Then the bosses go on the offensive, mounting vicious anti-union campaigns during which union supporters are fired, spied on and intimidated, pro-union workers are blocked from voting, ballots are tampered with, etc. These campaigns hardly engender "free choice" and often lead to prolonged lawsuits, which delay unionization for years or block it entirely. No wonder organizations like the Chamber of Commerce are bitterly opposed to the EFCA. Business's best friend in the White House, President George W. Bush, has vowed to veto the bill. However, it's unlikely the millionaires' club known as the Senate will pass the EFCA. Stay tuned.

## Anti-abortion amendment being challenged

By Kris Hamel

"Hyde—30 Years is Enough! Fund Abortion! Protect Dignity and Justice for All Women!" is the clarion call to action as well as the name of a campaign being launched by the National Network of Abortion Funds (NNAF).

This new national struggle aims to overturn the reactionary 1977 Hyde Amendment that denied women on Medicaid the right to funding for abortions.

Jimmy Carter, a Democrat, signed the Hyde Amendment into law after Congress passed it in 1976. Named for its ultra-reactionary sponsor, Henry Hyde, former long-term Republican senator from Illinois, the amendment has undergone several revisions over the years and now includes limited Medicaid funding for abortions in cases of rape, incest and life endangerment. It is renewed yearly as part of federal budget appropriations.

Before the Hyde Amendment, Medicaid covered over one-third of all abortions for women in the U.S., but since 1977 it has paid for virtually none. Coverage for abortion is also denied to women military personnel and their dependents, to women receiving Indian Health Services care and to people on disability insurance. ([www.hyde30years.nnaf.org](http://www.hyde30years.nnaf.org))

In a system where medical care is a commodity and over 45 million people have no health insurance, access to health care, especially reproductive health care including abortion, is a major factor in women's right to choose. As always, the most severely affected are low-income women, women of color and young women. The cost of a first trimester abortion can be higher than what a poverty-level family struggles to live on in a month.

According to the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, currently "32 states ban use of Medicaid funds for abortions and only provide public funding in limited cases of life endangerment, rape

and incest. 17 states provide public funding for all or most medically necessary abortions; 4 out of the 17 states provide Medicaid coverage for abortion voluntarily and the remaining 13 provide Medicaid coverage by court order." ([www.LatinaInstitute.org](http://www.LatinaInstitute.org))

Restrictive federal laws mean that immigrant women are usually denied abortion coverage, even in states where Medicaid pays for abortion.

A fact sheet on reproductive health from African-American Women Evolving (AAWE) in Chicago states: "The Hyde Amendment is a key strategy of those who seek to ban abortion and regulate women's bodies by blocking women's access to reproductive self-determination. ... Black women are three times as likely as white women to have an abortion and also represent a large percentage of women living under the poverty line. They must use already limited resources that would otherwise be used for basic living necessities to obtain an abortion. ... [D]enying access is discriminatory. The reality is that women with the least access to health care are those with the fewest economic resources who are disproportionately women of color. The right to have an abortion is a constitutional right, and rights can only be realized through access." ([www.aaweonline.org](http://www.aaweonline.org))



The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, in a 2005 National Funding fact sheet, states:

"The Hyde Amendment has directly affected low-income Latinas' access to safe, legal abortions. In fact, Rosie Jiménez, a Latina college student who was unable to pay for a legal abortion, became the first woman to die from a back alley abortion after the passage of the Hyde Amendment. Latinas have been especially affected by the Hyde Amendment because many low-income Latinas rely on Medicaid for their health care coverage."

The "30 Years Is Enough!" campaign defines the fight for women's reproductive rights in the U.S. as a struggle for the rights of low-income, nationally-oppressed and working-class women. The initiative needs all pro-choice, women's rights and anti-racism organizations united to overturn the Hyde Amendment to help lay the basis for a long-awaited movement counter-offensive against decades of right-wing attacks on women.

Go to [www.hyde30years.nnaf.org](http://www.hyde30years.nnaf.org) for more information and to add your group as a participating organization. A petition to overturn Hyde can be downloaded from [www.mecawi.org](http://www.mecawi.org) in the "DANFORR" section. □

### Support Smithfield workers!

The situation of the Smithfield workers in Tar Heel, N.C., is Exhibit A of why card check is needed. You've read about the horrible working conditions at the Smithfield meat processing plant and the determined struggle of the workers—predominantly African-American and immigrants from Latin America—to win better working conditions, higher wages and more benefits through union representation. Because of a vicious anti-union campaign by Smithfield bosses, many of those who are fighting for dignity, respect and a voice on the job have been fired or face deportation. The Smithfield Worker Justice Fund was recently established by Interfaith Worker Justice so friends of labor could help those workers in need. Please contribute generously at [www.iwj.org/dev/smithfield-fund.html](http://www.iwj.org/dev/smithfield-fund.html).

### Stop & Shop negotiations continue

Over 43,000 workers at Stop & Shop supermarkets in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island are poised to strike if the bosses don't offer a contract with decent health insurance, good pension terms and higher wages. After their contracts expired Feb. 18, all five union locals of the Food and Commercial Workers voted to strike. Negotiations are continuing. □

## Spanish workers protest Delphi closing

By Martha Grevatt

Since October 2005, Delphi, the former General Motors parts division with world headquarters in Michigan, has been closing and threatening to close 21 U.S. plants as part of its "reorganization." Now Delphi has announced it will also close a factory in Puerta Real near Cadiz, Spain—throwing 1,600 workers out of their jobs.

The workers have already started to fight. ([reuters.com](http://reuters.com))

On Feb. 25, some 3,000 angry protesters stood outside Delphi's Spanish headquarters. The union announced a March 1 rally outside the Puerta Real plant.

"This is industrial terrorism, corporate terrorism. It's not logical that a U.S. company can treat us like we're a U.S. colony," a union spokesperson said. The union is planning to hold a sit-in. ([futureoftheunion.com](http://futureoftheunion.com))

The Spanish workers are especially furious since just last year Delphi took subsidies from their regional government and promised to keep the plant open until 2010. The plant supplies parts to automakers including Volvo, Ford, GM, Nissan, Mercedes Benz, Kia and Renault. Unions estimate some 4,000 additional jobs indirectly linked to the site could be affected by the threatened closing. □



# The unnatural crisis of the global stock markets

By Gary Wilson

The global stock market drop that started Feb. 27 had wiped out \$2.4 trillion by March 5, the New York Times reported. On March 6, the Wall Street-based Bloomberg News service called it a “global market collapse.”

Bloomberg reported on “fear” in the markets and reports a New York Bank official saying there’s “no end in sight” of traders fleeing the stock markets.

The steepest drops were in Asia—Japan, India and China, with the Philippines showing the heaviest losses.

The U.S. stock exchange has seen a steady decline since March 1. It’s been a jarring reminder of the unstable base capitalist markets are built on.

On Feb. 28, the day of the biggest fall in the U.S. markets, the New York Times reported, “The nation’s manufacturing sector managed to slip into a recession with almost nobody seeming to notice.” Not a general recession, but a recession nevertheless in manufacturing.

What does that mean? Jobs are being wiped out, factory jobs in workplaces like General Motors, Ford and Chrysler.

A recent study by the Center for Economic Policy and Research confirms that those hardest hit by the recession in manufacturing have been Black workers.

“African-American workers have been particularly hard hit by the decline in U.S. manufacturing,” says the study released March 1.

“Chrysler’s recent buyouts signal the continuing decline of the U.S. auto industry, which has had a disproportionate effect on the African-American workforce. Manufacturing jobs, particularly unionized jobs in the auto industry, have been an important source of well-paid employment for African-Americans since World War II.”

Other recent economic news also reveals a severe downturn for all but the richest sector of the U.S. economy.

A Feb. 22 McClatchy Newspaper report said that the percentage of the U.S. population living in severe poverty “has reached a 32-year high.” According to this same report, at least 16 million working people in this country are paid so little that they are living in “deep or severe poverty.”

Poverty has increased by 26 percent since the year 2000, pushing “43 percent of the nation’s 37 million poor people into deep poverty,” the report adds.

Left out of all the reports and statistics are the millions of undocumented workers, immigrants who also live in severe poverty and are paid sub-minimum wages.

What isn’t said is that recessions don’t have to happen. Recessions were

## Chicago, prison torture

*Continued from page 3*

special units like the Special Operations Unit, which exists to instill terror in police-occupied working class African-American and Latin@ neighborhoods.

Although 10,150 complaints had been filed regarding illegal arrests and searches, excessive force and racial and sexual abuse from 2002 to 2004, only 18 cops received suspensions of more than a week as a result of disciplinary action. The report concludes: “Chicago has no effective system for police accountability. Its failure in this regard can not be understated, and the city and the CPD seem to have little interest in any real change.” (<http://www.dgapchicago.org/>)

Mass, militant action by the African-American community and their allies can force these criminals in blue to be brought to revolutionary justice. □



unknown throughout human history until the advent of capitalism. Recessions are unnatural disasters, nothing like a natural disaster such as a tornado.

### Nothing natural about crises

A commonly-believed myth is that recessions are inevitable and there’s nothing you can do about it.

That’s a myth of capitalism, a myth that is believed by many even though Karl Marx exposed it as a myth more than 150 years ago.

Marx was a scientist whose research was able to reveal the inner workings of the economy. He showed that capitalism, which regularly has cycles of bust and boom, is not based on a force of nature. Capitalism’s economic forces are created by people and can ultimately be controlled by people.

