

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

MAY 17, 2007

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May 17 is Free Mumia Time!

The challenge: racist police terror must not win!



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By Larry Holmes and Monica Moorehead

MUMIA Abu-Jamal's struggle for freedom finally has another day in court. That day is Thursday, May 17, at 9:30 a.m. in the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals at 6th and Market Streets in downtown Philadelphia.

This is a rare event. It has been almost six years since Mumia's struggle for freedom has had a day in court. The last one was Aug. 17, 2001. That was only weeks before Bush and the capitalist ruling class here started using 9/11 as an excuse to invade and occupy first Afghanistan and then Iraq, and open up a new phase of U.S. imperialism's endless war against the people of the world, including those here at home, most notably now the survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The government has always had two plans for Mumia: plan A to execute him and plan B to relegate him to life in prison without parole. The government's hope was that 9/11 would help them carry out plan B, and maybe even plan A.

The police, the judges, the politicians and the super-rich people whose interests they serve hoped that in a climate of war and repression against immigrants, against youths of color, against women, against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people, and against civil liberties, people would be too busy fighting an avalanche of attacks to keep the movement to free Mumia alive.

But the world has not forgotten about Mumia. One of the principal reasons that Mumia remains on our mind is that freedom fighters like Pam Africa and Julia Wright from International Concerned

Family and Friends of Mumia have worked tirelessly with many others to hold together the world movement to free Mumia.

Another reason that Mumia will never be just a memory is Mumia himself. Mumia has never forgotten the world. Even from his tiny death-row prison cell in a remote area near the Pennsylvania/West Virginia border, Mumia Abu-Jamal continues to write and speak on the important issues of the day such as on Don Imus, the Virginia Tech killings, immigrant rights, Katrina, Iraq, Cuba, Africa and Venezuela. His most recent book, "We Want Freedom," is a loving, passionate tribute to the Black Panther Party, which he joined as a youth in Philadelphia.

It seems that no matter how hard the government tries to murder, demonize or bury Mumia, they cannot silence the "voice

Continued on page 7

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Immigrant organizer demands

'Fair legalization & worker protection'

Christine Neumann-Ortiz, director of the Milwaukee-based *Voces de la Frontera*, spoke with *Workers World* reporter Bryan G. Pfeifer at the "A Day Without Latinos" Statewide Civil Rights March and Boycott, May 1, in Milwaukee, Wis.

Voces de la Frontera, a member of the Wisconsin Legalization Coalition, was the main organizer of the march and rally of over 80,000, one of the largest progressive events in state history and one of the largest actions in the U.S. for May Day 2007. May Day 2006 in Milwaukee drew 70,000.

Workers World: Why are you marching today?

Christine Neumann-Ortiz: We're marching as part as a national day of action for more comprehensive immigration reform.

WW: What has been the response in the Latin@ community, labor and other community organizations to this march and rally?

CNO: It's been phenomenal. It's very comparable to May 1 last year. So it's again one of the largest marches in Wisconsin's history.

WW: What are the demands of this march and rally and where are you going from here?

CNO: The most fundamental demand is fair legalization, by which we mean fixing our immigration system in a way that is going to lead to a path of earned citizenship for people who are already in this country. And something that is going to maintain strong workers' rights protections for people within the country or for any immigrant in this country regardless of immigration status.

We want strong worker protections and benefits for all workers. And we want increased visas to address the tremendous backlog in family visas, so families can be united and not have to be concerned about whether they're not going to see their husbands or wives or children again. And then of course an end to the dastardly policy of just militarizing more and more of the border which is causing more people to die.



Christine Neumann-Ortiz

And an end to the raids because I think the whole agenda behind the raids is an attempt to disorganize and intimidate. It's also been part of the agenda and effort to really disintegrate the Latino family structure, which has been a source of strength for these families. ... And the raids tear families apart. They're [the government] doing this in very violent ways: sending in automatic weapons, coming into peoples homes, coming into their workplace, treating them as if they were mass murderers. ... So I think people are making a statement today that we're not going to be intimidated. We're not going to be driven into the shadows. We expect respect.

WW: What do you see as a connection between the immigrant rights movement and the anti-war movement and why does *Voces de la Frontera* work to unite these two struggles?

CNO: Because you see the same companies benefiting off militarization abroad that are benefiting from the criminalization of the immigrant community and the militarization of the border. Boeing, GE, Halliburton. The very same companies who've been exposed for corporate corruption in the war that now 70 percent of the American public recognizes as an illegitimate war are the very same companies that stand to gain and are gaining from this attack on immigrants. And it really serves this function.

And part of the other reason we felt it was important [to unite the immigrant and anti-war movement] was because these issues were being pitted against each other when we were talking to elected officials. ... When you consider that \$467 billion has been spent on the Iraq war this year alone and then immigrants are being used as the scapegoat for all of the economic problems.

The other critical point that I think is never really talked about enough is the fact that the undocumented workers, young men 18 to 25, are required, like U.S. citizens, to enroll in the Selective Service for an emergency draft. So you have to wonder if the whole justification for denying them citizenship is that they're a national security threat yet that same government forces, requires legally with a threat of incarceration, undocumented young men to enroll in an emergency draft to fight and die for this country. So that's the kind of hypocrisy in the system. □

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San Francisco 8 shackled in court

By V. Edwards
San Francisco

Seven of the former Black Panthers known as the "San Francisco 8"—Richard O'Neal, Richard Brown, Ray Boudreaux, Harold Taylor, Hank Jones, Frank Torres and Anthony Bottom—were brought into a San Francisco courtroom in shackles on May 5, despite past objections by the defense.

Jalil Muntaquim (Anthony Bottom), imprisoned in New York, is awaiting a decision on his challenges to extradition.

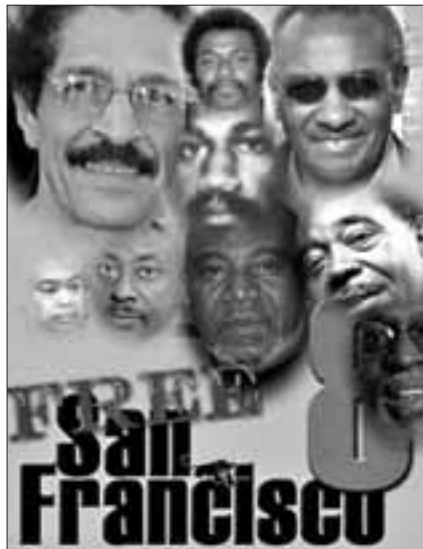
The courtroom was packed with supporters.

The defense requested motions

on bail, which is now set at \$3 million for each defendant. Judge Little announced that the case is being transferred to Judge Philip Moscone.

As this brief hearing ended, one of the defendants turned to face supporters, smiled and lifted his fist high. The people immediately responded by raising their fists and calling out words of encouragement and support.

The next hearing is on June 11 at 9 a.m. in Dept. 21. A rally will take place at 8 a.m., in front of the court building at 850 Bryant St. For more information, flyers and to make donations, visit: www.cdhrsupport.org. □



"San Francisco 8"—Richard O'Neal, Richard Brown, Ray Boudreaux, Harold Taylor, Hank Jones, Frank Torres and Anthony Bottom.

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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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Protests denounce police terror against immigrant march

By John Parker
Los Angeles

In reaction to growing anger over life-threatening police brutality against women, men and children, a police commission hearing was held May 8 at LAPD headquarters downtown, starting at 2 p.m. By 4 p.m. many people were still waiting to speak. Most of them called for the firing of Police Chief William Bratton.

Outside the hearing, loud and militant chants could be heard from in front of police headquarters. Chanters were calling the police pigs, lackeys and terrorists. The tone of this demonstration was angry and militant.

Cop Watch, a group that videotapes police on the streets, organized the action. At MacArthur Park during the May Day demonstration for immigrant rights, Cop Watch members had been assaulted by police trying to terrorize the crowd.

A Cop Watch organizer addressed the rally, saying: "When the police come to us with clubs we need to meet them with clubs, when they come to us with shotguns we need to meet them with shotguns, when they come to us with a marshmallow we need to beat the hell out of them with a marshmallow."

Cops had beat and clubbed people and then shot 240 rounds of rubber bullets against a very peaceful demonstration soon after the May 1 Boycott action held



TV camera operator beaten by Los Angeles police.

at City Hall. Anger against this police terror has been spreading as the video of the incident is shown almost daily on major television networks.

The video shows indiscriminate military-style and humiliating attacks against a crowd in a park that contained many children. Victims of the assault also included celebrity journalists from the Spanish-language news media.

People are also angry at Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who was quick to show his support for Chief Bratton despite this racist police assault. On May 7 Villaraigosa implied that his decision over whether to renew Bratton's contract would not be swayed by these events.

Bratton's contract is due for renewal this year. It is expected to be approved, although the only action Bratton has taken to discipline the cops has been to reassign two officers. Bratton told the media, "This

is not a witch hunt. This is not a feeling of having to 'hang 'em high'....Not a single Metro officer at this time has been suspended. There is no rush to judgment by me."

The video clearly shows exactly what happened and who was responsible for the cop riot, from the commanding officers down to the club-swinging, shotgun-toting cops. It belies the early police excuses that the police attack was a response to "anarchists."

According to the police, about 30—down from their May 5 estimate of 100—youth are to blame for provoking the cops. But instead of isolating these individuals, who the cops claim were throwing bottles at them, the police pushed the youths into the park a considerable distance until they were forced into the demonstration. The cops then began their racist riot.

Lawsuits have been filed and immigrant rights movement organizers are strategizing as to the next action. Many—including leaders of the March 25th Coalition, whose march of almost 100,000 earlier on May 1 was temporarily disrupted by police interference—believe the attack was a conscious decision made by top city and perhaps state officials to attempt to squash the immigrant rights movement and the rebirth of May Day as a workers' holiday here in the U.S.

For this and many other reasons, it is vital that solidarity for the immigrant struggle from the progressive and anti-war movement continue to grow. □

From Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row

Viva May Day!



The following transcript is from an audio message played at May Day rallies around the country. Go to prisonradio.org to hear more commentaries by Mumia.

On the move! Long Live John Africa. There are only two peoples living on the land we call America who weren't immigrants—the Indigenous, so-called Indians—and African Americans who were dragged here in chains and terror.

Every other person immigrated here or his ancestors did from Europe, from China, from India, from Ireland and yes, from Mexico. Truth be told, America was a land of Spanish settlement long before it became English and there's the rub.

The brouhaha over immigration today is mostly a fear of the browning of America. Imagine that. The people who originally lived in what's now California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, easily a third of what's now known as the United States, are to be seen as permanent outsiders, invaders even, because of their brown skins, their Spanish speech, their Catholicism, and their unremitting hunger for land and labor.

On this May Day, a day sanctified for labor, how can we turn our backs on some of the hardest-working people in America? Don't alienate them; organize them. Bring them into the farm workers' union. Draft them into a national carpenters' union. After all, ain't they workers? Celebrate May Day by building workers' movements. On the move! Viva May Day! From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. □

BOOKS BY MUMIA

We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party is an important history of the founding of the Philadelphia Black Panther Party.

Mumia, known to the world as a wrongly convicted political prisoner held for 25 years in Pennsylvania's death row, is exacting and luminous in his history and analysis of the Black liberation struggle. South End Press, 2004, Paperback: 320pp,

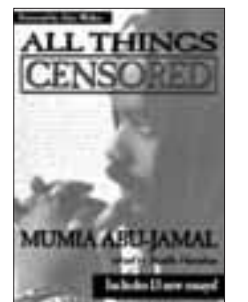


All Things Censored, is Mumia Abu-Jamal's major release with more than 75 writings, composed by Mumia with the cartridge of a ball point pen — in his death row cell.

