

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!



MAY 31, 2007

VOL. 49, NO. 21

50¢

## Palestine & Lebanon face new crisis

### U.S.-Israeli tactics provoke clashes

By Sara Flounders

The urgent need for solidarity with the Palestinian struggle was put in sharpest terms this May.

Israeli air strikes targeted apartment houses, cut off vital supplies and carried out a new round of targeted assassinations in Gaza. The Israeli army moved tanks and soldiers over the Gaza border and carried out eight air strikes on May 17 and 18.

This week in the West Bank the Israeli army invaded the Jenin refugee camp and the nearby Kufer Dan village in the northern part of the West Bank and clashed with members of the local resistance.

On May 21 the Israeli army also invaded Nablus and nearby villages, attacked Palestinian media outlets in the city and confiscated media equipment. Troops also attacked the southern West Bank cities of Bethlehem and Hebron, searching homes and kidnapping four civilians.

While Israeli forces attacked Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, the U.S.-backed Lebanese government surrounded and shelled a refugee camp housing more than 30,000 Palestinians in northern Lebanon, outside Tripoli. More than 60 people are dead. Electricity and

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# As lawyers appeal for new trial Rally demands: 'FREE MUMIA'



Rally outside federal court hearing in Philadelphia on May 17.

WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

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By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

Over a thousand people rallied in support of death row, political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal on May 17 outside the Federal Building in downtown Philadelphia, where a three-judge panel from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit convened to hear oral arguments on his right to a new trial.

Around 200 Mumia supporters, including Dick Gregory, former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, Lynne Stewart, Kathleen Cleaver, and international delegates from France and Germany, were also eyewitnesses on Mumia's behalf inside the courtroom. Abu-Jamal was prohibited from attending this oral hearing.

Participants included busloads from New York and Boston; youth organized by FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) and Students for a Democratic Society, who traveled overnight from North Carolina; a car caravan from Georgia led by McKinney; and supporters from Richmond, Cleveland and as far away as Los Angeles and San Francisco. However, the overwhelming majority were from the Philadelphia area, many who took off from work to attend.

There were rallies supporting Abu-Jamal in several other U.S. cities (see page 7 round-up article) and demonstrations in many countries around the world, including France, Japan, Mexico, Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Sweden and Britain.

The oral arguments were presented before Chief Judge Anthony Scirica and Judge Robert Cowen, both Reagan appointees, and Judge Thomas Ambro, a Clinton appointee.

tee. All three appeared to be familiar with the arguments contained in written briefs filed by attorneys prior to the hearing. During their time on the Third Circuit all three have overturned capital convictions based on the same claim Abu-Jamal is making about race-based exclusion of jurors by the prosecution.

Abu-Jamal was represented by Attorneys Robert Bryan and Judith Ritter, along with NAACP Attorney Christina Swarns. They argued that racial bias in jury selection and improper instructions by the prosecutor to the jury during the sentencing phase of Abu-Jamal's 1982 murder trial provided grounds for a new trial. Arguing for the prosecution, Assistant District Attorney Hugh Burns presented the state's appeal of the December 2001 decision by Federal Judge William Yohn that overturned Abu-Jamal's death sentence even though he remains on death row.

Burns, who was the first to present, often referred to Abu-Jamal's court appointed attorney Anthony Jackson and his failure to file a complaint about racism in jury selection during the trial. Jackson, assigned to "represent" Mumia by Judge Albert Sabo, was disbarred in 1992 for drug abuse, yet the state is still using this attorney to prosecute Mumia 25 years later.

Jackson did file a pre-trial motion in March of 1982 requesting information on the racial composition of the entire venire (jury pool) because he strongly suspected that there would be a problem. However, his motion was denied by Sabo, and the fact that Jackson did not raise this concern again during the trial proceedings was used by Burns to argue that it should not be considered

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# U.S. military's fire destroys trees, homes

By G. Dunkel

The fire that burned 20 square miles in southern New Jersey was officially declared under control on May 20. What made this fire different from other big ones, like the one on the border of Florida and Georgia where 365 square miles burned, is that it was set by the Air National Guard, practicing for warfare against Iraq.

There is a "gunnery range" in New Jersey, as well as in Nevada, California, Utah, Kansas, Florida and North Carolina. There used to be one in Vieques, Puerto Rico, for the Navy, but years of people's struggle shut it down.

Air Force officials at the Warren Grove gunnery in New Jersey haven't officially admitted their responsibility. But they did have two fire trucks standing by when some F-16s flying out of the air base in Atlantic City, about 25 miles south, practiced setting off flares to disrupt surface-to-air heat-seeking missiles. However, the two trucks weren't enough to put out the fire that a flare started.

The Air Force is providing up to \$25,000 in immediate emergency assistance to the dozens of families that suffered damage and will compensate them fully once its "investigation" is complete. It will also pay the costs of fighting the fire.

The fire was confined to a lightly developed area of South Jersey called the Pine Barrens. If the flames had

jumped the Garden State Parkway—a major north-south road running down the New Jersey coast—thousands of new, expensive homes and resorts might have been destroyed. The press reported at most a few dozen houses were affected; two senior centers were destroyed.

This is not the first incident connected to this gunnery range. Three years ago, an F16 fired 25 cannon shells through the roof of a nearby school. Since it was a night exercise, no one was hurt. The roof cost \$500,000 to replace.

Early incidents in 1999 and 2001 also involved fires. There have also been "accidental" weapons discharges outside the target area, as well as plane crashes.

The media were able to find some residents who say that the Air Force should just be more careful. But this incident seems to have swung public opinion against continued use of the Warren Grove gunnery range among the predominantly rural, working-class whites, with generations of family ties to the Pine Barrens.