Gold or diamonds, for example, appear to be valuable independently of the tremendous labor necessary to bring them out of the earth and then refine them. Yet it is the labor that gives them their real value.

The economy appears to have a life of its own. Recessions and stock market declines might seem to happen all on their own, spurred on by uncontrollable forces.

The source of recessions and stock market crashes, however, does not lie in any mysterious powers or unknown force.

No Wall Street capitalist thinks that either. As economist Paul Krugman, a New York Times columnist, wrote on March 2: “At the start, all sorts of implausible explanations were offered for the drop in U.S. stock prices. It was, some said,

the fault of Alan Greenspan, the former chairman of the Federal Reserve. ... One Republican congressman blamed Rep. John Murtha, claiming that his efforts to stop the ‘surge’ in Iraq had somehow unnerved the markets.”

Krugman continues: “Even blaming events in Shanghai for what happened in New York was foolish on its face, except to the extent that the slump in China—whose stock markets had a combined valuation of only about 5 percent of the U.S. markets’ valuation—served as a wake-up call for investors.

“The truth is that efforts to pin the stock decline on any particular piece of news are a waste of time,” Krugman concludes. There is no specific event that causes a stock market crash or a recession.

The source for capitalist crises, as Marx the scientist revealed, comes from the way that capitalist production is organized. The source of value—workers’ labor power—is hidden. Because the source of value is hidden, it is difficult to see that this is

the key to capitalism’s rises and falls.

Products seem to have a value on their own, when in fact it is the labor power put into production of the commodities that gives them their value. The magic of money is that it represents labor power and labor power is the source of wealth.

All values exchanged on the market are created by labor. The Wall Street stock market is like a gambling house where traders speculate on future values produced by labor. The stock market anticipates in an imprecise way how much surplus value—that is, how much profit—the capitalists will be able to get out of the workers.

A “bubble” in the stock market comes when the cost of stocks far exceeds the actual profits that a company is able to get from the labor of the workers.

There is no way to predict what will happen on Wall Street, whether there will be a sudden fall or rise. But the fact is that capitalism is an inherently unstable system and there will be crises and recessions and increasing poverty as well as booms and soaring profits for a small few.

The important thing to know is that it doesn’t have to be that way. The source of the problem is capitalism and not some force of nature. And capitalism can be replaced.

By understanding the economic forces behind capitalism, it is possible to overturn them through struggle and replace them with economic laws that put people’s needs before profits and eliminate the source of economic crises. □

## Stop immigrant bashing!!

At least 500 immigrant workers, mostly women from Guatemala and El Salvador were arrested during an Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid at the Michael Bianco Inc. factory in New Bedford, Mass. March 6. Many of these workers had children in local daycare centers and schools. A local church was opened to assist those children who had been separated from at least one parent. Immigrant rights organizations and their supporters quickly denounced this raid and called for the release of all who were arrested and demanded an end to ICE raids and deportations, reunification of the families and legalization for all immigrants.

### • Legalization for all immigrants now!

• Prevailing U.S. wages for cross border Mexican drivers!

### • Protection of all workers’ rights!

• Economic & social justice for Katrina survivors!

• Money for human needs, not war!

• Close inhumane detention centers!

### ¡LEGALIZACIÓN PARA TODOS!

¡Protección a todos los derechos de los trabajadores!

# ALTO

¡Salarios predominantes a los troqueros mexicanos que cruzan la frontera!

¡Justicia económica y social para los sobrevivientes de Katrina!

# STOP & the RAIDS DEPORTATIONS!

# ALTO a las REDADAS y las DEPORTACIONES

¡Dinero para las necesidades humanas, no a la guerra!

¡Cierre de los inhumanos centros de detención!

**Come Out for the Great American Boycott II Participa en el Segundo Gran Boicot Americano**

**No shopping, no work, no school, no economic activity No compras, no trabajos, no asistas a la escuela, no a la actividad económica**

**Major events in / ¡Abra grandes eventos en Los Angeles–New York–Chicago–San Antonio–Boston and more / y mas ciudades!**

On May 1st thousands of immigrants and their supporters will come out to fight for immigrant rights just like last year. In 2006, our movement stopped the Sensenbrenner Bill! We must go back to the streets to end the raids and deportations and to fight for legalization! We have a chance to win fair and pro-immigrant immigration reform but only if we go back to the streets!

The call for the Great American Boycott II was agreed upon at a national conference in Los Angeles on February 3 initiated by the March 25 coalition. There the National May Day Movement for Worker and Immigrant Rights was formed and is organizing to build a national movement.

**National May 1st Movement for Worker & Immigrant Rights**

c/o United Teachers Los Angeles, 3303 Wilshire Ave., 10th fl., Los Angeles, CA 90010

El Primero de Mayo los inmigrantes y sus aliados saldrán a luchar por los derechos de los inmigrantes como el año pasado. En el 2006 paramos la propuesta legislativa de Sensenbrenner. Debemos regresar a las calles para acabar con las deportaciones, redadas y luchar por la legalización. Tendremos la oportunidad de ganar una reforma migratoria solo si salimos a las calles!

El llamado a participar en el Segundo Gran Boicot Americano, fue un acuerdo del 3 de Febrero en Los Angeles y una iniciativa de la Coalición 25 de Marzo. Ahí el Movimiento Nacional de los Trabajadores y Derechos de los Inmigrantes fue formado y esta organizando un movimiento nacional.

• 213-995-4905 [www.maydaymovement.blogspot.com](http://www.maydaymovement.blogspot.com)



## HAWAII

# Protesters strike back against Stryker

By **Betsey Piette**  
Hilo, Hawaii

At a series of environmental impact hearings, the U.S. Army's plans to establish and train a new Stryker Brigade Combat Team at the Pohakuloa Military Training area on Hawaii Island have met with growing opposition. In fact, on Feb. 2, opponents of the plans took over a military "open-house" hearing.

Previous environmental impact statements on a proposed new testing site for the six-wheeled Stryker combat vehicles were discredited when the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Army had failed to consider other possible sites. The Army was forced to hold a new series of public hearings, including an earlier one in Hilo that was packed with opponents.

In an obvious attempt to stifle and isolate further opposition, the Army held an "open house" where those interested in testifying were "invited" to either submit

written comments, sit in private before a video camera, or dictate their comments to a legal stenographer. With testimony being taken at several places at once, behind closed doors, it would be difficult for the public and the media to gauge the level of opposition.

So protesters took matters into their own hands. They brought their own sound system into the hearing at the Waiakea High School cafeteria. When police attempted to remove Hawaiian activist Sam Kaleleiki as he opened the gathering with a traditional Hawaiian pule (prayer), the cops were forced to back off.

The Army brought an unstaffed court reporter's machine to the cafeteria, but took it away when protesters ignored it and videotaped the testimony themselves. "We are not military pawns," said one resident. "We are going to transform this meeting, instead of the Stryker Brigade." (Hawaii Island Journal, Feb. 10-23).

Speakers addressed the harm that the

army's expansion at the Pohakuloa testing area would do to the island, especially given the military's dismal track record for cleanup. Environmental activist Cory Harden read a story from that morning's Hawaii Tribune-Herald reporting that remains of depleted uranium had been discovered in the Wahiawa area near Pohakuloa, despite Army claims that DU had never been used in Hawaii.

Hilo resident Lynn Nakkim asked why the Army wasn't considering other locations to expand their testing. "Right around Crawford's good," she said. Crawford, Texas, is the site of President George W. Bush's ranch.

Other speakers challenged the U.S. military's role as a servant of corporate interests. Three veterans spoke in opposition. They included Kaleleiki, who served in Vietnam, where he was exposed to Agent Orange. He is now fighting cancer.

Protesters followed up their "peoples' hearing" with demonstrations in Hilo and

at the main gate of the Pohakuloa testing ground near Mauna Kea State Park on Feb. 14, 21 and 24. They demanded: "Stop the war! Stop Stryker!" and "Bring the troops home now!"

The Stryker program started before the first Gulf War, to replace heavier Abrams tanks that couldn't be rapidly deployed. The Stryker, a 20-ton armored attack vehicle, uses wheels instead of treads and can travel at 60 mph. In the current U.S. war in Iraq, the Stryker has been used in place of foot patrols to suppress insurgent activity, but has proven to have limited value in urban combat.

Only one Stryker can fit in a C-130 transport plane, commonly used on short airfields in combat zones. When fully loaded the Stryker is so heavy that the transport planes can't land at high-altitude airfields. The Army is looking to the creation of a Stryker Brigade Combat Team to address these problems.

The island of Hawaii, roughly the

## Anti-war encampment to confront Congress

*Continued from page 1*

lution that criticized the war that passed the House. The resolution is so insignificant that it was forgotten almost before it was voted on.

Democrats have proposed a whole series of other bills aimed at drawing attention away from their fundamental betrayal: they are funding the war. Every major politician has a plan. Some proposals reauthorize the war with new conditions and a plan for a phased withdrawal. Other plans take troops out of Iraq and redeploy them to Korea, Afghanistan or offshore in the Middle East. There are calls for more protection, more body armor, for more equipment for the U.S. troops.

The vast majority of these same politicians claim they will vote for funding because they care about the troops. Indeed, they will carry out their patriotic duty and vote to give President Bush a special, additional package, even above and beyond the already monstrous Pentagon budget, specifically to continue this hated war.