He writes on the ironies that abound within the U.S. prison system, the consequences of those ironies for us all, and his own case.

Mumia's composure, humor, and connection to the living world around him represents an irrefutable victory over the "corrections" system that has for two decades sought to isolate and silence him.

Seven Stories Press, 2000, Soft Cover, 334 p.p., Photos, Art



"They want me to die alone—silently."
—Mumia Abu-Jamal

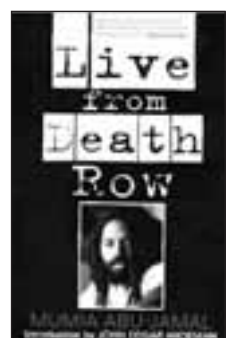
Live from Death Row

is a collection of prison writings—an account of the brutalities and humiliations of prison life. It is also a indictment of racism and political bias in the U.S. judicial system and the death penalty.

"A tough, true, timely book. You cannot read it and remain unmoved." —E.L. Doctorow

A rare and courageous voice speaking from a place we fear to know: Mumia Abu-Jamal must be heard. —Alice Walker

Avon Books, 1996, Paperback, 188pp



The books above are available at www.leftbooks.com

Young hunger strikers demand immigrant rights

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

Over a dozen activists in Houston's Latino community began a six-day hunger strike on May Day, called by the Coalition in Defense of Immigrants. Each day the fasters sat outside for eight hours in front of a different location, including the headquarters of both major electoral parties, the office of U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas), and in two popular community parks.

Each day members of the coalition as well as other organizations and activists came out to support the strike. On the last day, the crowd in Moody Park was treated to hours of Indigenous dances from Mexico. The performers were in strikingly colorful Native clothing and headdresses adorned with long pheasant feathers, considered sacred by Indigenous people.

Six youths fasted for the full six days and others participated for a day or two in solidarity. In the initial press statement, the coalition stated, "We are coming



Hunger strikers at Burnet Bayland Park.

together in condemnation of our society's shameful treatment of immigrants and its unwillingness to protect their fundamental human rights and dignity." News

coverage was generated in Houston for immigrant rights and against the raids, particularly in El Dia, Houston's daily Spanish-language paper. □

MSU students protest racist 'minuteman'

By Cheryl LaBash
Detroit

Wherever racist anti-immigrant so-called "minuteman" Chris Simcox appears, student protests erupt. When Simcox appeared at Michigan State University on April 19, though, the school administration and campus police worked hand in hand with Simcox and racist student organizations like Young Americans for Freedom to brutalize Latin@ students and suppress anti-racist protest, arresting five students. Two are charged with felonies.

On April 20, holding a large banner, "Ningún ser humano es ilegal! No human being is illegal" Latin@ students and their

supporters told the story of how Latin@ and other students of color were singled out for repression. "I was one of the first people asked to leave, and I was one of the last to exit," said Margo Cotter, who is white. "I don't know if it would have been different had I been a person of color, but the only logical answer to that in my mind is 'yes.'"

Campus cops climbed over white protesters to attack people of color, taking their cues from the right-wing students who pointed out Latinos for arrest. The first person ushered out by the police was a Muslim woman who sat quietly in the meeting, had no sign and didn't chant. University administration officials looked on approvingly and stayed inside the rac-

ist meeting, although students called out to them as they were removed from the room and arrested.

Students are demanding that the university drop the charges and instead take action against the racist anti-immigrant and anti-LGBT organizers on campus. All events are documented on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZT84sMUwNu0&mode=related&search=)

In an escalation of repression against Latin@ activists, police raided an off-campus home two weeks after the MSU arrests.

Last fall a coalition of student groups including LGBT campus organizations forced the university to cancel a racist anti-immigrant "game." □

The Flint sit-down strike

Workers confronted state repression

By Martha Grevatt

In today's political climate, many union activists are focused on 2008 and "taking back" the White House for the Democratic Party, cleaving to the premise that the Democrats are the party of the working class.

Others more critical of the current Democratic Party leadership, who want to take "their" party back, clamor for a return to the New Deal "democracy" under Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was president from 1933 to 1945.

However, a closer look at the role of the state during the Flint sit-down strike and the whole labor upsurge of the 1930s shows a different picture.

Unquestionably, the Roosevelt administration enacted a huge number of bold progressive measures, but as Workers World Party founder Sam Marcy pointed out in a 1995 article in Workers World newspaper, "Roosevelt was able to do this based on the virtual breakdown of the capitalist system.

EUROPE

Workers promise 'war' if auto giants close

By Martha Grevatt

The struggle continues to save 1,600 Delphi workers' jobs in Cádiz, Spain. Since the announced plant closing earlier this year, there has been no let up in the militancy in streets throughout the Andalucía region. There have been huge protests, a sit-down and a general strike April 18 in 14 cities. Delphi unions took part in the huge May Day protests across Spain. On at least three occasions, most recently May 7, workers have blocked roads with burning barricades.

The workers are singing "No Nos Moverán"—the Spanish translation of the old labor standard, "We Shall Not Be Moved." They chant "Si Delphi cierra, guerra, guerra, guerra." (If Delphi closes, war, war, war) However, the most popular banner slogan, "Delphi is not closing,"

The context for his initiatives and imaginative legislation was an insurgent working class. The working class was beginning to assert itself in an unprecedented way, and was entirely in accord with the revolutionary working-class struggles in Europe. Roosevelt's politics reflected the need to deal with the urgency of the economic situation and the militancy of the workers."

The National Recovery Act, the cornerstone of New Deal politics, could not by itself hold back the violence of the capitalist state against the working class. Scores of striking workers were murdered by police or by extra-legal goon squads while the police looked on. Untold numbers were beaten, shot at, wounded, arrested and fired, and even their young children were terrorized. The worst violence occurred in 1937, the year of the sit-down victory, during the



LABOR HISTORY

Little Steel Strike. Eighteen pickets were gunned down, including 10 who died in Chicago during the infamous Memorial Day Massacre.

During the Flint strike itself, the unarmed workers faced a military alliance of General Motors (GM), the city administration, the judges, the police, the National Guard and armed vigilantes whom the city manager had deputized. During the Jan. 11 "Battle of the Running Bulls," retreating cops managed to shoot and wound 14 strikers and supporters.

Union leaders Bob Travis, Victor and Roy Reuther, Henry Kraus and three others were arrested and charged with unlawful assembly and malicious destruction of property, charges which were later dropped. A Feb. 2 injunction not only demanded the eviction of the strikers inside the plants but banned peaceful picketing outside.

GM strikers in Anderson, Ind., had to conduct their struggle in a total police state atmosphere. The "Citizens League" of 300 local businessmen told organizer Hugh Thompson to "get out of Anderson, and do it now, while it is still safe." A Jan. 25 union meeting had to be canceled after League threats. Later that night GM foremen beat up union supporters, and a pro-company mob laid siege to the union hall. Thompson, 13 other adults and a four-year-old were escorted out by police and sheriffs and taken to jail, from where Thompson fled the town.

Union leaders were beaten up and driven from Saginaw, Mich., in a similar fashion, with GM foremen again recognized among the goons who attacked them.

Where were the Democratic friends of labor? Why could they not take legal action against government agents who were violating First Amendment rights? Is it not illegal for government to deny a group of people their constitutional rights?

Later, when the sit-down wave subsided, only a handful of Democrats in Congress opposed a 1938 bill making the sit-down tactic illegal—a bill that Roosevelt signed. That same year, Democratic Rep.

Martin Dies from Colorado began hearings of the House Special Committee on Un-American Activities, denouncing the sit-down strike as Communist-led. Four days of testimony attacked even Michigan Gov. Frank Murphy for "treasonable action" in failing to enforce the above-mentioned injunction.

Murphy is one whom sit-down historians generally portray in a favorable light, calling him a "peacemaker" or even a "man of principle." The governor played the key role of mediator in this historic showdown between labor and capital. It was undeniable that Murphy was under tremendous and conflicting pressures: on the one hand from the insurgent workers' movement that had just elected him and on the other from "the lawful owners" of industry and their money-fearing subordinates in Washington. His personal sympathies may well have been with the workers. Yet by February Murphy was finally prepared to order the National Guard to evict the strikers from the plants they had occupied since December 1936. He had secretly shared with Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) head John L. Lewis a letter to that effect.

There was no order to fire. On Feb. 9 Lewis informed the governor "that when you issue that order I shall enter one of those plants with my own people ... and the militia will have the pleasure of shooting me out of the plants." Earlier, Murphy had received a telegram from the strikers informing him that they would disregard an injunction ordering them out by Feb. 3. "We fully expect that if a violent effort is made to oust us, many of us will be killed," the telegram read. "If this result follows from the attempt to eject us, you are the one who must be held responsible for our deaths." It was not the strength of Murphy's supposedly tortured conscience but the strength of the determined workers, personified in Lewis's defiance, that stayed the hand of the capitalist state and brought GM to the bargaining table.

Praise belongs not to the peacemakers who only mediate the conditions of exploitation, nor to the politicians who make concessions in the heat of battle. It belongs to those courageous workers who put their lives on the line for the betterment of their class. □

Con Edison and the subways: greed kills

By G. Dunkel
New York

Con Edison is leading a determined campaign that critics say will bilk and endanger its customers, and overload and underpay its workers.

After stray voltage from Con Edison killed a woman who fell on a metal utility-hole cover while walking her dog in 2004, the company agreed to spend \$10 million to detect stray voltage on the streets of New York City to settle the lawsuit her family brought.

However, the first four months of this year, according to a Con Edison spokesperson, nearly 2,000 hot spots were identified, twice the rate of last year. The workforce at Con Edison is so depleted that there is no way workers can get repair crews to many of these spots in a timely fashion.

So the company began hiring livery drivers to park near the hot spots and to put up cones and warning signs. When the Utility Workers Union of America Local 1-2 noticed what was going on, it com-

plained to the Public Service Commission (PSC).

"You wouldn't want a limousine driver to respond to a fire until the Fire Department could get there any more than you would want a limo driver to respond to a Con Edison emergency," said John Duffy, vice president of Local 1-2.

The PSC ignored the union's complaints.

While Con Edison ducked the question, some reporters checked the limousine companies and estimated that about 1,000 drivers got an 8-hour shift doing Con Edison's "public warning" duty at \$150 a shift.

The PSC has been currently forced to conduct hearings on why Con Edison took 10 days to restore service last summer to 150,000 customers in northwest Queens during a heat wave. The union's position on the cause of the power outage is that Con Edison basically is not maintaining its distribution network to the level it should.

The thousands of extremely dangerous hot spots throughout New York City are

another sign of this lack of maintenance.

But Con Ed bosses obviously feel no shame. Con Ed just filed a petition with the PSC on May 4 for a rate increase that would bring in an additional \$1.2 billion a year. Residential rates would go up by 17 percent a year and commercial rates by 10.6 percent.

Con Edison is not the only large institution in New York that ignores safety and maintenance. The past two weeks saw two subway track workers killed.

At one incident, when track workers tried to turn off power to the third rail, they found the emergency switch didn't work. They ran to the other end of the platform and pulled that emergency switch. It

didn't work. They had to go outside and across the street to a fare booth that was still staffed to ask central control to turn off the power.