The U.S. military is putting the lives and property of thousands of people at risk in order to train its troops. Of course, if the real purpose of the U.S. military—defending the profits and investments of U.S. big business at home and abroad—was laid out for all to see, there would be even less support for gunnery ranges such as Warren Grove. □

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WW PHOTO: DEIRDRE GRISWOLD



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

## 'Power for the people!'

New Yorkers already know they're paying too much for electricity and gas. People in the borough of Queens are also angry over a nine-day-long power outage last year for which they haven't been compensated. The huge utility Con Edison earned \$12 billion last year but now is asking for a rate increase that, according to the business weekly Crain's (May 14-20), could raise residential customers' bills by 36 percent.

So, while Con Ed's stockholders were meeting inside, the groups Women's Fightback Network, Western Queens Power to the People Campaign and Million Worker March East got a lively picket going outside the utility's headquarters on May 21. They demanded no rate hike, power for the people and not for profit—open Con Ed's books, and reimbursement for unpaid damages and losses in Queens.

—Deirdre Griswold

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E-mail: editor@workers.org  
Web: www.workers.org  
Vol. 49, No. 21 • May 31, 2007  
Closing date: May 23, 2007

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

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription.

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

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

# Rev. Pinkney given probation in political frame-up

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
Benton Harbor, Mich.

May 14—Today's sentencing hearing at the Berrien County Courthouse in St. Joseph's, Mich., located in the southwest region of the state, for Black Autonomy Network of Community Organizers' leader, Rev. Edward Pinkney, resulted in the activist being given five years of probation for his conviction on five counts of felonious and misdemeanor fraud.

Pinkney, who was allowed to walk free from the courtroom after the hearing, faced the potential of up to twenty years in prison.

The charges brought against Pinkney derived from a successful recall election in 2005, when Glenn Yarbrough, a Benton Harbor City Commissioner, was voted out of office as a result of a political campaign led by BANCO. Supporters of BANCO and Rev. Pinkney believe that the charges were politically motivated because of the activist's outspoken work against officials in Berrien County.

Over 100 supporters of Rev. Pinkney attempted to enter the Berrien County Courtroom for the hearing; however, because of lack of space, dozens were turned away. The people who could not enter the courtroom joined an ongoing picket line outside which called for the release of Pinkney and the overturning of the convictions.

Attorney Hugh Davis emerged from the sentencing hearing saying that presiding Judge Alfred M. Butzbaugh wanted another seven days to decide the final terms of the sentence imposed on Pinkney. The defense team has repeatedly pointed to the numerous constitutional violations against Rev. Pinkney during the process of the prosecution and of the jury selection.

All potential African-American jurors were disqualified, resulting in Rev. Pinkney being judged by an all-white jury in Berrien County.

## BANCO leader remains under house arrest

Even though Rev. Pinkney was allowed to walk out of the courtroom today in

St. Joseph's, he remains on a tether and under house arrest. Pinkney is not allowed to leave his residence without the permission of the court. He cannot even walk out into his yard without being in violation of the conditions set down by the judge in the aftermath of his conviction earlier this year.

On May 13, Rev. Pinkney and Attorney Hugh M. Davis were interviewed over the "Fighting for Justice" program broadcast weekly on WDTW, 1300AM, a Detroit-area affiliate of Air America Radio. During the interview, Pinkney was constantly interrupted by noise and distortion over his landline telephone. Eventually he had to call the station again using a cell phone so that the interview could be conducted with program co-hosts Ron Scott and Sandra Hines.

The terms under which Rev. Pinkney is being confined are reminiscent of the "banning orders" carried out under the former apartheid regime in South Africa. For political reasons, activists were brought to trial on trumped-up charges, and if not sent to prison or the gallows, were confined to their homes and prohibited from participating in political activities.

Rev. Pinkney was tried by an all-white jury in Berrien County, a community that has a long history of racial tensions and violence. In 2003, African-American youth rose up in rebellion in the aftermath of the death of a motorcyclist who was chased down by Berrien County police in Benton Harbor.

BANCO took the lead in seeking justice for the police brutality victim and organized a region-wide demonstration from the predominately African-American city of Benton Harbor across the bridge to the exclusively affluent majority-white St. Joseph's, the seat of Berrien County and its power structure.

Pinkney was a constant thorn in the side of the authorities in the county, by charging the police, the political officials and the courts with racism and corruption. When BANCO organized the successful recall in 2005 of Commissioner Yarbrough, whom Defense Attorney Hugh M. Davis called "the major lackey of the power structure

# Press conference blasts 'aggressive policing'

By **Martha Grevatt**  
Cleveland

In 2006 Cleveland police killed three Black men and one Black youth, 15-year-old Brandon McCloud. Not surprisingly, the issue of police brutality was a factor last year in the election of Mayor Frank Jackson and the defeat of incumbent Jane Campbell.

In the second week of May 2007, however, three Black men were killed by police in three days. One was shot with 16 bullets, 13 of them in the back. The other two were killed in high-speed chases with one of those two being a bystander.

The very next day, Mayor Jackson announced an initiative for "aggressive policing."

"Three men are dead. How aggressive do you want to get?" asked Ernie Harris, president of Black On Black Crime, Inc., at a news conference his group held on May 20. "Do you want to kill eight or nine?"

The media, with the exception of one TV station who sent a cameraman without a reporter, boycotted the press confer-

ence. Yet the week before the Cleveland Plain Dealer made a news story out of the fact that there were no protests. This daily paper has tried to portray a community universally backing the police.

The groups that spoke alongside Black On Black testified to the public outrage at police murders and the complicity of City Hall. Groups present included Mothers Against Youth Violence, Survivors and Victims of Tragedy, the Hip Hop Workshop, Cleveland Lucasville Five Defense Committee, Peoples Fightback Center and the Revolutionary Communist Party.

Harris blasted the supposedly independent Police Review Board. "There have been 4,300 complaints and they have all been ruled justifiable," he pointed out. The rough figure of 4,300 represents 100 percent of the complaints filed against Cleveland police.