One congressional piece of legislation, HR 508, calls for ending the funding and bringing the troops home. Only 10 percent or 40 members of the House of Representatives have signed on to it, including a significant number of the

Congressional Black Caucus members and some of the most outspoken congressional opponents of the war. But in a congressional atmosphere of heavy pro-imperialist pressure, this bill too includes clauses that undercut what is promised in the title—"Bring the Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2007."

As the debate on how to proceed with war in Iraq grows more intense, the problem for the congressional opponents of Bush's tactics is becoming more difficult.

As a minority opposition, the Democratic Party could criticize Bush's handling of the war without taking responsibility for ending it. Now the Democrats' dream of controlling the majority in both houses of Congress has become their nightmare. The Democrats are caught between their complicity with the imperialist bourgeoisie and their promises to their anti-war voter base.

### Can mass action expose complicity?

Can a dramatic intervention from the ranks of the grassroots anti-war movement expose this complicity and move the opposition to the war to a new level?

Earlier protests have attempted to expose the role of both capitalist political

parties in imperialist war and of both the executive and legislative arms of the bourgeois state.

On Jan. 19, 1991, just three days after the first U.S. war on Iraq began with a massive bombing campaign, a large anti-war protest of tens of thousands marched from the White House to Congress to denounce the war.

In January 2003, just weeks before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, a massive demonstration of hundreds of thousands gathered in the field in front of the Capitol. Speakers and activists denounced both Bush for preparing the war and the congressional role in authorizing it.

Congress's criminal support for imperialist wars is even clearer today than at the time of those past anti-war demonstrations targeting the Capitol, because the majority of this Congress was elected on a wave of opposition to the war amid Democratic promises that Congress would act.

While even after Congress has already voted to authorize a war it is quite correct to protest there. This time political activists have called for a determined challenge during the very week that Congress discusses and votes the funds to continue the war.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the Iraq and Afghanistan war appropriations during the week beginning March 12. The Troops Out Now Coalition (TONC) and many hundreds of activists and grassroots organizations from around the country will descend on Washington, D.C., to camp in front of Congress to mobilize opposition to this vote.

The political dynamic has changed. The encampment ensures that another war vote does not go unchallenged.

Independent, militant action not tied to either political party is the only way that millions of poor and working people will gain an understanding of the system that oppresses and impoverishes them.

This challenge is taking root all across the country as local activists have targeted elected officials on their role in the war. This is not polite lobbying. There have been sit-ins, disruptions and arrests at the offices of both Republicans and Democrats.

Recognizing that it is sometimes more possible to use mass pressure at the local level, activists have encouraged city councils to pass resolutions demanding that Congress refuse to fund the

war. In New York City, Councilmember Charles Barron's resolution before the NYC Council and Councilmember Chuck Turner's resolution in Boston are examples of the growing challenge, as is a resolution in Detroit. In San Francisco, the Central Labor Council passed a resolution to support the encampment and to demand that Congress refuse to approve the funds to continue the war.

By calling for the week of mass actions at Congress, TONC has actively encouraged a move beyond mass one-day, bi-annual demonstrations. Mass demonstrations play a key role in moving people initially into action. But serious revolutionary activists and determined opponents of the war should grapple with how to move the struggle forward, toward active resistance to the war, both in the streets and within the military.

Some of the actions most remembered in the Vietnam War movement, in the Civil Rights movement, in the Black Liberation struggle, the union movement, the LGBT movement and the women's movement were the sit-ins, shut-downs, take-overs, seizures, encampments and job actions that by their challenge pushed the movement forward.

Although there have been a number of demonstrations at the Pentagon over the years, people remember the October 1967 event even today because thousands of young people refused to leave the site. They scaled walls, stormed the stairs, lit bonfires and faced down lines of U.S. soldiers and federal marshals.

Different forms of political action are not necessarily competitive. All have a place. The Troops Out Now Coalition and many others planning actions in D.C. during the week of March 12 to 19 have called for full support for the March to the Pentagon. Along with organizing for actions on the week of March 12, TONC is organizing buses in more than 20 cities for the Pentagon March.

It would further strengthen and re-energize the anti-war movement if the organizers of the March on the Pentagon urged all participants who were able to stay in Washington for even a few hours to join the encampment at the Capitol.

What is needed is growing numbers of people in the streets in united, determined and varied forms of independent action confronting the whole capitalist war machine. □

## Democrats raise Bush \$5 billion for the war machine

By **Caleb T. Maupin**

The Democrats are portraying themselves as an alternative to the Bush administration's vast spending on war and the reduction of social programs to aid the people. Hillary Clinton claims she will end this war by 2009, and Barack Obama says he is proud to be "unequivocally in opposition to Bush's foreign policy."

But in Congress, the Democrats decided that not only would they supply the U.S. war machine with all the money Bush asked for, they decided to call for an extra \$5 billion, making the war budget to be approved a total of \$98 billion.

\$98 billion is approved for war, while poverty and unemployment rise.

They do this at a time when the U.S. government's own Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that seven million work-

ers are unemployed. They do this at a time when the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that 11 million households are "food insecure."

With millions of homeless people in the United States sleeping on park benches and eating out of garbage cans, the Democrats have fulfilled the right-wing's budget of death, poverty and misery, and even raised them a few billion.

To the unemployed workers, the children living in food insecurity, the homeless and the people forced to go without heat in the cold winter season, Democrat promises of an alternative, compassionate and peace-loving "America" are truly empty and hollow. Reality shows that the myth that those who rule this country value human needs and quality of life is utterly false—regardless of which capitalist political party they promote. □

# Stryker

size of Connecticut, is the biggest of the chain of islands that make up the area the United States claims as the "state" of Hawai'i. Much of the island's interior is composed of dormant volcanic mountains and the 175,000-acre Parker ranch. Since 1893, when the USS Boston landed troops to support the cabal of sugar planters and business owners who overthrew and imprisoned Hawai'i's Queen Liliuokalani, the U.S. has increased its military holdings, using an occupied Hawai'i as a launching point for imperialist ambitions in the Pacific and beyond.

The U.S. military already controls 240,000 acres of land in Hawai'i, and 22.4 percent of the land on O'ahu. Fifty-four percent of the military's land holdings consist of stolen Hawaiian national lands. With over 36 fishponds, Ke Awalau o Pu'uloa (Pearl Harbor) was once a rich source of food for O'ahu. Today, under military control, it is extremely contaminated, comprising a giant Superfund site.

After years of testing bombs on the Hawaiian island of Kaho'olawe, the Navy was forced to withdraw. It spent \$400 million for a failed cleanup of unexploded bombs. The Army plans to station the Stryker Brigade, with 291 vehicles, on 25,000 acres of land in Hawai'i and O'ahu in what would be the largest military expansion since World War II.

In its environmental impact statement, the Army admitted that the Stryker would cause significant damage to cultural and historic sites, increase threats of fire and erosion, threaten endangered native species, and release 25 percent more munitions and toxins. Hazardous chemicals from military munitions such as RDX and HMX, which attack nervous systems, the carcinogen TNT, and increased levels of lead have already been detected in and around the Pohakuloa testing range.

Fifty-seven known sites on Hawai'i have been used for bombing, artillery and live-fire ranges, with 7.1 million live rounds of various weapons fired annually. Unexploded military ordnance has been found in the waters off popular Hapuna Beach, off the Hilo Bay breakwater, and at least twice on elementary-school grounds.

The increasing militarization of the Hawaiian islands can also be seen in the Navy's plans to establish a University Affiliated Research Center at the University of Hawai'i, and in increased targeting of Hawaiian youths by military recruiters. In 2005 the Stop UARC Coalition occupied the University of Hawai'i president's office for a week, forcing the board of regents to delay agreement on the research center. Military opponents have joined in a call for a moratorium on military expansion in Hawai'i, and support the call for Congress to cut off war funds against Iraq. □

## Labor council supports March 12-19 encampment

*The following resolution was adopted by the San Francisco Labor Council on Feb. 26 by unanimous vote.*

Whereas, the war in Iraq is continuing; the American people in the last election clearly stated their opposition to this war; yet the war cannot continue without war funding, and;  
Whereas, a major factor in ending the Vietnam War was the cut-off of funding by Congress, and;  
Whereas, the Bush administration is requesting massive additional funding for the war, and Congress is due to debate this re-funding of the war as early as March 2007, and;  
Whereas, the San Francisco Labor Council unanimously voted in December 2006 to oppose any continued war funding, and;  
Whereas, broadly-supported direct actions calling for cutting off all fund-

ing for the war are taking place to coincide with the Congressional debate—an Encampment to de-fund and Stop the War in Washington DC March 12-19, on the mall in front of the Capitol Building, and a demonstration to de-fund and stop the war at noon March 19 at the Federal Building in San Francisco [offices of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi], and;  
Whereas, these actions complement the national and local demonstrations on the 4th anniversary of the war, including the 3/17 March on the Pentagon and the 3/18 march in San Francisco which the SF Labor Council has endorsed; therefore be it

Resolved, that the SF Labor Council endorse and encourage participation in the March 12-19 Encampment to de-fund and Stop the War on The Mall in Washington DC, and the demonstration to de-fund and stop the war at San Francisco's Federal Building on March 19. □

### Meeting of Chicago organizers:

## 'We'll mobilize Black community against the war'



WW PHOTO: LOU PAULSEN

Black Mobilization Committee organizers against the war in Iraq held a teach-in on March 3 at the Center for Inner-City Studies in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago.

"As Black people we cannot be lackadaisical about this war. We have to relate this war to our pocketbook," said public schools counselor Doris Lewis.

Attorney Lewis Myers Jr. (shown left) declared: "The Republicans and the Democrats will not stop this war. If the people don't make a decision to end it, it won't end."