The subsequent investigation revealed that 70 emergency switches in the system don't work and weren't marked.

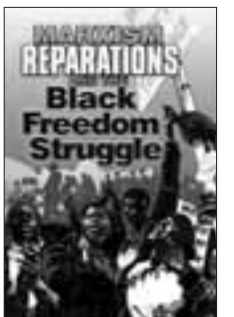
Now they are marked and the Transit Authority, which runs the New York City subways, has promised to fix them as "soon as possible."

The TA is hinting that the workers involved in these tragedies were taking shortcuts. One of the survivors, speaking at the funeral of his co-worker, made it clear that they were doing exactly what they were told to do. □

Marxism, Reparations & the Black Freedom Struggle

A new book from World View Forum

The following sections present an outline of the contents • Black liberation & the working-class struggle • The material basis for reparations in the U.S. • Brief overview of racist oppression & heroic resistance • What Hurricane Katrina exposed to the world • Africa: A battleground against colonialism and for sovereignty • Justice for the Caribbean • A salute to women revolutionaries. • Why fight-back is inevitable • Black labor and class solidarity
Order online from Leftbooks.com



Building support for Mumia

'Don't let them kill an innocent man'

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Hot off the presses and flying off the shelves! With the bold banner headline "Don't let them kill an innocent man," a new four-page newsletter, designed to raise awareness about Mumia Abu-Jamal's 25-year-long struggle to win freedom from Pennsylvania's death row, is being enthusiastically received all over Philadelphia.

"I never had people take papers like this before," sister Pam Africa from International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal told *Workers World*. "You go into a place and put down a stack of papers. Before you get home, people are calling asking for more!"

Africa reported that the newsletter is particularly popular at the North Philadelphia office of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, where they were excited to see that it includes an article on UNIA founder Marcus Garvey focused around the struggle for immigrant rights. The Honorable Marcus Garvey was an immigrant worker from Jamaica who

was deported in 1927.

"The newsletter provides facts about Mumia's case, but it also covers a lot more issues including the war, police brutality, the elections, and it has articles in Spanish." Africa noted: "It makes the point that all these struggles are really one. People especially liked the 'Peoples' Ballot' mail-in coupon where they could check off 'I vote for a NEW TRIAL for Mumia Abu-Jamal'.

"When I went to visit Mumia at SCI-Green I handed them out to family members of other death row prisoners on the bus who all wanted more copies to take back home."

Thanks to the volunteer efforts of just a few individuals, over 15,000 copies of the newsletter were given out in New York City and Philadelphia in less than a week. Now calls are coming in from other cities asking for the papers.

Throughout Philadelphia wherever papers have been dropped off, at laundromats, barber shops, delis, beauty parlors, pizza or Chinese take-out shops, the response has been the same. One west Philly pizza shop owner told a volunteer, "You know the cops won't like this, but you can

leave a big stack right here on the counter."

At a nearby beauty salon on 52nd Street, customers got out of their chairs to get papers, excited to hear that Abu-Jamal's case was finally going to be heard in the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals, but angry that the state has never released him from death row.

Further down the street at the corner of Baltimore and 52nd, one man told of growing up listening to Abu-Jamal's radio commentaries. He'd already given away his first copy of the newsletter to his father so he took another, and then took a stack that he started handing out on the spot.

When an elderly African-American man with limited vision received the paper and learned what it was about he asked the volunteer to repeat the details of Abu-Jamal's upcoming hearing on May 17 at 9 am at the federal courthouse at 6th and Market Streets several times so he could remember it. "I'll be there!" he promised.

At Market and 11th Streets in Center City, one man out shopping with his children took a paper and commented that he wished he could still hear Abu-Jamal's radio commentaries. He was thrilled

to learn that they are available on line through www.prisonradio.org.

With less than two weeks before Abu-Jamal's critical hearing on four appeals of his 1982 conviction, getting out information on his case and letting people know about the May 17 hearings is the number-one priority. The Fraternal Order of Police has been on a neo-fascistic rampage trying to silence support for Abu-Jamal as the court date draws closer. Just like Bush administration cover-ups around the war in Iraq, the FOP is trying to stop the truth about Abu-Jamal from getting out.

When the Third Circuit Court of Appeals reviews the case it will decide whether Mumia Abu-Jamal gets a new trial, life in prison without parole, or execution. The whole world is watching how the Third Circuit will rule.

We must let them know where we stand: Only Mumia's release or a new trial is acceptable! Go to www.millions4mumia.org to download the "Don't Let Them Kill an Innocent Man" newspaper, the May 17 leaflet and poster. To buy New York bus tickets to go to Philadelphia on May 17, call 212-633-6646. □

The whip of reaction

Supreme Court sides with anti-woman ideologues

By **Kris Hamel**

The April 18 U.S. Supreme Court decision restricting women's right to abortion will go down in history as a landmark reactionary ruling, with far-reaching consequences for reproductive rights and women's rights in general. The court's five to four ruling in *Gonzalez vs. Carhart et al.* is a vicious attack meant to signal that women's right to choose abortion may be overturned by the high court altogether in the not too distant future. (www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions)

Chief Justice John Roberts joined Justices Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, Antonin Scalia and Anthony Kennedy—who wrote the decision—in overturning three rulings by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the second, eighth, and ninth federal judicial circuits, which had found the "Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act" unconstitutional for failing to protect women's health.

The grossly misnamed federal law was passed by Congress and signed by President George W. Bush in 2003, but was never enforced because of legal challenges led by Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Abortion Federation and the Center for Reproductive Rights.

The Supreme Court, in upholding the 2003 federal ban, essentially ruled as illegal certain procedures used in post-first-trimester abortions, procedures referred to by physicians and the medical community as dilation and extraction (D&X) or intact dilation and evacuation (D&E). Medical professionals have decried the term "partial birth abortion" as a politically charged and unscientific term meant to restrict women's right to exercise medical options that are often the safest and best for them.

The Court's decision ominously overturns 34 years of precedent by providing no exceptions for the health of women. The court ignored decades of its own legal standards by ruling that restrictive measures on women's health are no longer considered an "undue burden" in outlawing certain abortions.

Medical opinion and expertise are no



WWPHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Hundreds of thousands of women defend abortion rights, Washington, D.C., April 2004.

longer allowed a role in women's and doctor decisions on the best type of post-first-trimester abortion procedure for a particular patient. Decades of legislative and judicial rulings guided by the principle of safeguarding women's health have been tossed aside with the stroke of a pen, with the justices providing no cogent reason in their decision.

While many people erroneously believe that only women who are too "lazy," "selfish," "irresponsible" or "intellectually diminished" could "put off" having abortions in the first trimester, nothing could be further from the truth. The federal abortion ban will especially affect older women, who after second-trimester amniocentesis may find out they are carrying a dead or dying fetus or one with severe problems such as hydrocephalus. These are the women most at risk for serious pregnancy complications, including pre-eclampsia and other severe medical problems.

The ban will also affect younger women who because of fear, lack of correct information and finances, and the inability to control their life's circumstances, are not able to deal with an unwanted pregnancy until after the first 12 weeks.

The law's vague and unscientific lan-

guage also puts a cloud of doubt on procedures used for first-trimester abortions as well. Anti-choice advocates have uniformly expressed glee that laws introducing more abortion restrictions without regard to a pregnant woman's health or the stage of fetal development will now be passed and legally upheld.

The Supreme Court stated in its decision that the 2003 federal law "... appl[ies] both pre-viability and post-viability because ... a fetus is a living organism while within the womb, whether or not it is viable outside the womb." (550 U.S. 2007, at 17) Advocates of "fetal personhood" are now emboldened to push for laws wherein women's rights will be secondary to the rights of fetuses.

On April 19, the day after the Court's decision, legislators in Michigan and Louisiana introduced their own versions of the "partial birth abortion" ban, with at least four other states following suit.

Both sides of the "abortion debate" agree that further restrictions to reproductive rights will soon proliferate and challenge *Roe vs. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion as part of a woman's right to medical privacy.

The 2008 legislative season is already

being called a "free-for-all" with the expectation that dozens of states will introduce and pass restrictions on women's right to abortion. One or more of these laws will then be reviewed by the high court, which is now postured to overturn *Roe*.

The majority opinion written by Kennedy is a highly reactionary political document that adopts and embraces the language of anti-choice rhetoric and unproven, unscientific notions regarding women and abortion. In the 39-page decision, the term "mother," ostensibly meant to indicate a pregnant woman, is used 23 times. Female anatomical terms are used over 36 times; "baby" or "infant" is used 11 times, and the word "kill" 28 times.

Even the words "love" and "moral" are included in the decision—for example: "Respect for human life finds an ultimate expression in the bond of love the mother has for her child. The Act recognizes this reality as well. Whether to have an abortion requires a difficult and painful moral decision ... While we find no reliable data to measure the phenomenon, it seems unexceptionable to conclude some women come to regret their choice to abort the infant life they once created and sustained." (550 U.S. 2007, at 28-29)

The decision accepts the unproven and unscientific idea touted by right-wing anti-choice ideologues that choosing abortion somehow "hurts women" and women must be protected from regretting their decisions. But there is no reputable scientific study of any kind that proves that abortion harms women psychologically or physically.

The court's language in *Carhart* has been universally condemned by women's rights advocates as paternalistic and condescending toward women. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, the only woman on the court, in the dissent on behalf of herself, John Paul Stevens, David Souter and Stephen Breyer, wrote: "The Court offers flimsy and transparent justifications for upholding a nationwide ban on intact D&E [without] any exception to safeguard a woman's health. ... [T]he Court deprives

Continued on page 9

PURE statement in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Panthers United for Revolutionary Education is a group of revolutionary prisoners on Texas death row. They composed the following statement in solidarity with the April 24 rally for Mumia in Philadelphia. Go to www.workers.org/2007/us/mumia-0510/

Big ups to all attending the April 24 event for Brother Mumia!

Of all the gatherings that PURE has been encouraged to send greetings of solidarity to, this one ranks the highest. PURE

has a true interest in being here today, an obligation, in fact.

Comrade Mumia is an ex-Black Panther and our organization, Panthers United for Revolutionary Education, is a product of the Panthers. Thus, it is safe to say that Mumia is our beginning.

Living as we do under the most austere conditions of prisons, in what is arguably the most racist and backward state of the union, Texas, we are indeed amongst the most oppressed and repressed. We

are poor. But without you, the people, we would be powerless. And without our brother, Mumia, we would be voiceless. So our interest here is clear and direct.

Let us make clear, also, this oh-so-shocking truth: Our brother and comrade Mumia is in the hands of killers! Killers who prefer to do their dirty deeds in the dark and are therefore waiting with the patience of a snake for you to grow tired; tired of turning out; tired of holding vigil; tired of being inconvenienced by sacri-

ficing so much and just plain ole tired of being tired.

Yes, it is this day—this night, rather—that they wait and relish. The night that we're worn down by attrition, the night that we blow out the candles to rest our weary minds and bodies.

But we have bad news for those laying in wait. We won't ever get that tired! Y'all hear me? I said, WE WON'T EVER GET THAT TIRED! And those that are waiting will die waiting.

We know we don't have much time and our statement should be short. But let us touch briefly on why we must not fall asleep and why Mumia's life is in such great danger.

It is often said that Mumia is the most recognized political prisoner in the United States. We have no interest in arguing semantics, but Mumia is a POW. This fact must be recognized for a full appreciation of what the brother is facing.