Speaking for "we of the hip hop generation," Al Porter of the Hip Hop Workshop stated that "Mayor Jackson was not elected for us to talk to his assistants or write him or jump through hoops to meet with him." □

in the city," the courts intervened to overturn the results of the recall elections.

Pinkney was initially charged and put on trial in 2006, with the proceedings ending in a hung jury. The re-filing of charges against the BANCO leader demonstrated the determination of the authorities in Berrien County to teach the activist a lesson in small town politics.

The Whirlpool Corporation has been a major employer in Berrien County and surrounding areas. As a result of downsizing and outsourcing, there is mass unemployment in Benton Harbor within the African-American community. Pinkney and BANCO have also called for a boycott of Whirlpool products as well as the goods distributed by other companies allied with the elite interests in the region.

## Broad based support from throughout Michigan

The delegations attending today's hearing and protest came from as far away as Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids and Flint. There were also people present from Chicago, which is 90 miles west of Benton Harbor, as well as Portland, Oregon.

This prosecution of a political activist in southwest Michigan has shined the spot-



PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

Rev. Edward Pinkney with bullhorn, May 14.

light on the problem of continuing institutional racism in this region of the state.

Supporters of Rev. Pinkney pledged to continue their struggle to win justice for the BANCO leader. Some of the organizations present at today's hearing were the Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice (MECAWI), the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization (MWRO), the Call Em Out Coalition in Detroit and the National Lawyers Guild of Detroit, among others.

*Abayomi Azikiwe is the editor of the Pan-African News Wire and has traveled to Benton Harbor and St. Joseph's on numerous occasions over the last four years to cover political developments in this area of the state of Michigan.*

## DENVER

# Block party remembers MALCOLM X

Special to Workers World

On May 20, Colorado Communities United Against Police Brutality held a community block party in Denver in honor of the martyred Black freedom fighter, Malcolm X. The party featured M-1 of dead prez, Umi of P.O.W. and Rebel Diaz. If he were alive today, Malcolm X would have turned 82 on May 19.

The community group, primarily comprised of people of color, formed to fight racism, state repression and to link to the fight against imperialism, has embarked on a path to commemorate leaders from oppressed communities.

In January, the group held a people's commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr., right next to the city of Denver's corporate funded parade, which eschews politics and has sought in the past to deny any political signs and/or banners.

The May 20th commemoration of Malcolm X was a free event including entertainment from headliner musicians, as well as from local musicians, free food and community services.

The event included political speeches from Shareef Aleem of Aurora CopWatch, Glen Spagnoulo of the Recreate 68 Alliance, Daniel Salcido of the Mexican National Liberation Movement, Larry Hales of Workers World Party and Melissa Kleinman of Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST). Dahlia Wasfi, an Iraqi woman, and Glen Morris of Colorado AIM were invited to speak also, and Dahlia electrified the crowd, which consisted mostly of people of color.



Portrait by Robert Templeton

Many community members came out and remained despite the breezy and rainy weather, which lasted for an hour of the eight-hour block party.

During the event children took the stage and sang or rapped about issues that they face in their communities. The crowd chanted anti-cop slogans and a large number of people expressed a commitment to help organize for the People's Tribunal and People's Review Boards.

An idea was also expressed to organize a Juneteenth political block party, one separate from the corporate event, and to organize a political block party for Mexican Independence Day on Sept. 16.

There was a great spirit of militancy in the air, with many smiles, yet determined faces. While this event was a way to build unity between oppressed nationalities, to remember the legacy of Malcolm X and to make the remembrance relevant, it was primarily a way to mobilize a base for future struggles. □

# The fear factor: How Wal-Mart keeps out unions

By Robert Dobrow

The Wal-Mart mythology, as told by the capitalist media, is that this mega-giant corporation—bigger than Exxon, bigger than General Motors, bigger than the Bank of America—owes its success to the great service it provides its customers through cheap prices.

But behind the veil of benign public service, the company is a ruthless and tight-fisted employer that sets the work-week a few hours shy of 28 hours so it doesn't have to pay benefits to hundreds of thousands of employees. A majority of its workers with children live below the poverty line.

How the company gets away with this is the subject of a recently released, 210-page exposé by Human Rights Watch (HRW), which documents Wal-Mart's "relentless exploitation of weak U.S. labor laws" in order to "bust unions and deny workers their most basic rights."

The report, "Discounting Rights," is based on interviews with scores of current and former Wal-Mart employees and managers. It states that "Wal-Mart workers have virtually no chance to organize because they're up against unfair U.S. labor laws and a company that will do just about anything to keep unions out."

Wal-Mart employs 1.3 million workers in the U.S. Not one is represented by a union.

When Wal-Mart managers suspect organizing in their stores, they are required to call the company's 24/7 "union hotline." A company hit squad of lawyers and union-busters is quickly dispatched from corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Ark., to the "trouble spot." Workers are pressured to attend group meetings, where they are inundated with a relentless propaganda campaign.

The report cites a typical case: "Bridgid Carpenter" (a pseudonym), a Greeley, Colo., Wal-Mart worker, expressed her frustration with one of the one-sided 'Labor Relations Team' meetings and anti-union videos shown at her store, where Wal-Mart



Anti-war protest at Port Oakland. See page 5.

PHOTO: JEFF PATERSON

defeated organizing efforts in 2005 using tactics that largely comport with U.S. law.

"The videos dramatize the anti-union message by showing an example of a picket line that turns violent, characterizing unions as antiquated organizations, and portraying union organizers as harassing and bothersome people.