The figures on the board reflect the cost to the people of Illinois of Bush's latest

\$100 billion demand for war funds alone. When interest is taken into account, it comes to \$25 billion from the people of Illinois. This is enough money, for example, to build 179,028 units of affordable housing. ([www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org))

Other speakers included professors Robert Starks and Anderson Thompson, journalist Nate Clay, and State Sen. Jackie Collins. Organizers are building for the March 17 demonstration in Washington, D.C., and a broad anti-war march on the evening of March 20 in downtown Chicago, and hope to have larger activities in the Black community itself.

—Report and photo by Lou Paulsen

# MARCH ON THE PENTAGON

## On the Fourth Anniversary of the Illegal Invasion of Iraq

### To demand

# TROOPS OUT NOW! Defund the Pentagon!

## Money for jobs, education, & health care, not war!

Join us for the national March on the Pentagon, organized by the ANSWER Coalition, the Troops Out Now Coalition, and many other national and local antiwar organizations. The Troops Out Now Coalition is organizing buses from 20 cities.

**For more information, call 212-633-6646 or go to [www.TroopsOutNow.org](http://www.TroopsOutNow.org) to see a list of local organizing centers.**

# MARCH 17



# Brzezinski tells how U.S. could provoke war with Iran

By Robert Dobrow

In mid-February, a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier strike group, led by the USS John C. Stennis, steamed into Mideast waters, doubling the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf, and raising the specter of a Pentagon military strike against Iran.

The Stennis, leading a strike force of cruisers, destroyers and submarines, joins the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower. These aircraft carriers are mammoth floating military bases, equipped with hundreds of cruise missiles, carrying more than 80 warplanes and a crew of 5,000 troops.

In addition to the military buildup, a media offensive has targeted Iran with a steady stream of sensational news charging Iranian support for “terrorist” and “sectarian” violence in Iraq. And last week, Vice President Cheney said it would be “a serious mistake” if Iran were allowed to become a nuclear power. “All options are on the table.”

On Feb. 1, former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, warned that the Bush administration is seeking a pretext for war against Iran.

Brzezinski, chief anti-Soviet cold warrior of the Carter administration, was the architect of U.S.-CIA intervention in Afghanistan in the late 1970s in support of

fundamentalist, anti-Soviet Islamic forces against the then pro-socialist government. Today Brzezinski is a loud critic of the Bush administration’s Mideast policy, fearing, in his words, that the war in Iraq “is a historic, strategic and moral calamity, which is undermining America’s global legitimacy. [sic!]

Being a Pentagon insider, his testimony was all the more remarkable for laying out the broad strokes for how U.S. military intervention against Iran might actually unfold.

“If the United States,” he said, “continues to be bogged down in a protracted bloody involvement in Iraq, the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large. A plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran involves Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks; followed by accusations of Iranian responsibility for the failure; then by some provocation in Iran; culminating in a “defensive” U.S. military action against Iran that plunges a lonely America into a spreading and deepening quagmire eventually ranging across Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.”

In the question and answer period, Brzezinski, in response to a question from Sen. Menéndez (D-NJ) as to how military conflict with Iran would unfold, Brzezinski recounted the now infamous

Downing Street memo. “Basically,” he said, “escalation, accusations, some incidents—there have already been some incidents between us and the Iranians. There are some allegations that the Iranians are responsible for certain acts—allegations but not facts. And that would spark, simply, a collision. It could even be in some fashion provoked.”

Brzezinski drew the attention of the senators to a meeting between Bush and the British Prime Minister during the months leading up to the invasion of Iraq and a March 27, 2006, New York Times article on this meeting.

“And in it, according to this account, the president is cited as saying that he’s concerned that there may not be weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq and that there must be some consideration given to finding a different basis for undertaking the military action. And I’ll just read you what this memo allegedly says, according to The New York Times.

“The memo stated, ‘The president and the prime minister acknowledged that no unconventional weapons had been found inside Iraq.’

“This is two months before the war.

“Faced with the possibility of not finding any before the planned invasion, Mr. Bush talked about several ways to provoke a confrontation.”

“And he described, then, several ways in which this could be done, and I won’t go into that. I don’t know how accurate these

ways were. They’re quite sensational, at least one of them.

“And if one is of the view that one is dealing with an implacable enemy that has to be removed, that course of action may, under certain circumstances, be appealing.

“I’m afraid if the situation in Iraq continues deteriorating, and if Iran is perceived as in some fashion involved or responsible—or the potential beneficiary thereof—that temptation could arise.”

A widely cited article by Seymour Hersh in The New Yorker (March 5), adds substance to Brzezinski’s charges. Hersh documents the new “redirection” by the White House to line up its Middle East allies in an anti-Iranian axis.

It seems utter madness to suggest that the U.S. government, embroiled in the mounting debacle in Iraq, unable to subdue the impoverished nation of Afghanistan, facing a deficit crisis of historic proportions, and facing its lowest approval ratings ever here at home would contemplate a new military adventure against Iran, a nation of 70 million people with a standing army of 450,000 soldiers.

Some may believe that the U.S. threats are aimed at intimidating sectors of Iranian society. Yet, given the adventurous and aggressive character of U.S. imperialism, it would be a mistake for opponents of U.S. militarism to let down their guard. □

## Following war crimes in Lebanon

# Revolt inside Israel Defense Forces

By David Hoskins

Almost 100 fighters of the Israel Defense Forces’ Battalion 51 of the Golani Brigade walked off the Tze’elim training base in southern Israel on March 1. The action has been described as one of the biggest revolts in IDF history. Eight soldiers from the battalion were killed by Hezbollah resistance fighters in Bint Jbeil, a small village in southern Lebanon, during the Israeli invasion in July 2006.

Golani soldiers have a long history of revolt. Smaller walkouts have occurred in the past. The IDF’s criminal history in occupied Palestine, Lebanon and other countries can only contribute to rebellion by rank-and-file soldiers.

This latest rebellion was led by young soldiers who were fed up with the harsh treatment they have endured at the hands of battalion commander Lt. Col. David Zini. Some of the more experienced soldiers abstained out of fear that the short time left before their discharge would be extended by imprisonment on charges of mutiny. Roadblocks placed by Brigade Commander Col. Tamir Yidai forced the soldiers to return to base.

The primary complaint launched against Lt. Col. Zini was his order denying soldiers the right to meet with psychologists and mental health officers to discuss psychological stresses stemming from their participation in the siege of Bint Jbeil. After the soldiers were forced to turn back, an anonymous high-ranking officer admitted that the complaints were legitimate, and that requests for medical care had been mishandled.

The IDF failed to take the town of Bint Jbeil, and withdrew after several days of bombing civilian targets such as houses and hospitals combined with a large ground invasion.

The residents of Bint Jbeil heroically defended themselves against the civilian atrocities perpetuated by the IDF. Dr. Fuoad Tahar of Bint Jbeil Hospital described intense Israeli attacks that dropped up to 350 bombs on the town in a single half hour.

Given the severity of the suffering inflicted on Bint Jbeil civilians, it is not surprising that IDF soldiers returning from that battle would require professional psychological help. Problems such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder are typical reactions to the brutal realities of war and occupation.

Denying soldiers access to mental-health workers compounds the dehumanization IDF troops experience as a result of their participation in Israel’s genocidal military campaigns.

Zionist leaders inside Israel cannot be pleased to learn that the only thing that prevented the rebellion from spreading throughout the entire battalion was the older soldiers’ fear of imprisonment. Israel already experienced defeat at the hands of the Lebanese people’s resistance led by Hezbollah. This recent display of a lack of loyalty to the IDF and its mission may signify a deeper division inside the Israeli army between superior officers and the subordinate troops they regularly sacrifice in Israel’s 59-year old perpetual war of occupation. □



Rabiatou Serah Diallo, leader of the National Confederation of Guinea Workers (left) and Ibrahima Fofana, leader of UST Syndical Union, at the Guinean assembly in Conakry Feb. 25.

With unity & sacrifice

## Guinean workers win

By G. Dunkel

The workers of Guinea suspended their general strike March 1 and went back to work.

The union coalition coordinating the strike told Agence-France Press that they would definitively end it if they approved of the composition of the new government, if the bosses paid workers for the days that the workers were out on strike and if the government released all the people rounded up during January and February at protests and demonstrations.

The strike was political. Its main demand was for the president of Guinea, Lansana Conté, to step down. The strikers also wanted the endemic corruption and thievery of public funds ended and the price of gasoline and basic necessities reduced.

While the unions coordinated and led, these strikes were really part of a mass movement against the government with tens of thousands of unemployed youth

in the “popular,” that is, predominantly poor and impoverished, suburbs marching and protesting.

They stayed in the streets, coming out again and again, even though the army and the cops killed over 150 protesters and wounded hundreds more. Even interviewed on their hospital beds by French television, these youths expressed their determination to keep on struggling to force Conté out of power. That was a necessary step, they stated, for a better future for themselves and their families.

“Beggars” and market women—the street sellers who handle most of the retail businesses in West Africa—expressed solidarity with the strike.

Conté’s decision to step down as head of the government, while remaining head of state, satisfied the unions’ demand. New Prime Minister Lansana Kouyaté has had a diplomatic career, working for the U.N. in New York and West Africa.