The U.S. government literally declared war on the Black Panther Party.

Of all the progressive nationalist organizations, civil-rights groups, and revolutionary formations of the 1960s and 1970s, the Panthers were declared the number-one threat to the country and were targeted for annihilation.

The assassinations, the frame-ups, the forced exiles, the infiltrations and agitation that had Panthers turning on Panthers are all recorded in history. To this day ex-Panthers are still doing prison time, living in exile and being rounded up. Why? What makes them different from other groups?

The difference is that most liberation organizations of those times were mere irritations to the state because they only demanded reforms within the constraints of the capitalist state. But the Panthers attacked the state itself, subscribing as they did to Marxism as a revolutionary tool and scientific guide for understanding revolutionary theory and for applying revolutionary action.

At the time, the government was fighting against communism everywhere—Asia, Africa, the Soviet Union, in its own backyard of Central and South America, and in its own midst, the Panthers here at home.

Mumia left the Panthers because of agent provocateurs, but never ceased to challenge the politics of national oppression, the outgrowth of imperialism, as well as racism and sexism, the outgrowth of capitalism.

Mumia was then, and is now, a soldier for the people. He is our voice, our great inspiration.

Our esteemed chairman, Howard Guidry, explains Mumia best: "From the isolation block of Texas' most prided plantation and in spite of all of the artificial forces unleashed to erode and mentally break us, we wish you all to know that our beloved brotha Mumia's voice, image and determination have exemplified the very revolutionary torch that has been passed on from our predecessors."

Thank you! Power to the People!
In solidarity,
Muenda, Prime Minister, PURE

Prison officials discriminate against Muslim prisoners

Following are excerpts from an April 2007 letter. The writer is the brother of Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan, one of the Lucasville 5 political prisoners in Ohio.

At Smith State Prison (SSP) in Georgia, a memorandum was posted prohibiting group gatherings in the common area (dayroom/dormitory), wherein Muslim prisoners would no longer be allowed to enjoy making congregational prayer and are now only allowed to pray in their respective cells. Prior to this memorandum being issued, Muslim prisoners were able to pray in congregation with no problems occurring and without any major complaints from prison officials.

However, on Feb. 15, the wardens at SSP announced—in a private meeting with me and five other Muslim prisoners—that we were prohibited any further congregational prayers in the common area within the dorms.

In support of this prohibition prison officials have equated Islamic Congregational Prayers (ICP) as "group activities," which are subject to prohibition on the grounds of "institutional safety" and "security." One has to question the reason for this sudden prohibition when there had been

no problems in the past with Muslims coming together to make congregational prayer, and where it appears this new prohibition only seems to be slated toward Muslim prisoners.

For example, as many as four prisoners are allowed to sit together and interact in various activities, i.e., playing cards, watching TV, or even to conduct bible study and discuss religious issues—in which some of these gatherings have exceeded over 40 prisoners at one time—yet prison officials seem not to have any safety and security concerns from such non-Muslim gatherings. It seems ironic that men who seek to pray together would be looked upon as a sudden problem and thus denied the right to pray in congregation, unless there is a hidden agenda for this denial.

Denying Muslim prisoners from being able to come together for this solemn act of worship can lead to other problems, i.e., disrupting their cellmate which can lead to hostility and aggression because there's very limited space in the cell and when you have two men occupying a cell, it doesn't leave much room to move around.

Not only that, it creates problems for the non-Muslim (living in the cell) to be disrupted, for they may be sleeping or

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

working on their legal case, etc.

What is happening right now are the same kind of things that caused conditions to break down in other prisons where riots have occurred, for example, the riot at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (SOCF) in Lucasville, Ohio.

It was the Warden (Tate) at SOCF who came out with orders to suddenly FORCE Muslim prisoners to take a TB test that contained "phenol," which is prohibited to Muslims because it contains alcohol. Alcohol in any form is prohibited to Muslims. As a result of Warden Tate's orders, it caused the longest riot in U.S. history to occur on April 13, 1993, where lives were lost and five men wrongfully accused, convicted and now reside on death row.

A grievance was filed on Feb. 20 to address the situation, citing religious discrimination and the right to exercise religious freedom under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Person Act. However, the response received from prison officials dated March 7 was met with resistance—a refusal to rescind the prohibition.

An appeal was filed and sent to the Warden, who also denied the grievance, on March 9. At present, the Warden's response is being appealed as of March 14 seeking relief in this matter.

Understanding the nature of prison officials and their need to deny prisoners at every turn, we are appealing to you—the Public—to help us in this matter. You may help us by contacting the following parties: Don Jarriel, Warden; Dan Dasher, Deputy Warden (in charge of Security) and Wayne Johnson, Deputy Warden (in charge of Care and Treatment) by phoning: (912) 654-5033 or (912) 654-5000. [Please ask for the extension of whomever you wish to speak to.]

With your help, we can, at least, get the attention of these officials where they will know WE ARE NOT ALONE. To obtain more explicit details regarding this matter please contact me.

Abdus-Salam Karim
(aka Walter Sanders, Jr. #269802)
Smith State Prison
P.O. Box 726 Glennville, GA 30427
Prisonersolidarity.org

Activities to support the MOVE 9!

Following excerpts are from the MOVE organization.

May 13 marks 22 years since vicious governmental bombing and murder of innocent MOVE family members, including babies and animals. The root of that vicious attack is the government's attempt to put an end to our unrelenting fight for the release of our innocent family members, the MOVE 9, who have been in prison for almost 30 years now, since 1978. Our fight has never ended.

The parole date for the MOVE 9 is Aug. 8, 2008, and they're beginning the parole process now. For this and many other reasons we are commemorating the May 13, 1985, bombing of MOVE people with a working session on the issue of parole for the MOVE 9 and political prisoners in general, and also a demonstration at the liberty bell in center city Philadelphia, to expose the contradictions and vicious-

ness of this country to all the national and international tourists that come to see that cracked bell.

The MOVE family is urging you to join us for these two events because they are programs that are not just for MOVE but are examples that benefit everybody, and we mean everybody.

Join the MOVE family on May 12 for the working session on parole, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., at the American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street in center city Philadelphia. Also join us on May 13 for a serious demonstration at the liberty bell, from 12 noon to 3 p.m., at 5th and Market Streets in center city Philadelphia.

For more information, contact us at 215 387-4107 or at onomovellja@aol.com. Also, view our Web site at www.onamove.com and check out www.cafepress.com/onomove. □



16 year-old Mumia joins Black Panther Party.



He reports on police brutality in Philadelphia. Above, 1985 police fire-bombing of MOVE house.



Mumia and his son.



Mumia has international support from trade unions like the San Francisco dockworkers above.

Racism, resistance & the death penalty

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

Hours before he was executed on March 7, Joseph Nichols told his mother what had happened to him as the prison prepared to move him from death-row housing in Livingston, Texas, to the death house in Huntsville.

"They cut off all my clothes and stripped me naked. I finally got a pair of boxers but my feet were shackled together, my hand were chained and then another chain bound my feet, went up over my shoulders and bound my hands. This is how our people were brought here from the motherland, naked and chained, and this is how I will leave."



Joseph Nichols

Nichols was executed despite front-page articles in the Houston Chronicle and opinion pieces explaining his innocence. On the gurney, with the IV loaded with poison, he blasted the prison personnel who had ordered him to shave or be disciplined the evening before his execution.

More and more in Texas, prisoners are not going willingly to their executions, but are fighting until the end. They are also actively protesting the conditions of severe isolation and torture. The DRIVE Movement, an activist organization on Texas death row, has held several hunger strikes in the last year, as have several individuals.

Roy Pippin, who had steadfastly maintained his innocence, was executed on March 29, after his month-long hunger strike exposing the horrific conditions on Texas death row won significant media attention.

In his last statement while on the gurney, Pippin said: "I charge the people of the jury, the trial judge, the prosecutor that cheated to get this conviction. I charge each and every one of you with the murder of an innocent man. All the way to the CCA, Federal Court, 5th Circuit and Supreme Court. You will answer to your Maker when God has found out that you executed an innocent man. May God have mercy on you. ... Go ahead, Warden, murder me. Jesus, take me home."

Last summer, Michael Johnson, another Texas prisoner who had always maintained his innocence, slashed his own throat rather than let the state kill him. Before he bled to death, he wrote on the wall of his cell in his own blood, "I did not kill that man."

In November 2006, after Willie Shannon was executed, he was laid in his casket dressed as a Black Panther, a reflection of his politics. He was a member of Panthers United for Revolutionary Education—PURE—a Texas death row organization.

Executions in the United States have dropped to the lowest levels in 10 years. The number of death sentences and the population of death row are also decreasing. For the first time ever, the Gallup Poll has reported that more people favor life in prison without parole over the death penalty.

During the 1990s there were about 300 death sentences given each year. Now the number is around 125. Even in Texas, death sentences are down 65 percent from 10 years ago.

Because of the issue of innocence, juries are less willing to condemn someone to die. Over a dozen states have halted executions due to innocence and also the rising evidence that the method of lethal injection kills prisoners while they are still conscious. The New Jersey legislature had a hearing scheduled for early May that could end lead to that state ending the death penalty.

In recent years, a number of major newspapers have changed their position on the death penalty and are now calling for its abolition. In the past month, both the Chicago Tribune and the Dallas Morning News reversed their long-standing support for capital punishment. And the Sentinel of Pennsylvania simply called the death penalty "useless."

Amnesty International reported that executions worldwide fell by more than 25 percent last year, down from 2,148 in 2005 to 1,591 in 2006. Of all known executions that took place in 2006, 91 percent were carried out in six countries: China, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan and the United States.

Over half the world's countries have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice.

In the United States, the death penalty is used mainly in the former slave-holding states of the old Confederacy. Between 85 percent and 90 percent of all U.S. executions take place in the South. This is no accident. Racism plays such a huge role in the death penalty because it is a direct outgrowth of the legacy of slavery and lynchings.

During the last 125 years there have been thousands of illegal, extra-judicial lynchings in the United States, primarily in the South, primarily done by whites against Blacks. The majority took place in the late 1800s and the first half of the 1900s.

Today, in the 21st century, it is the era of legal lynchings.

They are still carried out mainly by

whites and used mainly against people of color. Ninety-eight percent of all district attorneys in the United States are white, and only 1 percent is Black. It is these district attorneys who decide whether a defendant will face the death penalty.

States that sentence the most people to death also are the states that had the most illegal lynchings in the past, according to a study released in 2002 by sociologists at Ohio State University.

Historically unjust

The one factor that most determines whether a defendant will be sentenced to death is the race of the person killed. Even though Black and white people are murdered in nearly equal numbers, 80 percent of people executed since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976 had cases involving white victims.

Only 14 white people have ever been executed for the murder of a Black person, while 215 Black people have been executed for killing whites.

Conversely, white women represent only 0.8 percent of murder victims—yet 35 percent of those executed since 1976 were sentenced to die for killing a white woman.

The over-all picture of capital punishment shows nationality involved at every turn. If a white person is murdered, whether the defendants are Black or white, they are at least five times more likely to be given the death penalty than if a Black person is murdered.

African Americans are the least likely to serve on capital juries but the most likely to be condemned to die.

In Texas, racism in the criminal justice system was openly practiced until recently. Defense attorneys in Dallas remember that until the mid-1980s so-called Black-on-Black murders were known around the courthouse as "misdemeanor murder." Attorney Fred Tinsley reported in 2000, "At one point, with a Black-on-Black murder, you could get it dismissed if the defendant would just pay funeral expenses."