"'Anyone who saw the video would know it was anti-union,' said Carpenter, 'but they called it an educational video, which it wasn't. It made me pretty upset. ... They depicted the organizing committee as people who'll be on your butt forever 'til you sign the card, and that's not how we are. We're not going to make you do something you don't want to do. Home office kept saying this is an educational class. It should not just give one side of the union. They should give pro and con, not just con. It's not fair.'"

Wal-Mart's anti-union campaigns create a constant climate of fear at their stores, according to the HRW report. "We found that, after being subject to the full battery of Wal-Mart's tactics, many workers fear that if they express or even listen to pro-union views when union drives are underway, they may face retaliation, even firing.

"Largely denied the internationally recognized right to receive messages contrary to Wal-Mart's relentless, well-honed, negative characterization of unions, many workers also fear dire consequences if they vote for union representation. In this climate, workers are deprived of the right to make a free and informed choice of

whether to form a union.

"According to Angela Steinbrecher, a worker and member of the organizing committee at Wal-Mart's Greeley, Colorado, store, 'There is a lot of fear among the associates. ... [They] fear they will lose their jobs. It's not said. No one comes out and says if you vote union, you're going to be fired, but that's the fear everyone has.'"

The company has interrogated workers about their and their co-workers' union sympathies through direct and often hostile questioning and sent managers to eavesdrop on discussions among employees in a proposed bargaining unit. According to former workers and managers from Wal-Mart's Kingman, Ariz., store, Wal-Mart has also monitored union activity by focusing security cameras on areas where union organizing is most active.

The fear and intimidation campaign is unrelenting.

In February 2000, a group of meat cutters at the Jacksonville, Texas, Wal-Mart Supercenter signed union cards, the first successful union organizing drive at a U.S. Wal-Mart store. Wal-Mart responded by illegally refusing to negotiate with the union. Within two weeks, the company announced it was closing the meat cutting departments in 180 stores in six states. The action had the effect of dispersing the workers throughout the store and destroying the union.

The Human Rights report emphasizes that these actions are illegal under existing

U.S. and international law, and Wal-Mart is able to get away with it because penalties under U.S. laws are so minimal that they have little effect. Even when Wal-Mart is found guilty of illegal conduct, it receives only a slap on the wrist from the courts.

Over 150 years ago, Karl Marx wrote that "Capital is dead labor, which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks."

The quote is from "Capital," Marx's exhaustive analysis of the workings of the capitalist system. Marx showed that capitalist profit comes from surplus value, the value produced by workers' labor over and beyond what is paid out in wages. It's not high or low prices or the circulation of money that generates profits; it's the exploitation of the workers. The staggering \$11.3 billion in profits which Wal-Mart raked in just last year—an amount bigger than the gross national products of half the nations on the planet!—all ultimately comes from the workers.

The pro-capitalist group Human Rights Watch reports on Wal-Mart's conduct as though it is the exception, but the truth is that corporations like Wal-Mart are typical of how this economic system works. Across the board, from the auto industry to banking to retail chains, they are doing everything in their power to bust unions and drive down wages and benefits. That's why union membership has dropped so low in this country. But it is also the reason why workers' fight back is both necessary and inevitable. □

## Flint sitdown strike

# Class struggle and consciousness

By Martha Grevatt

In 1937 there were one million auto-workers in the U.S., yet membership in the United Automobile Workers of America stood at a mere 25,000. The UAW, which had grown in the early half of the decade, had lost most of its membership because the American Federation refused to organize the unskilled sector of the labor movement.

Flint, the center of GM's corporate empire, was essential to reorganizing the auto industry and advancing industrial unionism. Yet it seemed impossible under GM's absolute dictatorship.

Even handbill distribution was illegal. State courts had ruled that picketing was illegal, countering First Amendment arguments with the opinion that there was no such thing as "peaceful picketing." Out of 45,000 GM employees only 122 were UAW members. Half of them were out-and-out company spies or members of the notorious Black Legion (a Ford and GM-financed Ku Klux Klan offshoot).

What would it take? It would take fearless, dedicated and class conscious leadership. In June 1936 a determined radical

rented a cheap room at Flint's Dresden Hotel. No sooner had UAW Vice President Wyndham Mortimer hung up his coat than his room phone rang. "You had better get the hell back where you came from if you don't want to be carried out in a wooden box!" said the caller, who then hung up. (Wyndham Mortimer, "Organize!")

Undaunted, Mortimer set upon the task of locating and contacting potential union members. After generating a list of names and addresses, he began writing a series of letters. The typewritten copies were mimeographed and mailed to Mortimer's list, thus circumventing the ban on leafleting.

### Elevating Marxism & anti-racism

These weekly appeals, which made their way into the plants, gave a clear orientation to workers. Autoworkers, without realizing it, got a basic Marxist education, as shown in these excerpts: "It is well to understand what we mean by the word 'Profit.' It is that part of the corporation's income that is left over after all charges such as wages, salaries, depreciation, overhead, etc., are paid. In other words it is the loot, or swag, that is split between the Executives and salaries in addition to the enormous sala-

ries and bonuses they receive. ... This loot will amount to a sum equal to all the wages paid [in the first six months of 1936] to the 200,000 employees of the General Motors Corporation. ...

"Under our present economic system, we as workers can only improve our condition by improving the condition of the entire working class. ... I stress the class nature of the struggle, knowing that I will be accused of raising class against class, but as long as one class lives by robbery, is it a crime to call to the attention of the victim just who the burglar is, and how we may stop his depredations?" (Henry Kraus Collections, Box 8, Folder 40, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University)

At the bottom of his appeals, Mortimer left the address where he could be found at the Dresden. He phoned and made home visits to former union members. He set up house meetings.

Despite their relatively small number inside the plants, Mortimer considered it critical to bring Black workers into the organizing drive. He was shocked when one of the remaining union activists, Ed Geiger, uttered an epithet and said he

wanted nothing to do with Black people. Undaunted, he pressed Geiger for names and got in touch with an influential man known as Old Jim. Jim sent Mortimer to his son-in-law, Buick foundry worker Henry Clark.