He has French support, since French Minister for Cooperation Brigitte Girardin



# Reprieve for 3 condemned Iraqi women

By John Catalinotto

The top news stories out of Iraq March 5 and 6 showed that the occupation continues to make Iraq a deadly place for Iraqis and for the U.S. occupation forces. Nine GIs were killed, six north of Baghdad by a roadside explosion. And dozens of Iraqis were blown up or burned in explosions or killed by U.S. fire.

Up to two million Iraqis have fled the country, unable to bear the insecurity that the U.S. occupation has imposed on many areas of Iraq since the March 20, 2003 invasion, killing and maiming hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. U.S. imperialism is a conquering power that has brought repression and humiliation to Iraqis without constructing a viable economy or a stable society.

A key event that has captured the attention and activities of the worldwide solidarity movement with Iraq is the attempt of the Iraqi government to schedule the execution of three women for their alleged participation in the resistance movement.

The women are 31-year-old Wassan Talib, charged with the killing of five police officers in an attack on the police; 25-year-old Zainab Fadhil, charged for an attack on a joint patrol of the Iraqi and U.S. armies in Baghdad; and 26-year-old Liqa Muhammad, charged with the killing of an official in the Green Zone in the course of a kidnapping.

All are in Baghdad's Al-Kadhimiya Prison. Two are caring for their small chil-

dren, who are with them in prison. The 1-year-old daughter of Liqa Muhammad was born in prison. All the women deny the charges for which they face death by hanging.

Fearing a quick execution on March 3, leading activists in the BRussell's Tribunal in Belgium, from the Turkish anti-war movement, from the British anti-war movement, from the International Action Center in the U.S. and many others around the world, joined to wage a petition campaign to protest and stop the impending executions. ([brusselstribunal.org](http://brusselstribunal.org))

As a result of the campaign, high officials in Turkey, Britain and the European Union protested to the Baghdad regime.

According to a March 2 statement signed by Hana Al Bayaty, Ian Douglas, Abdul Ilah Albayaty, Iman Saadon, Dirk Adriaensens and Ayse Berkay, the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has stated that "the three Iraqi women will not be executed until an appeals court has ruled on their cases."

The statement continues: "This assur-

ance came from Iraqi authorities. It is not enough. We demand to know the charges on which these three Iraqi women stand convicted. We demand to know the date of their appeal hearings. We demand that a public statement is made. We demand that they be afforded all due protections under international human rights and humanitarian law."

And it makes what is the most powerful point: "If charged with resisting foreign occupation and aggression, we declare this charge illegal."

Some 2,000 women are imprisoned in Iraq and classified as "security detainees." For most of the world's people, whoever participates in acts of resistance against the illegal and criminal occupation are heroes and heroines who have sacrificed not only for Iraq but for all the oppressed peoples of the world.

## Assault in Basra

In a well-publicized strike in Basra in the South of Iraq, British troops and Iraqi special forces assaulted the offices of an

Iraqi government intelligence agency. British officials said they discovered about 30 prisoners, some showing signs of torture, as justification for this strike against the government the British and U.S. have been supporting.

A more famous example of torture in prisons is that of Abu Ghraib, run by the U.S. military with guards that come out of the repressive U.S. prison system.

In a less publicized action on Feb. 23, U.S. forces raided the Baghdad offices of the Iraq Syndicate of Journalists. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) condemned as "outrageous and inexcusable" the action of occupation soldiers who carried out the armed raid.

According to the IFJ network, U.S. soldiers "destroyed furniture, ransacked the offices, arrested state-employed security guards, and confiscated 10 computers and 15 small electricity generators destined for the families of killed journalists."

As of Jan. 1, some 170 journalists had been killed in Iraq since the occupation began, many of them by U.S. forces. □

**Join a Women's Fightback Network delegation from the Encampment in Washington D.C. to the Iraqi Embassy to demand the release of the condemned three Iraqi women and their children on TUESDAY, MARCH 13.**

Visit <http://encampmenttostopthewar.blogspot.com/> or call 212-633-6646 for more information.



# U.S. war parties united on Afghanistan

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

Resistance to the U.S. military and political presence in Afghanistan took a dramatic form on Feb. 27. A suicide bomber detonated himself at the gate of a U.S. air base in Kabul while U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney was staying there.

News sources on March 5 are reporting that U.S. soldiers were responsible for 17 civilian deaths in Afghanistan on March 4 alone. On that day U.S. soldiers fired indiscriminately on civilians after their convoy was attacked in eastern Afghanistan near Jalalabad.

District Chief Mohammad Kahn

## demands

dropped by Conakry, the capital of Guinea, on March 2—the day after Kouyaté became prime minister—and gave him a check for 100,000 euros to care for the hundreds injured in the protests.

It became clear that Conté was going to be forced to back down when the Guinean parliament voted Feb. 24 to end the state of siege he had imposed two weeks earlier. Conté was also having problems with the army. The higher officers still supported him, but he had lost so much support among the young officers and the enlisted men that he locked up the ammunition for their weapons, according to Cheikh Yérin Seek in the Feb. 18 *Jeune Afrique*. Aminata.com, a web-based news service in Guinea, reported March 4 that many lower ranking soldiers were upset with their pay and living conditions.

Conté's only reliable contingents were some mercenary Red Berets from neighboring Liberia and the presidential guard. But as harsh and violent as they were, these forces couldn't crush the

Katawazi and nine other witnesses said the U.S. soldiers fired wildly and "treated every car and person" riding or walking along a busy, six-mile stretch of highway as a "potential attacker." (AP)

Zmarai Bashiri, a spokesperson for Afghanistan's interior ministry, bluntly indicted the U.S. forces as responsible. U.S. officials said 16 civilians died. (NY Times)

On the same day, U.S. planes dropped two 1,000-pound bombs on a house in Nijrab, north of Kabul, killing a family of nine, including small children. U.S. spokesperson Lt. Col. David Accetta blamed the deaths on Afghan fighters, saying they

resistance.

Since Guinea produces more than half the world's bauxite, as well as significant quantities of iron ore, gold and diamonds, the strikes had a worldwide economic impact. (Bauxite is the main component of aluminum.)

Even though a majority of Guineans are desperately poor, living on less than \$2 a day, and desperately want steady work, they looked on the job actions that the unionized workers took as defending their interests, economic as well as political. There is no valid reason why a country like Guinea with such vast and well developed material resources is so impoverished, although neocolonialism and its by-product, corruption, are important factors.

It is clear that if the workers and people of Guinea do not see a sharp and quick improvement in their living standards, they will continue the struggles they have waged for the last 12 months. For more information on this development, go to [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org). □

showed a "blatant disregard for human life" by militarily engaging U.S. forces in a "populated area."

In response to these massacres, angry protesters gathered on the streets of Jalalabad to demand that U.S. troops get out of Afghanistan. This continued a series of anti-U.S. mass protests that have rocked the province, including one in May 2005 after 17 Afghan students were killed. (A World to Win News Service)

This resistance is not surprising, given the desperate conditions in Afghanistan since the U.S. invasion. On March 1, a U.S. government report documented that opium production in the country has hit a record high, up 60 percent over past years. Afghanistan currently produces 90 percent of the world's opium. (International Narcotics Control Strategy Report)

This actually reveals how increasingly hard it is for Afghans to support themselves through traditional farming and trading networks. Since the 2001 U.S. invasion, opium has re-emerged as profitable in a country that now ranks fourth from the bottom in the world for living standards and third from the bottom for gender inequities. (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan)

The impact of the U.S.-created catastrophe also exposes how dishonest it is to justify the invasion by calling it "liberation"—a pretext that has been endorsed by Democratic as well as Republican leaders.

Afghan girls and women are increasingly being sold and traded to settle opium-related debt. In 2006 there were 69 cases of self-immolation and opium-related murder of girls and women, and more than 20 suicides of girls and women in just the provinces around Kandahar. (Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission)

As conditions worsen in Afghanistan, here in the United States there is a push

to sell Democratic politicians as the leaders who can end the unpopular U.S. wars. A February 2007 commentary by Richard Parry in Consortium News even resuscitated a talk by former Vice President Al Gore given five years ago, before Washington launched its war on Iraq.

Parry lauded Gore for stating doubts about that invasion. But what was Gore's objection? He thought that "the Bush administration, rather than beating the drums for war with Iraq, should focus its efforts on winning the battle against terrorism." ([commondreams.org](http://commondreams.org))

Gore specifically praised the U.S. assault on Afghanistan. He said of saying of President George W. Bush's military policy there that "until the invasion of Iraq, I think he did a good job ... up until Tora Bora" when U.S. forces blasted mountain refuges of Afghan guerilla fighters but failed to capture Osama Bin Laden. (WIRED, May 2006)

Gore's endorsement of U.S. intervention carries on the approach to destabilizing Afghanistan first launched through the CIA in the late 1970s during Democratic President Jimmy Carter's administration.

The code phrase "battle against terrorism" sums up the Democratic leadership's commitment to the overall aims of its capitalist ruling class—and their demonization of oppressed countries for any attempt at resistance or assertion of self-determination.

On March 1 the Democratic majority on the Senate Budget Committee overruled the committee chair, Sen. Kent Conrad, himself a Democrat, who had suggesting cutting \$20 million from the Bush administration's \$142 billion war budget for 2008. This money is aimed at funding another year of U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq—and of Afghanistan. Democratic House leaders also said they wouldn't cut funding. □





# Another preventable death

**T**welve-year-old Deamonte Driver died in Maryland on Feb. 25 after bacteria from an abscessed tooth spread to his brain. Most reading this story were shocked. How could this be true?

While the acute complications of the infection were rapid, the factors leading to the infection were long-term and preventable.