The U.S. Supreme Court twice found the method of jury selection in Dallas uncon-

stitutional. In response, Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade developed a system of training prosecutors to excuse people of color, women, Jews and those physically disabled.

Wade reprimanded a prosecutor in the late 1950s for allowing a Black woman on a jury, telling him, "If you ever put another n—r on a jury, you're fired."

An African American, Thomas Miller-El, was sentenced to death in Dallas in 1986. In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered that he be retried because all African Americans except for one were excluded from his jury. He is now at the Dallas County Jail awaiting a new trial.

In Philadelphia, where political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death, the odds of receiving a death sentence are 38 percent higher in cases in which the defendant is Black. In fact, in Pennsylvania, over 70 percent of those on death row are African American; this is the highest proportion in the country.

The United States is a little over 225 years old. It was built on land stolen from the Indigenous peoples and Mexico, and on the backs of African slave labor. It became highly industrialized during the last hundred years and today is the leading imperialist power because it exploits its large working class, a growing proportion of whom are African American, Latin@, Arab, Asian and Native American.

National oppression and racism is so tightly woven into the fabric of life in this country that it colors all aspects of life from birth to death, including death at the hands of the state.

"The movement to abolish the death penalty is growing and learning that if executions are to end, we must be a movement of all peoples, particularly those of us who make up the majority on death row. No change has ever come willingly. We must fight for it. But with unity and struggle we will see the end of this crime called capital punishment," said Njeri Shakur, a leader of the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement for over a decade.

The writer is a long-time organizer with the TDPAM.

May 17 is 'Free Mumia Time'

Continued from page 1

of the voiceless." It's not necessary to meet Mumia in order to get a sense of his historical significance for either the Black liberation struggle or the ever urgent struggle for a new world free of imperialism.

You can get that from Mumia's eloquent, informed and stirring words. Having had the opportunity to meet with Mumia from time to time over the last 11 years, as the writers of this article have, only adds greater depth, appreciation and a richer personal dimension to what millions already know—and that is that Mumia Abu-Jamal is dangerous to the system.

He is dangerous because he has all the qualities of a leader who can move people to struggle against the evils inherent within the capitalist system.

Mumia's case was never about the facts. If it had been, Mumia would have never spent 25 days, much less 25 years, on

death row. This case was always about a political frame-up calculated to silence a powerful voice and crush the struggle against police terror.

More than anything else, Mumia's struggle is against racist police terror in all its forms. It's a struggle against the police terror that executed Sean Bell in Queens, N.Y., and Kathryn Johnston in Atlanta, as well as the police terror that brutally came down on immigrant workers in New York City and especially in Los Angeles on the May Day just past.

The very idea that Mumia's May 17 oral hearing might open the door to a new trial has so enraged the police that they are organizing counter-demonstrations against Mumia support events and threatening judges against ruling in favor of a new trial.

If you love freedom and justice, make plans to join the many freedom lovers

from everywhere who will be assembling in Philadelphia in front of the federal court on May 17.

That date is just two days from the anniversary of the birthdays of Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh. In Malcolm's honor, let's renew our commitment to free Mumia and all political prisoners, including Leonard Peltier, the Cuban Five, MOVE 9, Sundiata Acoli, the Angola 2 and others, by "any means necessary."

On May 17, the "means" is mass mobilization.

Holmes and Moorehead first interviewed Mumia in March 1996 with the assistance of the late Key Martin, a founder of People's Video Network. Go to www.workers.org/2007/us/pvn/ to view segments of that video. Go to www.millions4mumia.org for more background information on Mumia's case and to download May 17 literature.



Mumia carries his evidence.



Oscar Collazo, Puerto Rican Independentista and actor Ossie Davis are among those who supported 2000 Justice for Mumia rally in Madison Square Garden.



An Interview with Mumia by Monica Moorehead and Larry Holmes is available through WW newspaper.



In 2003 Paris makes Mumia an honorary citizen. April 2006, a street is named after Mumia in St. Denis, France near Nelson Mandela Stadium.



A French activist with Ramona Africa, Suzanne Ross and Pam Africa.

French elect rightist to attack workers' rights

By G. Dunkel

A few minutes after the polls were closed, Nicolas Sarkozy got a telephone call from U.S. President George Bush congratulating him on decisively winning the French presidency with 53 percent of the vote. His rival Ségolène Royal got 47 percent. There don't appear to have been many conscious abstentions because nearly 85 percent of the registered voters went to the polls.

Sarkozy's campaign made it clear that he would change France's foreign policy in ways that would please the current administration in the White House. While he will not engage France in Iraq, which he and almost all European leaders see as a dangerously lost cause, he will continue to keep French troops in Afghanistan and the French navy in Middle East waters.

Sarkozy worked the American angle carefully, going so far as to have his campaign books translated into English and published by Random House as "Testimony."

In his acceptance speech, Sarkozy made it clear that he plans to continue the attacks on immigrants he began as interior minister, grant big tax breaks to big corporations—as Bush did—and attack the right to strike, until now guaranteed by the French constitution. He said he would increase the competitiveness of French industry, which means he wants to lower wages, increase poverty and homeless-

ness, and remove the right to their jobs that a majority of French workers have.

In his book, Sarkozy writes about how his "family didn't allow [him] to participate in the great demonstration supporting Gen. Charles de Gaulle" after de Gaulle managed to overcome the May 1968 movement of workers and students that included an open-ended general strike of 10 million workers. In his speech, Sarkozy promised to overturn all of the lingering gains of May 1968. He also wants to overturn the 2005 vote rejecting the European constitution.

Sarkozy drew a crowd of 30,000 to hear this speech at the Place du Concorde, which was the site of most of the public executions of French aristocrats during the French revolution.

In Paris and most of the large cities of France, small demonstrations protesting Sarkozy's election broke out as the news was announced. According to the preliminary police report, 367 cars were burned, 28 cops were injured by missiles (generally bottles and rocks) and there were 270 people arrested. Because Sarkozy wants to portray himself as "the president of all the French people," the cops downplayed the strength of the reaction, generally from the poor and working class suburbs.

Mohamed Mehmache, the president of AC le Feu, one of the leading groups to grow out of the 2005 revolt of the suburbs, issued a statement saying "France has not

learned the message of what happened in October-November 2005." AC le Feu as well as many other groups and parties on the left are gearing up for the elections to parliament which will take place in June.

If Sarkozy's party, the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), doesn't win a workable majority in the new parliament, he will lose a lot of his ability to force his program through. The union movement has already warned him against trying to use the summer vacation time to push for radical changes, by recalling the boomerang effect that has hit previous governments.

The Socialist Party (PS) is in disarray. Some analysts claim that Ségolène Royal's campaign never presented a clear program. Instead her program essentially moved from the center to the right and her campaign portrayed her as simply less abrasive and divisive than Sarkozy. This latter charge is true since Sarkozy, as interior minister, made racist comments about the youth rebellion in the suburbs. But Royal's "Vote for me because I'm not Sarkozy" was not enough to defeat him.

To the left of the PS, both the French Communist Party (PCF) and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) issued calls for struggle and for unity on the left.

George-Marie Buffet, the candidate of the PCF, said "The election of the head of the UMP and the serious defeat of the left

are a true political catastrophe. For the first time since the liberation of France from the Nazis, we will have a leader who accepts most of the policies of the extreme right and the ultraconservative economic and social policies of the business community. ... I urgently call for a mobilization of all the forces of the left to organize a reply. The Communist Party will not lower its guard."

Olivier Besancenot of the LCR said "The populist demagoguery used in this campaign will now give way to anti-people, repressive and anti-democratic measures that will not fail to incite massive protests. The LCR intends from now on to devote all its resources to build this social and democratic resistance. It proposes that a united front of all democratic and social forces be made available to confront the ultraconservative and reactionary Sarkozy program."

Elections in capitalist countries, which are always influenced by the position of the ruling class and its corporate media, only reflect the political mood of the voters at a particular moment. In this case the elections put a reactionary in the presidency. But elections aren't the whole story. Strikes and street protests can challenge the new executive. And even those workers who voted for Sarkozy may find they have to go into the streets or on strike when his program starts reducing their social benefits and wages. □

Movement grows to confront dictatorship

By Sara Flounders

In Pakistan U.S.-backed military dictator President General Pervez Musharraf is confronted by a rising mass movement. Ever since Musharraf suspended Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhry on March 9, the country has been experiencing mass protests and legal challenges.

President Musharraf removed the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in an effort to intimidate the judiciary from raising any political challenge in parliamentary elec-

tions which are expected in September or October. President and General Musharraf is expected to seek another term as president, without giving up his role as head of the armed forces. This is illegal under Pakistan's constitution.

The attack on the chief justice was seen by opposition groups as an outrageous and unconstitutional attack on the independence of the judiciary and as political preparation for his illegal reelection.

General Musharraf came to power in Pakistan after a right-wing coup in 1999, with U.S. assistance. He had himself declared president in 2001. Under Musharraf's military dictatorship, arbitrary arrests, torture, persecution of political opponents and extrajudicial killings have vastly increased.

In his struggle to consolidate his position and continue his rule, Musharraf accused the chief justice of misusing his powers and originally placed him under house arrest. The effort to intimidate the chief justice had the opposite effect. After a storm of protest Justice Chaudhry was released, but he is still under investigation. Musharraf is now faced with the most serious political crisis since he seized power in October 1999.

Musharraf's close relationship with U.S. imperialism and the role of the Pakistani military in the war in neighboring Afghanistan is deeply unpopular



PAKISTAN

May 4. Pakistan Labor Party demands release of Farooq Tariq.

in Pakistan. Intensifying repression, the deteriorating economy, growing unemployment and rising inflation have added to the mass anger. The Bush administration has made clear its total support for the unpopular dictatorship.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, U.S. military aid to Pakistan soared to \$4.2 billion, compared to \$9.1 million in the three years before the attacks—a 45,000 percent increase—boosting Pakistan to the top tier of countries receiving U.S. military funding, according to the Center for Public Integrity. A recent study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies estimates the total value of all U.S. aid to Pakistan since Sept. 11, 2001, including military, economic and development assistance, at more than \$10 billion.

Since 2001, Musharraf has allowed the U.S. to use Pakistan's air bases in "anti-terrorism" operations, provided access to logistics facilities, shared intelligence, illegally detained citizens charged with involvement in terrorism, and deployed 80,000 Pakistani troops on the Afghan border. This growing U.S. military presence and growing climate of repression is deeply unpopular

Opposition to dictatorship grows

Chief Justice Chaudhry has become a rallying figure for the entire political opposition in the country. Every effort to

intimidate the growing opposition has led to a new series of demonstrations demanding a return to civilian rule.

The opposition to Musharraf is an alliance that includes left and progressive organizations all the way to conservative religious parties. At this point the movement is led by lawyers, journalists, political workers, human rights workers and students. It is a movement drawn mostly from the middle class.

Police forces have battled militant street demonstrations and raided and ransacked political offices and opposition media. They raided the Islamabad office of GEO, a popular television news channel, which has aired in-depth and often critical coverage of the events following the suspension of Chaudhry. At this station and other TV stations, such as AAJ and ARY-TV, the regime has blocked transmissions to prevent coverage of rallies and meetings. It has banned magazines and newspapers such as the Awami Tehrik Party's magazine, imposed curfews and impounded thousands of public transport vehicles to restrict travel to demonstrations.