After receiving a note under his door signed "Henry," the union leader followed its instructions: he arrived at midnight at an address that turned out to be an African-American church. In the wee hours of the morning Mortimer signed up 18 union members, but only after promising that they would not be joining a "Jim Crow union" like the AFL. Shouldering many responsibilities, Henry Clark would later stand out as a leader on the picket lines.

UAW President Homer Martin, a red-baiter backed by the AFL, maneuvered to have Mortimer reassigned away from Flint. In his place Martin sent Bob Travis, who had distinguished himself as an organizer in Toledo. The Communist Travis is widely regarded by labor historians as one of the most brilliant strike strategists of the turbulent 1930s.

Travis, in regular communication with

*Continued on the next page*

## Chrysler sale whets appetites

# Wall Street plans to devour health benefits

By Martha Grevatt

For three months after the Feb. 14 announcement that Chrysler was for sale, Chrysler workers were kept in suspense about their future. They hungered for information while overpaid executives and Wall Street vulture capitalists flew back and forth across the Atlantic for meetings behind closed doors. Now the world knows who the buyer is—Cerberus Capital Partners—and there are others besides Chrysler workers who are worried about their future.

From the chief organ of finance capital one can get a pretty good idea of what the Big Three automakers have in mind for this year's negotiations with the UAW. "By effectively agreeing to give away 80.1 percent of Chrysler Group to private-equity firm Cerberus Capital Management LP, German auto maker DaimlerChrysler AG has set the table for a potentially far-reaching restructuring of Detroit's faltering auto giants," writes the May 15 Wall Street Journal, a day after the sale was announced.

"The New York investment firm and the German auto company have set an ambitious goal: to work with the powerful United Auto Workers union to restructure the \$18 billion that Detroit's No. 3 auto maker estimates it will eventually owe for UAW retiree health-care benefits."

"Many big airlines and steelmakers have chosen to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to reduce such liabilities. If Cerberus can devise a formula for doing so outside of bankruptcy court, Ford Motor Co. and General Motors Corp. would almost certainly try to follow suit, potentially affecting some \$95 billion in total retiree health-care obligations. Discussions among Big Three executives are under way at 'the highest levels,' one person familiar with the situation says."

The Associated Press added: "Cerberus is seen wielding a big bat when it comes to the bargaining."

Even back in March, GM's annual report cited the intention of "vigorously" going after health-care costs. The sale of

Chrysler to this group of bat-wielders on Wall Street has accelerated global restructuring. Rather than seeking a competitive advantage over one another, the domestic automakers are collaborating to sharpen their competitive edge against the ever-shrinking but well-paid workforce.

### Bosses plan: Leave it to VEBA

Following the Goodyear model agreed to after last year's strike, GM, Ford and Chrysler want to jointly establish a Voluntary Employee Benefits Association (VEBA) to be administered by the UAW. This scheme would shift the burden of increased health-care costs from the corporations to the union-run fund.

VEBAs are non-profit trusts through which corporations invest money for the purpose of financing employee benefits. The money is raised by the tax-exempt interest earned from investments. When GM workers and retirees agreed to make concessions to cover retiree health care costs, GM already had a VEBA to pay for all union and non-union employees' benefits.

UAW activist William Hanline explains that "there is nothing in the law that prevents a company from using the money in the VEBA for capital expenditures. GM reported doing exactly that in the company's Proxy statement of 2001. During the year 2000, General Motors raided the VEBA for over 1 billion dollars (1) for a 500 million dollar equity purchase in Suzuki (to build a plant) and (2) for a 500 million dollar equity injection into GMAC to show a profit that year. In other words, they looted the health-care trust to build a plant overseas and transfer money from our health-care VEBA to the stockholders. ..."

"In the beginning of year 2005, General Motors was telling Wall Street and the world they had 21 billion dollars in cash. Where was that money? You guessed it, 'in the VEBA.' In the beginning of the year General Motors decided to take 6 billion dollars out of the VEBA to cover three consecutive quarters of one billion dollar losses. Losses that grew from poor sales, rebates, the employee discounts made

available to the public and massive recalls. However, during that time nobody, neither in General Motors or their 'Cooperation Partner' (the UAW) spoke of the VEBA.

"Consequentially, General Motors and their 'Cooperation Partner' had to come up with some kind of scheme to free up that VEBA money. Naturally, the plot was propagated in the media, newspapers across the country and in GM and Delphi plants as 'Excessive Healthcare & Legacy Cost.'

"The cleverly designed scheme provides General Motors with the right to absolve its existing VEBA and replace it with a new VEBA." ([www.futureoftheunion.org/?page\\_id=1036](http://www.futureoftheunion.org/?page_id=1036))

Does GM propose to now dissolve this VEBA, absorbing the cash, and start another VEBA with Ford and Chrysler? How will a "Big Three VEBA," funded to the tune of \$55 to \$65 billion, be regulated? Will there be safeguards against corporate raiding? If the fund loses money, will benefits be cut?

In any case, the corporations would be forever off the hook for absorbing future cost increases, a savings they would pocket. The ongoing restructuring is really a huge transfer of wealth.

Health care is not the only casualty—traditional defined pensions are also at risk of being incorporated into a VEBA-like setup. While GM and Ford stunned workers last year with announced cuts of 35,000 and 30,000 jobs respectively, now they are already exceeding those projections with Ford "getting out of the foundry business" and GM dumping its light truck division. Who but a fool would trust Chrysler CEO Tom LaSorda and Cerberus Chair John W. Snow not to go beyond the planned cutting of 13,000 workers?

Has UAW President Ron Gettelfinger forgotten that former Treasury Secretary Snow was the architect of another transfer of wealth—Bush's tax cuts?