Over a long period of time Deamonte's mother, Alyce Driver, had tried to find proper dental care for all of her children. At the time, she was especially focused on finding care for Deamonte's brother because he had multiple rotting teeth and was constantly reporting his pain.

Her first obstacle was that her jobs in a bakery, construction and home health care did not provide health insurance. Even though she eventually received Medicaid, it was very difficult to find a dentist, and especially to find a dental surgeon who would accept Medicaid and extract Deamonte's rotting teeth. Eventually she sought assistance from a lawyer with the Baltimore-based Public Justice Center.

When she finally found a surgeon who would extract six of her son's teeth, she had to cancel the appointment because she did not have the necessary evidence of current Medicaid certification. She suspects that notification of the approval was sent to a homeless shelter where she no longer lived. Days later Deamonte was admitted to a hospital. He died weeks later.

As shocking as this story is, it is representative of a vastly larger problem. Nearly 47 million people in the U.S. have no health insurance and the numbers are growing rapidly. This is 15 percent of the population. Many of those who do have health insurance have no dental insurance.

In the state of Maryland fewer than one in three children in the Medicaid program received any dental services at all in 2005. Those statistics are even worse in the District of Columbia, where more than 70 percent got no treatments in the same year.

Tooth decay is still the single most common childhood disease nationwide. Poor children are more than twice as likely to have cavities as their more affluent peers, and far less likely to get treatment. The lack of transportation, bouts of homelessness and erratic telephone and mail services contribute to poor care. This is especially true of children living in rural areas, who sometimes have to travel hours for dental care. (Washington Post, Feb. 28)

The American Dental Association released a statement on the death of Deamonte Driver. "It is a national disgrace that in the 21st Century America, millions of children don't have access to basic preventive and restorative dental care. Thousands of these kids suffer from profound dental disease—they can't eat or sleep properly, can't pay attention in school because they're suffering from chronic infections and the resulting constant pain that could have been prevented and easily relieved through treatment." (<http://www.ada.org/>)

Every day, the vast majority of people living in this country are experiencing their own horrors trying to find the medical care they need. A recent New York Times/CBS News poll reported, "A majority of Americans say the federal government should guarantee health insurance to every American, especially children." (New York Times, March 2)

It is revealing that the top two public issues identified by this poll for the 2008 presidential campaign are the Iraq war first and affordable health care second.

Social programs all over the country are being slashed to free up the trillions of dollars needed to carry out this immoral war in Iraq for profits. People in this country are now realizing that this is a war at home as well. The struggle for quality universal health care for all and the struggle to end the war are one. □

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## Systemic of imperialism

# Scandal at veterans hospital

By Larry Hales

A House panel has revealed that horrendous conditions found at Walter Reed Army Medical Center—the Army's flagship veterans' hospital—exist throughout the military health care system. Rep. John Tierney, chair of the panel, said that as the wars continue the problems will increase. (Associated Press, March 5)

The attempts by the Bush administration to show it values the lives of human beings in Iraq and around the world can be best refuted by illustrating how the U.S. cares for its own soldiers.

On March 1, Maj. Gen. George W. Weightman, Walter Reed hospital commander for the past six months, was fired. Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey was forced to resign on March 2. Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, who commanded the hospital from 2002 to 2004, is being asked to step down.

It is sure that these officials commanded their positions with callous disregard for the medical well-being of U.S. soldiers. As commissioned officers, their relation to the enlisted is that of boss to worker. They deserve to face criminal charges.

But this latest case of headhunting is a smoke screen. The blame goes all the way up the chain of command to the Veterans Affairs Department and the president.

Veteran Ray Oliva spoke to the system wide problems and conditions at the Veterans Affairs hospital in Livermore, Calif., where he receives care. "It is just not Walter Reed. ... The VA hospitals are not good either except for the staff, who work so hard. It brings tears to my eyes when I see my brothers and sisters having to deal with these conditions." (Washington Post, March 5)

The latest documentation of the problems at Walter Reed were featured in a Feb. 18 Washington Post article on Building 18, an outpatient barracks where wounded soldiers are sent to recover. The article documented black mold along walls, rotting openings in ceilings, cockroaches and mice.

Yet the apex of complaints might reveal falsified records of the number of war injuries. New York Times columnist Frank Rich reports, "The Veterans Affairs Department keeps 'two sets of books'—one telling the public that the official count of nonfa-

tal battlefield casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan stands at 23,000, the other showing an actual patient count of 205,000." (March 4) Veterans Affairs Secretary Jim Nicholson attempted to explain this by saying "a lot of them come in for, for dental problems." (New York Times, Feb. 27)

Seventy-five percent of troops polled at Walter Reed have listed their experience as "stressful." One mother, who spent 15 months living on post to care for her son, intimated: "They do the paperwork, they lose the paperwork. Then they have to redo the paperwork. You are talking about guys and girls whose lives are disrupted for the rest of their lives, and they don't put any priority on it." (Washington Post, Feb. 18)

Another mother said, "If they can have Spanish-speaking recruits to convince my son to go into the Army, why can't they have Spanish-speaking translators when he's injured?" (Washington Post, Feb. 18)

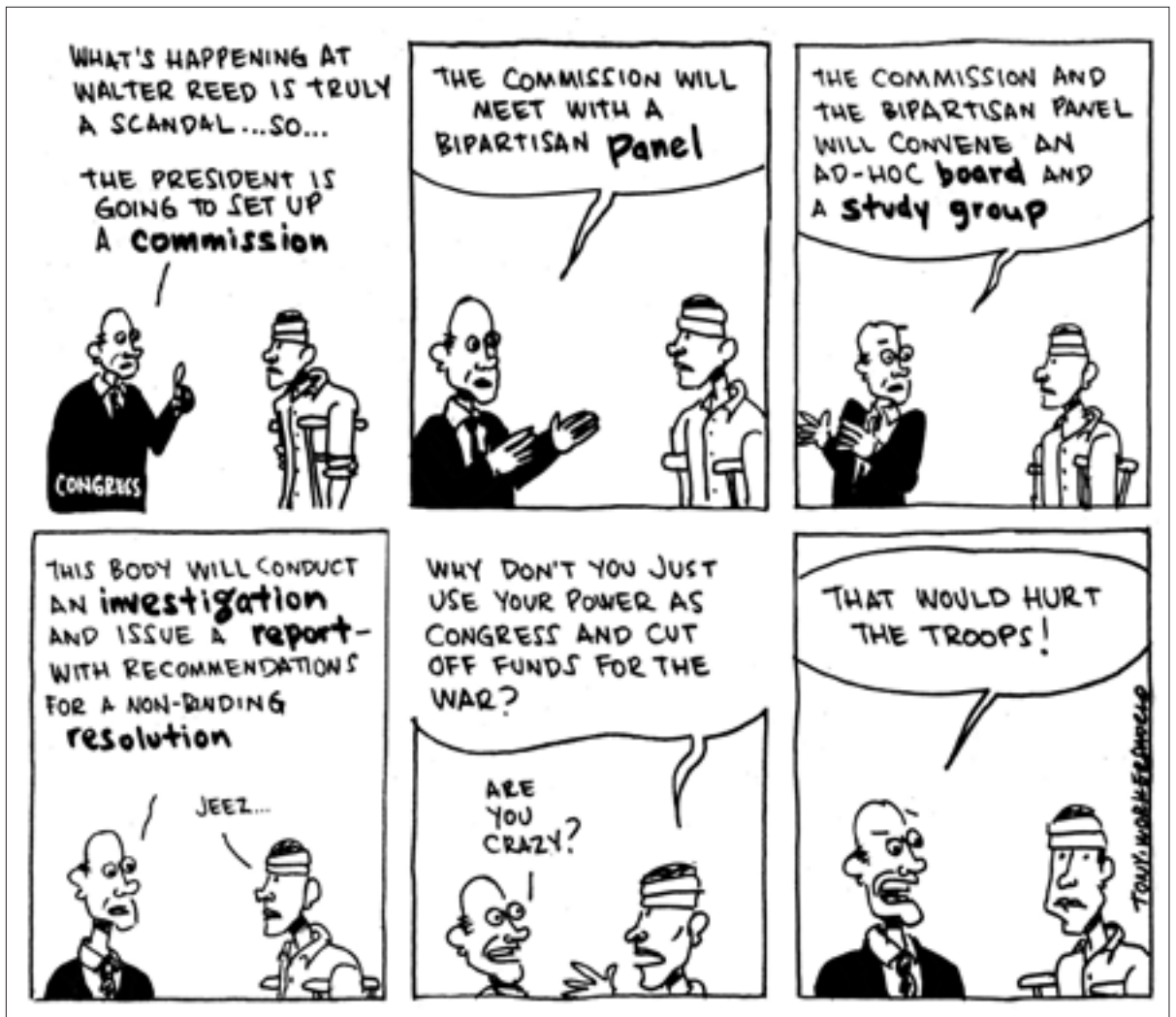
Tierney, D-Mass., said the problems are "just another horrific consequence of inadequate planning that went into war in Iraq." (Washington Post, March 5)

His remarks are indicative of the delicate balancing act the Democratic Party has been playing all along—going along with the brutal, genocidal war while using mass outrage at the war to prop up the party.

This is disingenuous and too late. Complaints about the VA system have been registered by veterans from all previous wars and are brought to light now because of the failing U.S. adventure.

As the U.S. military is the arm of U.S. imperialism, the most important expenditures are considered those that enhance its fighting capabilities—not those that treat the injured. In addition, as complaints of ill treatment continue, more soldiers are being left destitute, homeless and/or suffering from addiction.