Chief Justice Chaudhry's decision to travel by car from Islamabad to Lahore for a political rally was seen as a test of the opposition's growing strength. Lahore is considered Pakistan's most politically influential city.

The government demanded that Chaudhry travel to Lahore by air or they threatened that "terrorists" might target him. Chaudhry insisted on driving.

As it traveled through towns and cities of central Punjab province on the way to Lahore, the slow-moving car caravan several miles long became the occasion for a series of mass rallies against the Musharraf dictatorship

On the eve of Chaudhry's arrival in Lahore, the general secretary of the Pakistan Labor Party, Farooq Tariq, who was at the forefront of the protest preparations, was arrested by police at the Labor Party's office and taken to secret detention.

Immediate demonstrations demanded the release of Farooq Tariq.

Despite the arrests and intimidation tens of thousands of supporters thronged roadsides to greet Chief Justice Chaudhry on May 5.

On May 7, unsuccessful in stopping the demonstration or in intimidating the opposition, the police released Labor Party's leader Tariq.

May Day celebrated

In the days before the giant opposition rally, the alliance of left-wing and religious parties joined together to celebrate May Day and especially to express solidarity with immigrant workers in the U.S. and other countries.

The event organized by the Labor Party of Pakistan focused attention on the racist attacks on immigrant workers and especially on the U.S. policies of targeting, detaining and deporting Muslims. They denounced the treatment of six planeloads of Pakistani deportees recently sent back to Pakistan.

The demonstration raised demands concerning the migrant community working in the Middle East, where millions of workers from Pakistan, India, Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal and Bangladesh face the worst conditions. Workers are treated as slaves, deprived of all human rights, union rights and health care. Passports are confiscated, while workers are paid \$120 to \$170 a month for 12- to 16-hour days of work. The Labor Party described conditions of workers in Qatar where 600,000 out of a population of 800,000 are migrant workers without any rights. In Dubai, out of a population of 4 million, only 800,000 are citizens.

The May Day rally, the struggle for workers rights in Pakistan and the decision to raise the struggle for the rights of all workers show that as the mass movement against the military dictatorship gains momentum, the working class will increasingly come forward with its own demands for economic and political rights. □

Women's International meets in Latin America

By Berta Joubert-Ceci
Caracas, Venezuela

Under the theme "Women of the World: a vital force against neoliberal globalization, terrorism and imperialist wars; for equality, social and economic justice and for peace," more than 1,000 women representing organizations from five continents met in Caracas, Venezuela, from April 9 through 14. They were joined by thousands of Venezuelan women who hosted the 14th Congress of the Women's International Democratic Federation.

This congress, the WIDF's first in Latin America, was of crucial importance in coalescing the political line and actions of anti-imperialist and revolutionary women who comprise the membership of the federation.

The congress was preceded by a two-day Encounter of Young Women—an attempt to involve younger women more actively in the federation.

Plenaries and workshops alternated with cultural presentations. Each day ended with an Anti-Imperialist Tribune in an outside tent. Some topics of the working sessions provide an idea of the discussions held: the impact of neoliberal globalization on women; women's struggle and the impact of state terrorism, occupation and imperialist wars, and the struggle for national liberation; exploitation of women and children, with a special emphasis on immigrant and displaced women; building international solidarity against political repression and all forms of violence against women; defense of Indigenous and African-descendant women and their culture and for equality.

A detailed listing and information about the congress and the WIDF can be found at www.fdim-widf.com.br.

A special session for women holding government office was held in the National Assembly, hosted by Venezuelan socialist parliamentarians under the theme "International Meeting of Parliamentarians against Imperialism and for Solidarity and Peace in the World."

History of the WIDF

It is not accidental that very little is known in the U.S. about this federation, which was born to fight against the same imperialism that the U.S. leads. On Dec. 1, 1945, right after World War II, women from 41 countries met in France to create the WIDF (FDIM in Spanish). Many of these women had suffered directly from the bloody effects of the war and many had struggled against fascism.

Yolanda Ferrer Gómez, general secretary of the Cuban Women's Federation, gave a moving statement on the organization's history: "They were widows, moth-



The Women's Fightback Network organized a delegation of women from the U.S. to attend the WIDF Congress in Caracas, Venezuela.

ers who had lost their children, former prisoners from Nazi concentration camps, combatants who fought alongside men in the battlefields, members of the resistance and clandestine movements, guerrillas, workers who secured the rearguard and supplied the front, fighters all of them in uniform or civilian clothes."

She continued: "With them, women who had fought in other latitudes against fascism also united, Spanish exiles, members from national organizations from the Americas and Asia, African women, from Arab countries, from Indigenous communities, all in solidarity."

They pledged "To defend the economic, political, legal and social rights of women; to fight so that the indispensable conditions for the harmonic and happy development of our children and future generation are built; struggle tirelessly so that all forms of fascism are forever annihilated and establish worldwide a true democracy; fight without rest to assure a lasting peace in the world."

The WIDF was also enriched by the membership of socialist women from the revolutions that later developed in Cuba and Vietnam. The federation has played a key role in support of national liberation, such as in Angola, and against apartheid in South Africa. It has worked in international forums trying to give a more militant direction and has given voice to those under the yoke of imperialism, from Palestinians to Iraqis.

The WIDF was especially hard-hit during the 1990s, when the disintegration of

the USSR and the Eastern and Central European socialist countries meant that material support and great theoretical and practical contributions so instrumental for the functioning of the federation suddenly stopped.

Crucial role of Cuba

Vilma Espín—one of four WIDF vice presidents, a combatant in the Cuban Revolution, a member of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party and president of the Cuban Women's Federation—played a decisive role in the enormous task of assuring the survival and development of the WIDF. Thanks to Cuban action, the federation not only survived but thrived as a space of struggle and promotion of women.

During the WIDF's 13th Congress held in Beirut, Lebanon, in 2002, Marcia Campos from Brazil was elected president. This was the first time a woman from Latin America held that post. She had founded the Confederation of Brazilian Women and is a member of the Central Committee and the National Secretariat of the October 8th Revolutionary Movement in Brazil.

The 14th Congress was held in Venezuela to show solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution. But a new phenomenon occurred. The fighting revolutionary masses who are transforming this region also came to the congress. Many of the organizations present were not yet affiliates of the WIDF, but infused the congress with their combative energy. Wanting to

affiliate and move forward the federation, many representatives spoke at the regional work session of the Americas.

There were Indigenous women from the Bolivian Bartolina Sisa Peasant Union, Peruvian Indigenous parliamentarians, young women from Puerto Rico and Colombian women urging a humanitarian exchange of prisoners. Prominent was the participation of Venezuelan women who, as the hosts, worked tirelessly to assure the smooth development of the congress and in their presentations highlighted the important role and advances of women under the Bolivarian Revolution.

The overall experience was tremendous: meeting and sharing with revolutionary women from all over the world, listening to their countries' struggles, and most important, experiencing the overwhelming solidarity among all the attendees and their great respect, admiration and gratitude for Cuban President Fidel Castro and Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez.

Where else could you hear women from the Sahara thanking Chávez for his support of their cause in international forums? The congress gave the opportunity to interview many women from different struggles who offered their progressive views on crucial current events: women's role in Angola's MPLA, South Africa after apartheid, Zimbabwe's land distribution, the political view of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the struggle against Plan Colombia and so much more.

Delegation from the U.S.

Many women went from the U.S. The largest delegation was organized by African-American artist Vinie Burrows, who is also the WIDF representative to the U.N., and the National Women's Fightback Network (NWFN) of the International Action Center. The NWFN is now an affiliate of the WIDF.

The Burrows delegation included representatives of the Granny Peace Brigade and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The NWFN delegation included Susan Abulhawa, Palestinian writer and director of Playgrounds for Palestine; Brenda Stokely and Anna Wilson from the labor sector; Patricia Dahl, who works in solidarity with Colombia; Nellie Hester Bailey, co-founder and director of the Harlem Tenants Council; Sara Ann Mokuria, LeiLani Dowell, Liza Green, Jill Hill, Kris Hamel, Minnie Bruce Pratt and this writer, all from the NWFN.

The WIDF congress is not simply a "women's issue." As one participant said, "Everything and every struggle is of concern to women; we are half the world and give birth to the other half." It was a Congress of Women in Struggle. □

Supreme Court sides with anti-woman ideologues

Continued from page 5

women of the right to make an autonomous choice, even at the expense of their safety. This way of thinking reflects ancient notions about women's place in the family and under the Constitution — ideas that have long since been discredited." (550 U.S. 2007 Dissent, at 13, 17)

Ginsberg's dissenting opinion in this case will also have important implications for abortion rights and women's rights in this patriarchal, capitalist society. Ginsberg dared to stray from framing abortion in the narrow right of "privacy," a right implied but not guaranteed in the Constitution, and said that abortion rights are paramount to women's equal-

ity in society: "[L]egal challenges to undue restrictions on abortion procedures do not seek to vindicate some generalized notion of privacy; rather, they center on a woman's autonomy to determine her life's course, and thus to enjoy equal citizenship stature." (Dissent at 4)

Indeed, Cass R. Sunstein, who teaches at the University of Chicago Law School, wrote on April 20: "In the long run, the most important part of the Supreme Court's ruling ... may not be Justice Anthony M. Kennedy's opinion for the majority. It might well be Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg's dissent, which attempts, for the first time in the court's history, to justify the right to abortion squarely in terms of

women's equality rather than privacy. ... Ginsberg has now offered the most powerful understanding of the foundations of the right to choose." (www.latimes.com)

It should be remembered by all activists for women's rights and reproductive rights, including abortion rights, that the victory in *Roe vs. Wade* was wrested from the Supreme Court by a vast struggling involving literally millions of women and male supporters. In 1973 the high court was forced to enact judicially what this militant struggle won in the streets. Like voting rights and civil rights for the African-American community, and overturning antiquated "sodomy" laws targeting gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people,

it was the struggle of millions that forced the confirmation of women's legal right to choose abortion.

Now more than ever before, it is time for all progressive people to assist in revitalizing a mass movement for women's rights and women's lives and health, for equality and abortion rights for all women, including poor women and those most disenfranchised. Now is the time to bring pressure to bear on the large women's organizations, including NOW, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the Feminist Majority, and others, to issue a call for a massive national march on Washington to turn back the tide of reaction aimed at women's rights and equality. □



Iraq war comes home

President George W. Bush says that the Pentagon can still tough its way out of the criminal war against Iraq with a victory. If he really believes this, he has misjudged the Iraqis—who will eventually drive the U.S. out. And he has misjudged the people here.

The resistance in Iraq has been dramatic and courageous. At home it has been slow in developing—but it is here.

Take, for example, the news from a May 8 Boston Globe column. In 2000 some 23.5 percent of Army recruits were African American. That was a higher rate than the rest of the population and reflected the lack of opportunity for Black youth in civilian jobs. By 2005, after two years in Iraq, the rate had dropped to 13.9 percent—the same as of the population. As of current Pentagon estimates, “the African-American propensity to join the military had dropped to 9 percent.”

That means that in the more politically aware part of the U.S. population, the people want no part of the war in Iraq. Black youths no longer join the volunteer Army as they did before. This attitude has spread in most of the big cities to other sectors of the population, driving Army recruiters into deep depression. So the Pentagon has turned to the National Guard to fill its ranks in Iraq. And send them back again and again. Especially it is relying on the guard units from smaller cities and towns in the U.S. midsection.