### Workers equity = leverage

As Workers World has often pointed out, when a corporation declares bankruptcy, it becomes a "debtor in possession," with the workforce being its largest creditor. This

is because of the billions of dollars owed workers in deferred wages, or pensions. Therefore the workers have a legal right to seize their assets if necessary.

Even when bankruptcy is not declared, workers have equity in the credit they advance every day in the form of delayed payment for their labor power. If an auto-worker works 40 or more hours in a given week, he or she does not get paid until the following week. Thus by the first hour of the first shift hundreds of thousands of dollars are owed to autoworkers in unpaid wages.

The picture gets even clearer when benefits—deferred wages—are figured into hourly labor costs. For example, when autoworkers are hired, they work six months or more without health insurance. So for those months they are really loaning out a portion of their wages until the company pays the insurance premium. Then the cycle of partially unpaid labor begins anew until the premium is paid again, perhaps on an annual or quarterly basis. There is a similar cycle with vacations; a worker must work a year or more to get even a week of paid leave.

Then consider pensions. A typical autoworker will put in thirty or more years—giving the boss that many years of partially unpaid labor—before collecting a pension.

Workers need to arm themselves with new understanding. Workers need to dispense with the notion that a corporation has some inherent right to bail out their top management with huge salaries, bonuses and golden parachutes. Workers need to know that they have power as legal stakeholders—that they have a right to protect their equity. Workers have a legal property right to their jobs and all the benefits that traditionally go with them.

In just four months the contracts expire between the UAW and the auto corporations. The moment of class truth is coming. Knowledge empowers the workers to propel the class struggle forward.

*Martha Grevatt has worked at the Chrysler plant in Twinsburg, Ohio, for twenty years and serves on the executive board of her local union.*

Mortimer, continued the painstaking work of meeting with workers—who were still afraid to come by the union hall. Both men were determined to build a union that included not only white workers but also Black workers and immigrants. "Be sure and go to that Polish meeting this Sunday," Mortimer instructed Travis in a November 1936 letter. (Henry Kraus Collection, Box 9, Folder 3, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs)

### Workers prepare for the GM occupation

Other Communists inside the main plant helped demonstrate the effectiveness of the sit-down tactic. A brief work stoppage won two fired workers their jobs back and served as a stimulant for the 44-day occupation, which these same radical workers helped start.

Victor and Roy Reuther, at the time still Socialists, had the critical task of commandeering the sound car. From the loudspeaker the brothers gave voice to the workers' aspirations, boosting morale inside and outside the plant.

Another indispensable leader, Genora Johnson was part of the Socialist Party and later the Socialist Workers Party. She organized the Women's Emergency Brigade, which proved invaluable in maintaining the outside pickets and fighting the cops. Her immortal words in the

heat of battle gave strength to the weary strikers: "Cowards! Cowards!" Johnson shouted at the police, "shooting unarmed and defenseless men!" She then called on the women to "break through those police lines and come down here and stand beside your husbands and your brothers and your uncles and your sweethearts."

## LABOR HISTORY

(Sol Dollinger and Genora Johnson Dollinger, Not Automatic)

Seventy years later historians still differ on the relative strength and contribution of the various left parties. Perhaps now it is not as necessary to "set the record straight" as to recognize the value of a leadership that opposed capitalist ownership of the means of production.

Despite deep political differences, Socialists and Communists fought together to bring the heroic strike to its victorious conclusion. Unfortunately, Mortimer, Travis and other skilled organizers were later removed from leadership during periods of factionalism and red-baiting. Now today's UAW leadership has grown so conciliatory to management that the heroes of Flint would scarcely recognize their once-militant union.

Nevertheless, a new breed of dedicated and class-conscious union leaders will emerge to resist the relentless attacks bearing down on the entire labor movement, particularly the auto workers. □

## To protest war profits Workers refuse to move cargo

For the second time on May 19, longshore workers honored a picket line at the Stevedoring Services of America (SSA) terminal in Port Oakland, Calif. The picket line was called by the Port Action Committee, an ad hoc group of anti-war, labor and community organizations. Three ships sat at the SSA docks and cargo did not move. Since 2003, SSA has received millions in contracts to manage the Umm Qasr ports in Basra, southern Iraq. Umm Qasr is the largest single port system in the country.

Organizers accused American President Lines and SSA of war profiteering. Both are served by Eagle Marine Services, which has a contract to run the Concord Naval Weapons Station, which brings in \$975 million annually. Organizers also claim the port does \$33 billion in business a year, yet contributes nothing to local schools and social services. Slogans on the picket line included "Stop the Shipping of War Materials to Iraq! Bring the Troops Home Now! Give Them the Health Care They Need! Port Money for Schools and Social Services!"

*Excerpted from Jeff Paterson's May 20 article, "Courage to Resist."*



Port Oakland anti-war picketline.

PHOTO: JEFF PATERSON

# Rally demands 'FREE MUMIA'

Continued from page 1  
today.

The appellate judges devoted considerable time debating whether racism in jury selection could be determined if the racial makeup of the jury pool was unknown. When asked about the racial composition of the jury pool at Abu-Jamal's PCRA (Post Conviction Relief Act) hearing in 1995, Prosecutor Joseph McGill claimed he didn't remember. However, given that African Americans made up 44 percent of the population of Philadelphia in 1982, the fact that less than 15 percent (two out of fourteen) of the jurors at Abu-Jamal's trial were Black should be evidence enough.

The racial composition of the final pool of jurors is known. Twenty-eight out of forty-three were white and fifteen Black. Each side in a trial can use twenty challenges to eliminate potential jurors without stating why; however, these peremptory challenges may not be used to keep members of a particular race off the jury. McGill used 15 peremptory challenges to remove 10 of the 15 remaining Black jurors, but only five of the 28 whites.