The crocodile tears of the Bush administration, Congress and the military brass mean nothing. To truly protect the lives and well-being of the troops, the troops must be brought home immediately from all foreign bases. The Pentagon must be defunded and all necessary resources and funds put into health care, housing and rights for all. □



**FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL • LEONARD PELTIER  
THE CUBAN FIVE & ALL U.S. POLITICAL PRISONERS**



## Initiative to free political prisoners

# Rainbow Solidarity for Cuban 5 spans the planet

By Leslie Feinberg

More than 800 lesbian, gay, bi, trans (LGBT) and other activists fighting oppression based on sex, gender and sexuality have already signed on to the call for Rainbow Solidarity for the Cuban Five, first issued on Jan. 7. Updated lists of signers can be viewed at [www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org)—look for the rainbow.

The collective sentencing of these five U.S.-held political prisoners—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—to four life sentences and 75 years reveals in stark relief that U.S. imperialism's "war on terror" is a pretext for war for empire.

The five Cubans are in prison merely for having infiltrated CIA-backed right-wing terrorist commando organizations in order to monitor and stop attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

The struggle to win freedom for these five political prisoners held in U.S. prisons has galvanized a broad united front among those who battle oppression based on their gender expression and/or sex and who they love.

Individuals and organizations have signed on from 45 countries, from every continent and from virtually every state in the continental U.S.

### United to free the Five

Volunteers have translated the introduction to the Rainbow Solidarity initiative and the call itself, so that it is now available in Spanish, English, simplified and traditional Chinese, Farsi, Turkish, Greek, Portuguese, Japanese, Italian, French and German.

The Croatian translation will be posted

on the [www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org) website soon. Croatian feminist and LGBT activists are circulating the call.

ASWAT—the Palestinian lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersexual organization—is in the process of translating the introduction and call into Arabic.

Filipino activists are working on the Tagalog translation.

Recent organizational signers include the national Lavender Caucus of the Green Party USA; Bus Riders Union/Labor Community Strategy Center, Los Angeles; Canadian Union Of Postal Workers (CUPW), Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Canadian Union Of Public Employees, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Hospital Employee's Union of British Columbia; Greek Homosexual Community, Athens, Greece; Committee To Defend Palestinian Human Rights, Sterling, Mass.; Cuba Education Tours, Vancouver, B.C., Canada; Fairness Campaign, Louisville, Ky.; Freedom Tracks Music/Records, Nashville, Tenn.; Welfare Warriors, Milwaukee, Wis.; Queertoday.com, Boston, Mass.; Winona Gender Mutiny Collective.

Among recent signers are individuals and organizations whose activist work includes the struggle against women's oppression: Brenda Stokely, a leader of the Million Worker March Movement and NYCLAW; Sara Flounders, co-director of the International Action Center; Women's Fightback Network, Boston, Mass.; League of Women Voters in Montenegro; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Washington, D.C.

### Solidarity, loud and clear

The Rainbow Solidarity initiative is also giving voice to individuals who are eloquently registering their outrage at

the continued imprisonment of the five Cubans and at Washington's economic and political blockade of Cuba and other illegal and covert acts of war.

Niloufer Bhagwat, from the International Association of Democratic Lawyers in Mumbai, India, writes "The Cuban Five were taking legal measures to prevent criminal attacks on Cubans and are innocent of the crimes they are charged with."

Richard Carlson from Wappingers Falls, N.Y., states, "It is wrong, it is immoral and unjust what the U.S. is doing to these five men."

Sandy Shevack from Paterson, N.J., says, "This is a miscarriage of justice."

Dr. Zak Cope, from Belfast, Ireland, adds, "If the U.S. government was concerned with the rule of law, the brave actions of the Cuban Five would have been completely unnecessary."

Jay Mitchell, from Shrewsbury, England, emphasizes, "It's about time they were out of there and back home."

Rebecca Starr writes from San Diego, Calif., "Free the Cuban Five!! No more political prisoners!"

Richard Palmer, in Jacksonville, Ill., says "Close Guantánamo, human rights are for humans everywhere."

Marcos Quintero writes from Bielefeld, Germany, "Free the 5 Cubans now, stop the war on Cuba and the rest of the world!"

Adela Brent, from the Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc. in Queensland, Australia, states "I want to express my solidarity with the Cuban Five and the Cuban people and Fidel."

### 'Get the word out to keep up the pressure'

T. Dorsey, from Santa Margarita, Calif., comments, "These five men, fighting



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

against terrorism, have been imprisoned by the U.S. government—"MY" government! Jailing heroes and supporting terror, while pretending to do the opposite, is sadly all the public can count on from 'our' hypocritical, double-speaking, global corporate-run excuse for a 'by and for the people' government."

Brian Perkins states from Newport, Ore., "I am enraged by the hypocrisy of five innocent men being held in prison under harsh circumstances while known terrorist Luis Posada Carriles goes scot-free. While Bush and cronies spout off that no nation that harbors terrorists will be tolerated with one face, they set a convicted terrorist murderer of at least 73 innocents free with the other, while holding five innocent men in prison."

Melinda Clark, a local co-founder of Code Pink in Willits, Calif., says of the Cuban Five: "Thank you to all who have been fighting for their survival and publicity. They will be freed."

Robert Taylor, from the Bus Riders Union/Labor Community Strategy Center, writes from Los Angeles, "Let's keep the fight on to free the Cuban Five from jail!"

Monty Lish, from Jamul, Calif., stresses, "Please get the word out to keep up the pressure."

Translations and downloadable leaflets and petitions are constantly being updated on the [www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org) web site.

Readers are asked to circulate the call—which can be found at [www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org)—far and wide. Those with ideas about wider distribution of the call are encouraged to email [rainbowsolidarity4cuban5@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowsolidarity4cuban5@gmail.com).

More information about the case of the Cuban Five is available on [www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org) or at [www.freethefive.org](http://www.freethefive.org). □

## Travel to Cuba with FIST

Travel to Cuba in summer of 2007 with youth activists from Fight Imperialism—Stand Together.

FIST is a national group of young activists committed to fighting racism, sexism, oppression of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, and exploitation of the working class, all of which result from imperialism and capitalism.

FIST believes that the only way to achieve true liberation for all peoples throughout the world is through socialism—and that the Cuban revolution, 90 miles away from the United States and under constant threat by U.S. imperialism, is a bastion of what is possible for human societies when workers have freed themselves from the ravages of capitalist production.

Since the early days of the Cuban revolution almost 50 years ago, successive U.S. administrations have tried to undermine the Cuban people's resolve. The United States directly invaded the country in 1961, has supported terrorist activities against the Cuban government and the Cuban people, tried assassinating the beloved leader Fidel Castro, and has imprisoned five Cuban heroes in the United States on trumped-up charges.

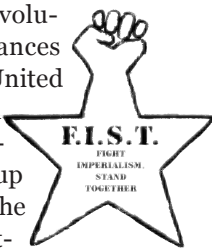
Washington has also kept in place, since 1961, a brutal economic blockade and restrictions on U.S. citizens traveling to the island nation. Recently the U.S. government has stepped up pressure

against the Cuban revolution, limiting remittances from Cubans in the United States to relatives in Cuba, initiating a policy that would speed up aggression to topple the revolution and threatening further action against travelers to the island.

In solidarity with the Cuban revolution and the Cuban people and with other organizations that openly challenge current U.S. law, and to show youth in the United States the gains of the Cuban revolution and what is possible for workers, the oppressed and poor—Join us, meet Cuban youths and workers and see the Cuban gains in education, health care, housing and agriculture; and return, not only to seek an end to the blockade, but to help in fomenting a broad struggle against oppression, racism and war, which are endemic to capitalism.

In addition, because of the special role that the Cuban Communist Party has historically played in consolidating the Revolution, visits will be made to party institutions and meetings will be held with party leaders to learn more about the CCP, how it organizes, its role in the government, and in society.

Learn more about FIST and the trip to Cuba at [FIST@workers.org](mailto:FIST@workers.org) or 212-627-2994. □



## LISBON: 150,000 workers protest social cuts



PHOTO: AVANTE

Union leaders estimated that 150,000 workers marched through Lisbon on March 2 in probably the biggest pro-labor protest in that country in more than 20 years to demand a halt to the government's policies of privatization and the dismantling of social programs.

The government is led by Premier Jose Socrates and by the party that calls itself Socialist. But this party is more like the Democratic Party in the U.S., and has been carrying out reactionary social reforms as aggressively as the former center-right government it replaced. The Socialists won by a landslide two years ago, supported by voters who opposed the rightist policies of the prior regime.

The demonstration, called by the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CGTP), demanded higher pay and pensions and an end to the government's destruction of the social infrastructure. Socrates' policies include tax hikes, halts in promotions for government employees, cuts in health and retirement benefits and the dismantling of medical clinics and schools.

As in France, where mass protests reversed reactionary programs in 2005, in Portugal too the workers are dependent on their actions in the streets to stop these reactionary government policies. The March 2 demonstration has given a big boost to this continuing struggle.

—John Catalinotto



**¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!**

## Enfoque y tácticas en el movimiento contra la guerra

# El congreso y la guerra

Por Sara Flounders

El Partido Demócrata tiene ahora mayoría en ambas cámaras del Congreso. Esta nueva mayoría ha prometido, si fuese elegida, actuar en contra de la guerra. Todos los políticos están tratando de presentarse como si estuvieran escuchando a su electorado. Están ocupados en encontrar la forma de “dar vuelta” a la guerra.