There the population is mostly white, less politically aware and more likely to be steeped in patriotism. And while white youths don't face racist discrimination, like all young workers they find few civilian opportunities. Many youths join the Army and the National Guard. It would be no surprise to find there is a high proportion of youths in the military from a town like Greensburg, Kan., or its neighbors.

And now, in a way, the Iraq war has come to Kansas. Greensburg's buildings were completely flattened in 20 minutes by an uncommonly powerful tornado. The tornado struck quickly. State aid came slowly.

The Kansas governor, before some presidential arm-twisting quieted her, complained bitterly that the state National Guard forces “don't have the equipment they need to come in” because it is all in Iraq. This message won't be lost on small-town USA, despite all the hugs Bush is dealing out on camera in Kansas.

Across the board, people here are learning to embrace what the Globe column said is the typical attitude of Black people in the military toward the occupation of Iraq: “This is not a Black people's war. This is not a poor people's war. This is an oilman's war.” □

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1970s Cuba:

Sex education campaign battled old prejudices

By Leslie Feinberg

Eva Bjorklund wrote in Swedish-Cuba magazine in 2000: “In 1977, the Center for Sexual Education (CNES) was founded on the initiative of the Cuban Women's Federation (FMC) and their seminars and publications encouraged a more enlightened outlook on homosexuality and started to undermine traditional prejudices and taboos. The work done by this center has contributed to changes in attitudes and laws, and the credit for the fact that the AIDS problem has not been handled with a homophobic outlook is largely attributed to this endeavor.” (Quarterly publication of the Swedish-Cuban Association)

Bjorklund noted: “Before the Center for Sexual Education (CNES) started its work, sexual education was a practically unknown phenomenon in Cuba, as in the rest of Latin America, where the stand and the attitude of the Catholic Church has continued to curb any attempted change. In this light, Cuba's sexual education is groundbreaking.”

Cuban women led the way forward.

Dr. Celestino Álvarez Lajonchere, then-director of the National Institute of Sex Education in Havana, recalled in a December 1986 interview: “In 1974, the Federation of Cuban Women has already insisted that sex education had to be done. They had been working on this since the early 1960s.” (International Journal of Health Services, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1988)

The interview with Álvarez—known on the island as “Tino”—was conducted with Elizabeth Fee, Joan Furman-Seaborg and Ross Conner. Margaret Gilpin arranged the interview and did the translation.

In the interview, Álvarez stressed: “The First Party Congress reviewed all of the things that the Federation has asked for and converted them into a political directive. This is the only country in the world where the people who have suffered from the consequences of ignorance, principally women and young people, did not have to spend one minute to convince the highest levels of leadership of the country that something had to be done. On the contrary, the political leadership was always worried that they weren't doing enough of what the women expected them to do. I am convinced that that doesn't happen in any other country in the world. I think that's important—very important.”

Álvarez continued: “The First Party Congress of 1975 agreed on the declaration of the complete and absolute equality of women. The elaboration of that declaration included the need to organize a system of sex education. They needed a plan to create, for example, illustrated texts, and educational materials for the population. The National Assembly of People's Power then created a permanent commission. Within that commission they created a working group, the National Institute of Sex Education. The structure is very important. I don't think that in any country in the world, including the socialist world, does this

kind of structure exist, except here.”

He added, “With this kind of task, to create a national plan, you can't leave it in the hands of one person or a group of people or to one organization; it has to be done throughout the entire society.”

One of the first suggestions the Ministry of Education made was to begin elementary sex education from the earliest years. But Cuba was still trying to build enough schools and train enough teachers to meet the educational needs of the population. Álvarez said his youngest child's teachers at that time in secondary school in the countryside were just two or three years older than their students.

“It was difficult for the Ministry of Education under these circumstances,” he stated, “to assume responsibility for a national program in sex education.”

“The first task was to prepare some texts on the subject, because there weren't any.”

Ground-breaking first publication

Álvarez explained, “We decided to make a selection from the most highly developed socialist country in this area, East Germany, and we selected the books that we thought would best cover our needs.”

The first ground-breaking publication in Cuba was Sigfried Schnabl's “The Intimate Life of Males and Females” (El hombre y la mujer en la intimidad). The book had been published first in the German Democratic Republic—the East German workers' state—in 1978.

Bjorklund wrote that Sigfried Schnabl's book, which was “translated and edited in Cuba in 1979, clearly states that ‘homosexuals should be granted equal rights, respect and recognition, and that any kind of social discrimination is reprehensible.’ This book served as guidance for the work of CNES and at pedagogical colleges.”

In their article in the Summer 1980 Gay Insurgent, Stephen J. Risch and Randolph E. Wills noted, “In fact it was the Women's Federation which saw the book as so important that it successfully lobbied for its publication considerably ahead of schedule (since there are limited resources for publishing books in Cuba, finished manuscripts must wait in line to be published).”

Álvarez remembers that the subject was so popular: “We sold it in a special way to try and guarantee that it would get into the hands of doctors, other health personnel and teachers. We sold it at about 5 pesos, but in addition, the buyer had to have a paper signed by me saying that he or she had the right to buy the book. Otherwise, the books would have disappeared from the bookstores within two hours.”

The law against same-sex love was removed the same year that the book was published in Cuba—almost a quarter century before the U.S. government followed suit under pressure from a mass lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans movement.

A subsequent publication, “Are You Beginning to Think about Love?” trans-

lated and edited in Cuba in 1981, “was more ambivalent,” wrote Bjorklund. “It was intended for a broad audience and argued that homosexuals have the same ability to function in society as other people, but that they can never be as happy as married people. Mónica Krause, a leading expert at CNES, admitted that this was a response to criticism against the first edition of Schnabl's book, for being too positive towards homosexuality. A second edition of Schnabl's book, intended to be printed in 250,000 copies, although delayed because of the economic crisis, however, persisted, stressing that sexual violation of minors has no causal relationship to sexual orientation, dismissing the theories of seduction into homosexuality, and emphasizing that since nobody is responsible for his or her sexual orientation, homosexuals must be just as respected as heterosexuals.”

Álvarez said the next step was a paperback entitled “When your child asks you” (Cuando tu hijo te pregunta), first printed in 1980. It was offered for public sale with a book aimed at sex education for children aged 9 to 12. “We did simple illustrations showing the process of reproduction. This was the best way to start trying to break the prejudices of the population,” he stated. “We were trying to tell parents that they didn't have any alternative, they had to tell children about these things, because their kids were going to deal with them for better or for worse. It was up to the parents to answer their kids' questions and they needed to know how to do that.”

A fourth publication, “Thinking about love?” (¿Piensas ya en el amor?), was designed for teenagers. Álvarez explained: “This book covers sexually transmitted diseases and discusses some of the emotional aspects of how children become adults and what adult relations are all about. It deals with some of the problems that have to do with being in love, and also talks about contraception.”

Yet another book was written for children from 3 to 7 years old, entitled “Mama, papa and me” (Mamá, papá, y yo). Álvarez said, “It was the only one that didn't sell out immediately, the way all the rest of them did, and we think that's a sign of some resistance to our work in the population.”

In 1981, the Cuban Ministry of Culture produced a publication titled “In Defense of Love” that stated homosexuality was a variant of human sexuality. Cuba-solidarity.org.uk concluded that the book “argued that homophobic bigotry was an unacceptable attitude inherited by the Revolution and that all sanctions against gays should be opposed.”

This ground-breaking work on sex education, in which Cuban women played such a leadership role, helped pave the road for a scientific and humane approach to the AIDS epidemic that put the imperialist countries to shame.

Next: Cuba prepared AIDS health care plan before the first diagnosis.

To read more about Cuba, read parts 86-96 of Lavender & Red at workers.org.

E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org

Havana conference mobilizes solidarity for Cuban 5

By LeiLani Dowell

Solidarity with the Cuban Five and determination to win their freedom was the focus of an international youth conference from April 29-30 in Havana, Cuba. The conference was organized by the Union of Young Communists (UJC) and included representatives from more than 35 countries around the world.

The Cuban Five—Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and René González—are political prisoners held in the United States. They have been collectively sentenced to four life sentences and 75 years for infiltrating CIA-backed right-wing terrorist organizations in order to monitor and stop attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

Participants at the conference pointed out the hypocrisy of the U.S. government, which imprisons these men while committing atrocities in Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond under the guise of a “war on terror.”

Concurrent with this hypocrisy, and a major focus of the conference, is the case of Luis Posada Carriles—an admitted terrorist who, along with other bombings and assassination attempts, masterminded the bombing of Cubana Airlines Flight 455 in 1976 that killed all 73 passengers and crew onboard. Activists worldwide are demanding the extradition of Posada to Venezuela to face trial for his role in the airliner bombing. Posada escaped from prison in Venezuela before returning to the United States.

Posada was expected to face trial in El Paso, Texas, on May 11, not for acts of



LeiLani Dowell and Larry Hales of FIST, first and second from left, with delegates from Mexico and Haiti at Havana conference.



terrorism but for “illegally” entering the United States. In fact, the prosecution had attempted to silence any mention of Posada’s terrorist actions or connection to the CIA during the trial.

Three days before the trial was to be held, however, a U.S. judge dismissed all the charges against him and set him free, on grounds that the case was based on statements made by Posada under false pretenses. (Reuters, May 8)

Worldwide actions on May 11 will

condemn U.S.-sponsored terrorism and demand justice in the cases of the Cuban Five and Posada Carriles.

Conference participants—including family members of the Five as well as family members of passengers aboard Flight 455—raised that were it not for Posada and allied terrorists, who continue to receive impunity from the U.S. government, there would have been no need for the Five to travel to the United States in defense of their country.

These cases were the focus of the annual May Day march in Cuba as well. A large UJC contingent followed the international conference delegation and closed out the march, carrying large photos of each person killed on Flight 455.

At a closing ceremony for the con-

ference on April 30, Cuban National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcón told participants, “Tomorrow, our people will gather in every square in the country and will show their unanimous and strong will to struggle for justice until we have it. We will show Bush, and little by little show others the truth. Little by little the people of the United States, who do not deserve the terrorist regime that makes them suffer, will be the ones to find the key to those jails.”

For more information on the case of the Cuban Five, visit www.freethefive.org or www.freethefive.ny.org.

LeiLani Dowell represented *Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST)* at the Havana conference.

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LAHORE, PAKISTAN



JAKARTA, INDONESIA



BEIRUT, LEBANON

Workers Day celebrated worldwide

By Brenda Ryan

From Cuba to Pakistan to South Korea, millions of workers around the world celebrated May Day with marches and rallies.

In Cuba, more than half a million people paraded through Havana’s Revolutionary Plaza. They denounced the U.S. government’s release of terrorist Luis Posada Carriles from a Texas jail last month. Carriles was behind the bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 and several other terrorist activities. The Cubans also demanded the release of the Cuban Five, who have been imprisoned in the U.S. for more than eight years for supplying information on terrorist conspiracies against Cuba.

President Fidel Castro, who was not at the parade, sent a message calling for “prison for the assassin” Carriles. Salvador Valdés, secretary general of Cuba’s central

workers’ union, spoke before the crowd wishing Fidel a speedy recovery, to which people shouted “¡Viva Fidel!” Millions of Cubans marched in other parades across the island.

Venezuela’s President Hugo Chávez marked May Day with another blow against imperialism: the government took over the last privately run oil fields in the country. BP, ConocoPhillips, Chevron, Exxon Mobil, France’s Total SA and Norway’s Statoil ASA had controlled the drilling fields in the Orinoco River basin. Chávez addressed a gathering of thousands of red-clad oil workers, shouting “Down with the U.S. empire,” the Associated Press reported.