An added factor in support of defense claims was the systematic pattern of exclusion of African Americans from juries by Philadelphia prosecutors around the time of Mumia's 1982 trial. This was addressed by Swarns, who presented oral arguments contained in an amicus brief on behalf of Abu-Jamal by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

The LDEF pioneered the affirmative use of civil actions to end jury discrimination. Their 31-page brief, which underscores the seriousness of the evidence of racial discrimination, can be found at [www.naacpldf.org/content/pdf/jury/Abu-Jamal\\_v\\_Horn\\_amicus\\_brief.pdf](http://www.naacpldf.org/content/pdf/jury/Abu-Jamal_v_Horn_amicus_brief.pdf).

The LDEF brief cites the 1986 case of *Batson v. Kentucky*, in which the Supreme Court declared that a criminal defendant who is able to prove that his trial prosecutor used peremptory challenges to exclude potential jurors on the basis of race is entitled to a new trial. Attorneys on behalf of Abu-Jamal are asking the Third Circuit Court of Appeals to consider the combination of factors that infer that his was unquestionably a racially charged case.

## Case tainted with racism

Abu-Jamal is African-American and the victim was a white policeman. In the months between the Dec. 9, 1981, shooting death of Daniel Faulkner and the July 1982 trial, the local media continually emphasized the racial aspects of the case, particularly Abu-Jamal's membership in the Black Panther Party and his support of the MOVE organization, including the political prisoners known as the MOVE 9.

In his work as a journalist, Abu-Jamal often reported on prisons and police brutality and in one instance publicly challenged then Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo. He also wore his hair in dreadlocks at the time and the LDEF brief cites a Philadelphia Inquirer article from June 10, 1982, which stated, "Several prospective jurors left the courtroom Tuesday saying they were too upset and afraid to serve after being questioned by Abu-Jamal, who wears his hair in the dreadlocks style of the MOVE sect."

Swarns argued that the trial prosecutor in Abu-Jamal's case, Joseph McGill, had a history of systematically striking Black jurors.

The LDEF brief notes that "a survey of homicide cases tried by Mr. McGill between September of 1981 and October 1983 reveal that he excluded prospective African-American venire persons approximately three times as often as he excluded non-black prospective jurors."

The brief points out that "A comprehensive statistical study of Philadelphia County death penalty cases tried between 1981 and 1997 reveals that, 'in 317 capital trials in Philadelphia between 1981 and 1997, prosecutors struck 51 percent of black jurors and 26 percent of non black jurors.'" Both Swarns and Bryan made reference to a notorious video training tape prepared by Philadelphia D.A. Jack McMahon advocating the systematic exclusion of African-American prospective jurors based on his experience in the D.A.'s office.

Swarns also noted that African-American jurors were struck from the jury pool because they were unemployed, divorced or single parents, yet these criteria were not applied to white jurors. Black jurors were asked if they had heard Abu-Jamal on Black radio stations, yet white jurors were not asked if they had heard Abu-Jamal's commentaries that played on NPR. One African-American man was dismissed because he admitted to having a hearing problem, while a white juror who had to turn up his hearing aid to listen to Prosecutor McGill's questions was allowed to remain.

One African-American woman whom McGill picked for the jury because "she hated Abu-Jamal" was later thrown off by Sabo when she had to attend to a dying pet. She'd asked for a brief time off but was refused. Meanwhile Sabo adjourned the proceedings for an entire afternoon so that a white, male juror could take a civil service exam.

The issue of McGill's clearly inappropriate instructions to jurors during the July 1982 sentencing phase was addressed by Ritter who also questioned the legality of McGill's three-page verdict form.

Each death sentence must rest on two findings: proof beyond a reasonable doubt of at least one aggravating circumstance that would have increased the seriousness of the crime; and the finding that there are no mitigating circumstances sufficiently substantial to call for leniency in sentencing. The verdict form in Abu-Jamal's case consisted of a list of aggravators without any instructions on their application.

While the law doesn't require jurors to be unanimous when it comes to considering mitigating circumstances (for example, positive character witnesses or the fact that the defendant in this case had never been convicted of a crime), the verdict form provided no space for jurors to indicate that some jurors felt these were relevant even if not all agreed upon them.

In fact McGill's instructions gave jurors the impression that they had to be unanimous in order for mitigating circumstances to be considered. In



addition, Ritter challenged the constitutionality of McGill's charge to the jury that it was alright if they gave Abu-Jamal the death sentence because he would have "appeal after appeal."

A third appeal by Abu-Jamal's attorneys argued that his 1995 PCRA hearing was constitutionally flawed because the judge—the same Judge Albert Sabo who tried Mumia's original case—was biased in favor of the prosecution. The PCRA transcript shows that Sabo denied subpoenas of witnesses requested by the defense, cut off defense lines of questioning and threatened Abu-Jamal's attorneys with contempt of court when they challenged him. One defense witness who testified to being coerced by prosecutors to lie in the 1982 trial, found herself arrested in the courtroom while she was still on the witness stand in the PCRA hearing.

Sabo's racism and bias against Abu-Jamal is also evidenced by his comment to another judge, "I'm going to help them fry the n\*\*\*\*r," overheard by court stenographer Terri Maurer Carter.

## 'The Mumia rule'

While many of the cases cited as legal precedent by Abu-Jamal's attorneys have been grounds for the reversal of a number of convictions in capital cases, that is no guarantee of a new trial for Abu-Jamal. In a May 15, article by author Dave Lindorff and columnist Linn Washington Jr. titled "Justice System on Trial as Mumia Case Reaches Climax," they point out that over the course of Abu-Jamal's more than two-decade-long appeals process, the courts have shown a willingness to create special exceptions that apply only to him.

They note an example of what might be called 'The Mumia Rule' that occurred in the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The state's top judges in 1986 overturned a death sentence where McGill had made the same closing arguments to jurors at the conclusion of a murder trial presided over by none other than Sabo.