En cuestiones de guerra, el ejecutivo, el presidente, tiene el poder de decidir. Pero según la Constitución, sólo el Congreso puede aprobar los fondos para financiar la guerra.

Durante la semana del 12 al 19 de marzo, el Congreso está programado para dar el más crítico de sus votos desde que en octubre del 2002 le dio al Presidente George Bush completa autorización para invadir y ocupar a Irak. Ese voto ocurrió cuando los Demócratas también eran la mayoría en el Senado. Desde su comienzo esta guerra ha sido bipartita.

Para las fuerzas revolucionarias y los opositores a la guerra, la pregunta es cómo intervenir en el debate del Congreso de manera que se exponga la complicidad criminal de ambos partidos, Republicano y Demócrata, en la guerra.

¿Es acaso inevitable que cualquier lucha que tenga que ver con el Congreso sea apropiada por el Partido Demócrata y se descarrile?

Mientras el Pentágono apunta sus cañones contra Irán, una lucha determinada por el movimiento anti guerrista podría clamar demandas adicionales. Millones de personas en los Estados Unidos que están opuestas a la guerra, sabrían también que el Congreso tiene la autoridad legal para actuar en contra de las amenazas inmediatas de una nueva y más amplia guerra contra Irán. Quedaría claro que el Congreso tiene la autoridad de librar una lucha en contra del colosal presupuesto del Pentágono, pero sólo si las masas populares de los Estados Unidos se movilizan para exigirlo.

El presupuesto del Pentágono es un monstruo de continuo crecimiento que se traga más de un millón de dólares por minuto. Todos los programas sociales que son de gran necesidad para la población—la educación, la salud, la transportación, el medio ambiente—se están recortando para poder enriquecer al presupuesto militar que a su vez enriquece a las grandes corporaciones, en especial a los monopolios petroleros y al complejo militar industrial.

Si los Demócratas en realidad estuvieran determinados a poner fin a la guerra, aún sin tener la mayoría, una minoría del Congreso determinada a finalizar la guerra, podría obstruir el que se den los fondos. Podría convocar al pueblo a que rodeara el Congreso. Cualquier resisten-

cia real en el Congreso podría inspirar una respuesta de la población y de los soldados que ahora se oponen a la guerra en cifras cada día más numerosas.

Si no hay una intervención política fuerte desde abajo, entonces una resolución débil y no obligatoria como la aceptada por la Cámara de Representantes el 16 de febrero se vería como si fuese lo mejor que pueden hacer. El abstenerse de esta lucha es dejar la arena totalmente en manos de los reformistas que quieren alinear al movimiento antiguerra con el Partido Demócrata y dejarle sin ningún poder independiente.

Los Demócratas no encuentran problemas en posicionarse contra la guerra. Es fácil para ellos el criticar a George W. Bush, un Republicano que con mucha razón es odiado alrededor del mundo. Él es definitivamente un criminal de guerra. Su nivel de apoyo popular es el más bajo que el de cualquier otro presidente excepto el caso de Richard Nixon inmediatamente antes de que renunció justamente antes de ser destituido de la presidencia.

Estos políticos poderosos del Partido Demócrata y sus grandes auspiciadores financieros están interesados en desviar la atención del movimiento masivo en contra de la guerra fuera del apoyo a la guerra que tiene el mismo Partido Demócrata, como por ejemplo la negativa de Hillary Clinton de declarar que ella no debía haber votado a favor de la guerra en el 2002. Actualmente, ella está rehusando eliminar un ataque nuclear contra Irán como una opción.

Los Demócratas están intentando enfocar la ira contra la guerra exclusivamente en Bush. Eso es su estrategia electoral para el 2008.

No será muy popular o fácil librar una lucha contra todas las fuerzas—Republicanas y Demócratas— que apoyan la guerra, así como en contra de los intereses del imperialismo estadounidense que sirven. Sin embargo es una lucha esencial.

La clase dominante capitalista siempre quiere desviar al movimiento de las masas hacia canales inofensivos—cabildando, votando, y poniendo la confianza en los políticos vendidos. El desafío es desarrollar demandas claras que impulsen la lucha hacia las calles.

Desde los días más tempranos de la lucha organizada de parte de la clase trabajadora, el propósito de las manifestaciones masivas siempre ha sido para confrontar al gobierno con las demandas que expresan los intereses de la clase trabajadora.

Desde que el Pentágono invadió a Irak en marzo de 2003, el movimiento antiguerra ha movilizado a cientos de miles de personas en Washington, D.C. y en otras ciudades principales.

La guerra ha continuado porque el imperialismo necesita la guerra, la conquista y las ganancias incesantes.

Pero cada movilización masiva ha presentado nuevos retos y enseñado nuevas lecciones. Las manifestaciones son escuelas de lucha.

Las protestas antes de que el Pentágono lanzara la invasión fueron en realidad más grandes que las marchas más recientes, aunque en aquel entonces la proporción de la población de los EEUU opuesta a la guerra o que siquiera pensara en la guerra era más pequeña. Los millones que participaron esperaban que una sola manifestación grande pondría un alto a la guerra imperialista inminente, una esperanza que en realidad comprobó ser una ilusión.

En las elecciones de noviembre del 2006, decenas de millones de personas esperaron que al echar la papeleta en la urna electoral, iban a acabar con la guerra. Ellas han quedado desilusionadas por el débil papel jugado por los Demócratas y quieren ver más acción en esta cuestión.

### Se precisan nuevas tácticas

Organizar un campamento en la cercanía del Capitolio durante la misma semana que el Congreso va a comenzar a votar sobre el pedido de Bush de más de \$100 mil millones adicionales para las guerras en Afganistán e Irak, es una táctica creativa. Tal acción hace recordar la Marcha de los Veteranos de los años 1930 y la Marcha de la Gente Pobre de los años 1960, — dos acciones que solidificaron la lucha.

Un campamento de 24 horas al día directamente frente al Capitolio mientras el Congreso vota sobre el auspicio de la guerra actual es un reto más enfocado a la maquinaria entera de guerra. Esta protesta combina una demanda clara para poner un alto a la ocupación del Pentágono con demandas al Congreso para que vote en contra de proporcionar fondos para la guerra.

Larry Holmes, un portavoz de la coalición “Troops Out Now” (Tropas Fuera Ya) (TONC), la organización que inició el llamado al campamento, explicó en comunicados de prensa, “Durante la semana que empieza el 12 de marzo, el Congreso empezará a votar sobre la demanda de Bush de \$100 mil millones adicionales para las guerras en Irak y Afganistán. Si el Congreso vota para cortar los fondos, pueden terminar ahora mismo la guerra y retirar las tropas. Si aprueban los fondos que pide Bush para la guerra, las muertes, los asesinatos y la ocupación continuarán. Es tan sencillo como eso. ... El movimiento contra la guerra debe estar allí para dejarle ver al Congreso que nosotros no vamos a permitirles que se salgan con la suya.

Para enfocar la atención en los fondos interminables para la guerra mientras que

los programas sociales que se necesitan desesperadamente enfrentan una nueva ronda de recortes, TONC recomienda que la gente traiga sus cuentas de luz y de gas que no han podido pagar, préstamos estudiantiles y cuentas de tarjetas de crédito. La privación enorme que una guerra crea en la vida de la gente pobre y trabajadora es un punto principal del campamento.

### La unidad es necesaria — marcha al Pentágono

La semana de acciones en marzo presenta un serio reto político a la guerra. Si los líderes del movimiento pueden usar este reto para conscientemente forjar la unidad, la lucha contra la guerra entraría en una nueva fase.

El campamento para demandar al Congreso que corte todos los fondos para la guerra ayudará a enfocar la atención de miles de activistas en la lucha que se está desarrollando en el Congreso. También va a ayudar a aumentar el interés en la marcha masiva al Pentágono, iniciada por la coalición ANSWER.

El Pentágono es un objetivo importante. La maquinaria de guerra lleva al cabo la política mortal que apenas es debatida en el Congreso y es brutalmente autorizada por la rama ejecutiva.

La Coalición Tropas Fuera Ya ayudó a formular y circular una carta firmada por muchas organizaciones importantes de la comunidad y activistas de sindicatos, organizaciones de comunidades y contra la guerra, que exhortaba a la Coalición Unida para la Paz y Justicia (UFPJ) a apoyar, endosar y trabajar para una movilización unida en Washington el 17 de marzo en frente del Pentágono en vez de dividir al movimiento al organizar una manifestación en Nueva York el día siguiente.

El mensaje de unidad para la coalición UFPJ destacaba este importante principio político: La unidad es un paso esencial hacia la revitalización del movimiento contra la guerra.

Además de movilizar a activistas que pueden venir a Washington, D.C. temprano para una lucha resuelta frente al Congreso, TONC está organizando autobuses para ir a Washington el 17 de marzo desde Nueva York, Boston, Oeste de Mass., Detroit, Buffalo, Filadelfia, Raleigh y Atlanta.

Más allá de Capitol Hill, donde se reúne el Congreso, y más allá de las torres de las altas finanzas y las instituciones que fomentan las ideas capitalistas, hay una enorme oposición a la guerra. Ya es la hora de traer esa oposición a Washington para rodear el Congreso, para enfocarnos en el rol del Partido Democrático como co-conspiradores en la guerra, y para demandar: ¡Ni un centavo más! ¡Que retiren las tropas inmediatamente! □

**¡Movilización unida en Washington el 17 de marzo en frente del Pentágono!**

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