May Day events were held throughout Latin America. In El Salvador, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica people protested against CAFTA, the free trade treaty with the United States.

In Turkey police attacked a May Day

rally in Istanbul with tear gas, water cannons and batons and arrested more than 500 people, including many union leaders. The crowd had been marching to Taksim Square to mark the 30th anniversary of “Bloody May Day,” when 34 people were killed after someone fired on the crowd and caused a stampede. The government blocked roads and cancelled buses, trains and ferries to block people from gathering.

In Pakistan trade unionists held rallies and meetings in Karachi to honor the U.S. labor activists executed by the government after the 1886 Haymarket riot.

The Daily Times of Pakistan reported that workers from North and South Korea held their first joint May Day rally in South Korea. They had held joint celebrations in North Korea in 2001 and 2004.

From Portugal, Andre Levy of the weekly newspaper Avante reported that on April 19, a national plenary session

of delegates and activists of CGTP-IN, the largest Portuguese confederation of unions, scheduled a general strike for May 30. At the May Day march, tens of thousands took to the streets. Many carried banners calling for participation in the May 30 general strike. For the past several months there have been dozens of strikes, marches and protests in response to the government’s attacks on workers rights. Levy said the ruling Socialist Party has increased the cost of living, the age of retirement, unemployment and temporary labor.

Protests and rallies were also held throughout Russia and the former Soviet Republics, in cities throughout Germany, in Spain, Italy, Britain and Hungary. Thousands marched in Jakarta, Indonesia. And in Greece transport workers called for a 24-hour strike, prompting the Greek carrier Olympic Airlines to cancel dozens of domestic and international flights. □

MUNDO OBRERO

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!



Mensaje de Mumia para el 1º de Mayo

¡Adelante! Viva John África. Hay solamente dos pueblos que viven en la tierra que llamamos América que no eran inmigrantes, el pueblo Indígena-llamado Indio y el africano americano que fue arrastrado aquí en cadenas y con terror.

El resto inmigró aquí o sus antepasados lo hicieron de Europa, de China, de la India, de Irlanda y sí, de México. A decir verdad, América era un asentamiento español mucho antes de que se convirtiera en inglés y he ahí el dilema.

La algarabía sobre la inmigración hoy en día es sobre todo un miedo al bronceamiento de América. Imaginen eso. El pueblo que vivió originalmente en lo que ahora es California, Nuevo México, Arizona, Tejas, Colorado, fácilmente una tercera parte de lo que ahora se conoce como Estados Unidos, es visto como forasteros permanentes, invasores incluso, debido a su piel marrón, a su habla en español, a su Catolicismo, y a su continuo deseo de tierra y de trabajo.

En este Primero de Mayo, un día santificado para la clase trabajadora, ¿cómo podemos darle la espalda a una de la gente que más duramente trabaja en América? No la alienemos; organicémosla. Traigámosla a la unión de trabajadores de la agricultura. Inscríbámosla en una unión nacional de carpinteros. ¿Después de todo, no son trabajadores y trabajadoras? Celebremos el Primero de Mayo construyendo un movimiento de trabajadores y trabajadoras. ¡Adelante! ¡Viva el 1º de Mayo! Desde la galera de condenados a muerte, éste es Mumia Abu-Jamal. □



FOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

La verdadera razón por que Wolfowitz está bajo fuego

Por Robert Dobrow

Estos días, desde las sangrientas batallas en Irak hasta los lujosos salones del Banco Mundial, el “Nuevo Siglo Americano” del imperialismo está en problemas.

El ex jefe diputado del Pentágono y ahora presidente del Banco Mundial, Paul Wolfowitz, príncipe de los nuevos conservadores y arquitecto de la invasión de Irak, está sumido en un profundo escándalo. El hombre que comenzó su puesto hace dos años como cabecilla de la supuesta institución financiera pública más grande del mundo con llamados a luchar contra la “corrupción global” se encuentra acusado de pedir favores a una amiga en el Banco.

No gastemos tinta en estos puntos de segunda. Dejaremos esto a los derechistas de la prensa capitalista que ha tornado todo comentario político objetivo sobre Wolfowitz en un escándalo sensacionalista sobre sexo, mentiras y sobornos.

La verdadera historia es cómo la administración de Bush ha tratado de moldear al Banco Mundial en una herramienta para su agenda de guerra y los límites de su habilidad para forzar al resto del mundo a obedecer su voluntad.

Cuando Wolfowitz fue nominado por George W. Bush hace dos años para dirigir el Banco Mundial, el periódico financiero europeo, *The Economist*, de extrema derecha y conservador, publicó en un editorial que, “Su postulación dice al mundo que el señor Bush quiere capturar al Banco Mundial y convertirlo en un ala de la política exterior americana.”

Debemos agregar aquí sin embargo, que *The Economist* no tiene ningún problema en que el Banco Mundial sea un ala de la política exterior imperialista de Europa.

El SIDA como arma política

Wolfowitz, después de Bush, ha sido un de las figuras más visibles y odiadas en el mundo por su papel en Irak, por las mentiras que justificaron la invasión, por las políticas de torturas de la ocupación, por la arrogancia y la conducta despiadada de la guerra.

Y ahora como presidente del Banco Mundial, Wolfowitz también ha impuesto una agenda descaradamente pro estadounidense. Un artículo de primera plana en la revista *New Yorker* del 19 de abril por John Cassidy titulada “La Siguiente Cruzada” cita numerosos ejemplos para apoyar este punto de vista.

Por ejemplo, en julio del 2005, la república de Uzbekistán en el Asia Central demandó que EEUU retirara sus tropas y aeronaves de una base militar en su territorio que había sido usado para apoyar la guerra contra Afganistán. Dos meses después, Wolfowitz suspendió un paquete de ayuda al país dedicado mayormente para proyectos de servicios de agua y salud en las zonas rurales. No se sugirió semejantes recortes para Tayikistán, un régimen brutalmente represivo pero partidario de los EEUU que recibe millones en préstamos del Banco Mundial.

Wolfowitz ha empleado la acusación de corrupción selectivamente para negar préstamos a los países que ejercen una medida de independencia de la influencia de los EEUU, como Congo-Brazzaville y Chad, países pobres africanos con ricos recursos naturales. A ambos países el Banco Mundial les negó ayuda para desarrollo el año pasado.

Con Irak, sin embargo, Wolfowitz ha estado más activo en hacer disponible el Banco Mundial al servicio del Pentágono.

Primeramente Wolfowitz hizo una serie de nombramientos a puestos del más alto nivel en el banco a socios políticos de gobiernos derechistas que habían sido unos de los más leales seguidores de la política estadounidense en Irak, como por ejemplo El Salvador, España y Cisjordania. “Ha utilizado su puesto en parte para recompensar los gobiernos e individuos que fueron particularmente útiles a los EEUU en la guerra de Irak”, dice Steven Clemmens de la Fundación Nueva América.

El Banco Mundial y el petróleo

Luego, el otoño pasado Wolfowitz estableció una oficina permanente del Banco Mundial en Bagdad. Según el Centro de Información Bancario, una organización liberal no gubernamental que monitorea las políticas del Banco: “La institución está aconsejando al Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI) sobre el desarrollo de la estrategia del sector petrolero. Más ampliamente, el Banco está aconsejando a Irak sobre cómo atraer inversiones directas extranjeras a través del rápido desarrollo de leyes facilitadoras para los inversionistas y a la vez aconsejando sobre la reforma [privatización-BD] de empresas estatales. Adicionalmente, el Banco está participando en reuniones con el FMI, el Ministro de Finanzas de Irak y el Centro Internacional de Impuestos e Inversiones (CIII) sobre el sector petrolero de Irak. El CIII es un grupo de cabilderos empresariales compuestos de representantes de BP, Chevron, Eni, ExxonMobil, Shell y Total”.

“La aparente intrepidez de Wolfowitz de utilizar el Banco Mundial para avanzar los objetivos militares dudosos de los americanos en el Medio Oriente es ... una violación de los Estatutos de Acuerdo fundadores del Banco, y un malgasto precipitado de los recursos donados”, dijo Bea Edwards, directora del Programa Internacional del Proyecto de Contabilidad Gubernamental, un grupo de interés público sin fines de lucro y una organización que protege a las personas que revelan actividades corruptas.

“De hecho, está prohibido que el Banco opere en semejante conflicto”, agregó Edwards. “En los términos financieros más sencillos, no hay sistema bancario funcionando, el gobierno no controla su territorio”.

El Banco Mundial y el Fondo Monetario Internacional están esperando que el Parlamento Iraquí establezca un Concilio Federal de Petróleo e Hidrocarburos, administrado por ejecutivos de las grandes empresas petrol-

eras. “La ley nueva otorgaría al concilio virtualmente todo el poder para desarrollar la política y los planes para los campos petroleros sin desarrollar, y revisar y cambiar todos los contratos de exploración y producción,” reportó Juan González en el *Daily News* el 21 de febrero. La Compañía Nacional Iraquí de Petróleo quedaría sin defensas frente a estas compañías extranjeras.

“Como la mayor parte de los 73 campos comprobados de petróleo en Irak están todavía por desarrollarse, el nuevo concilio se convertiría instantáneamente en una poderosa central mundial de energía,” escribió González. Los contratos con compañías internacionales probablemente serían semejantes a los controversiales acuerdos de producción compartida, los cuáles ofrecen la parte mayor de las ganancias petroleras a los inversionistas extranjeros.

El Banco Mundial fue fundado en 1945 con el propósito específico de proyectar el poder de los Estados Unidos en la época de posguerra. El presidente del banco siempre ha sido de los Estados Unidos, la sede del banco está en Washington, y Estados Unidos tiene veto permanente. El Banco es criticado en muchos países alrededor del mundo por las medidas severas de austeridad que obligan a las naciones en camino a desarrollarse a aceptar sus términos, incluyendo demandas de privatización de industrias y el saqueo de recursos nacionales e industrias nacionales a favor de las ganancias del capital extranjero.

Pero el Banco Mundial en el pasado ha sido también un esfuerzo de coalición de capital estadounidense, europeo, y japonés, con fondos considerables provistos por fuentes no-estadounidenses.

Sin embargo, hoy en día, a la administración de Bush y a sus socios de las grandes empresas no les interesan las coaliciones. Demandan el control total. Esto está mejor revelado en el infame documento co-escrito por Wolfowitz mismo hace siete años titulado “Reconstruyendo las defensas de América”. Este manifiesto del proyecto llamado Proyecto por el Nuevo Siglo Americano ha sido llamado el “Mein Kampf” del movimiento de los nuevos conservadores. Proyecta un mundo de dominación estadounidense global, pidiendo aumentos masivos en el presupuesto militar, que se cubra el planeta con bases del Pentágono, que se cree un estado casi permanente de disponibilidad militar, y que se cambie el régimen dondequiera que los intereses políticos y económicos de capitalismo estadounidense estén amenazados.

Pero esta utopía reaccionaria está desintegrándose en el suelo de Irak donde la resistencia popular frente a la agresión estadounidense sigue creciendo. Y aunque preferiríamos que Wolfowitz sea acusado de crímenes de guerra en vez de por los cargos menores de soborno, el hecho es que sus problemas en el Banco Mundial son otro signo más de que la administración de Bush está a la defensiva y sin el poder de imponer su voluntad sobre un mundo que no está dispuesto a acatarla. □