The state's top court declared that McGill's language had "minimized the jury's sense of responsibility for a verdict of death" and ordered a new trial. Three years later in 1989, this court reversed itself when it came to upholding Abu-Jamal's conviction. Eleven years later in 1997 the court flip-flopped again and barred such language by all prosecutors "in all future trials."

In his closing arguments during the May 17th hearing, defense attorney Robert Bryan made a point of this when he listed defendants whose capital cases have come before the Third Circuit Court of Appeals—Donald Hardcastle, Arnold Holloway, Curtis Brinson and Harold Wilson—whose convictions were overturned because of racial discrimination in the proceedings. "Are we to believe that there was no racism in this highly charged case in which a political Black defendant was accused of killing a white police officer; that his is the exception to the rule?" Bryan charged.

The three white, male judges appeared to take a cavalier view when discussing the "criteria" by which they would decide whether racism was a factor in this case. An example of this was their debate over what percentage of exclusion of African Americans from a jury would constitute "bias." At one point Judge Ambro even acknowledged that the intentional exclusion of even one juror on the basis of race violates Abu-Jamal's constitutional rights.

John Parker, a Mumia supporter who flew in from Los Angeles, told Workers World that "While some have applauded the judges for their 'fair attitude' at the hearing, in the first place it's ridiculous that there had to be a hearing since there is more than ample proof that Mumia did not have a fair trial. The judges read the arguments before the trial started. They should have granted a new trial automatically. In the second place, if these judges were really concerned about fairness, truth and decency, they would see more of a sense of urgency in getting Mumia free, not waiting a month or so to make a decision while Mumia remains tortured under the conditions he's placed in on death row."

The judges are expected to return a ruling within the next 45 to 90 days.

Before, during and after the two-hour-plus legal proceedings, demonstrators took to the streets, including marching up Market Street and several times around City Hall, blocking traffic for nearly 30 minutes. The march was led by a sound truck packed with youthful supporters. Along the way, shoppers, motorists and workers on their lunch hour stopped to receive material on the case, ask questions and often express their support by honking their horns and waving their fists in the air.

Widespread support was also evident at three separate events the night before, including a reception at the Friends Center for Cynthia McKinney and the French delegation, a teach-in at Drexel University sponsored by Educators for Mumia, and a jam-packed hip-hop and spoken word performance at the Rotunda featuring Immortal Technique.

This community support is a critical factor in winning freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal. For all the legal dancing around how the federal courts should weigh the claims raised by the attorneys, many suspect that this case will not be determined on the basis of law, but on the basis of the political movement mobilizing in the streets.

Speaking at the teach-in the night before the appellate hearing and at a public forum the following evening, German author and researcher Michael Schiffman provided stark evidence that a lot of people have lied in order to put Abu-Jamal on Pennsylvania's death row and to keep him there. Schiffman presented a slide show of photos taken by press photographer Pedro Polakoff that exposes police manipulation of the 1981 crime scene and contradicts statements made by key witnesses for the prosecution and is further evidence of prosecutorial misconduct. Schiffman noted, "To bring this to light would put many careers on the line—some in very high places."

Already an on-line petition is being circulated calling on the Third Circuit Court judges to do the right thing and rule in favor of a new trial, but organizing has to be done to raise broader awareness of the facts in the case and to prepare Abu-Jamal's supporters for what comes next. Toward this end, the Philadelphia International Action Center has issued a call for a meeting on May 29 at 7 p.m. at the Calvary Church, 48th and Baltimore in Philadelphia. Call 215-724-1618.

*Piette was an eyewitness to the May 17 oral argument.*

It's Free Mumia Time  
Subscribe to Workers World!



# Solidarity for Mumia in 6 U.S. cities, 8 countries

By John Catalinotto

In at least five U.S. cities outside Philadelphia and at least eight other countries demonstrations in solidarity with Mumia Abu-Jamal took place aimed at bringing attention to the latest court hearing May 17 and winning the political prisoner a new trial on the way toward freeing him.

In **Ankara**, Turkey's capital and **Istanbul**, its biggest city, activists protested against the United States for imprisoning Mumia unfairly for 25 years. The group included academics, journalists, human rights activists and also correspondents of the daily Evrensel in front of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara and the Central Post office in Istanbul. They delivered a petition to the U.S. Embassy demanding a fair trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The **Cleveland** Lucasville Five Defense Committee demonstrated during rush hour downtown. Signs called for the freedom of Abu-Jamal and the Lucasville Five, innocent men who face execution in Ohio in relation to the 1993 Lucasville prison uprising, and demanded "Justice for Aaron Steele." Steele, a 23-year old African-American bus mechanic, died May 8 after being shot multiple times by Cleveland police. Passersby grabbed hundreds of newsletters on Mumia's case. Other Mumia supporters had held a protest during the morning rush hour.

Members of the **San Diego** International Action Center and the San Diego Mumia Coalition gathered at a busy community intersection and distributed news-

letters and other material on Mumia's case to workers on their way home from work in the evening commute. Several motorists pulled over to get more details on Mumia's struggle. Poet Jim Moreno read his Ode to Mumia for the assembled activists.



Milwaukee

PHOTO: DAVE CORCRA

Organized in only one week, a broad-base of labor and community activists joined to support a May 17 press conference and protest in **Milwaukee** demanding a new trial for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Speakers from Africans on the Move, AFSCME Local 82, Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), International Action Center-Milwaukee, the National Lawyers Guild, Pan African Revolutionary Socialist Party, Peace Action-Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Green Party spoke in downtown Milwaukee at the Henry Reuss Federal Plaza.

Prior to the May 17 action IAC-Milwaukee organizer Bryan G. Pfeifer was invited to speak about the struggle surrounding Mumia Abu-Jamal's case on "The Eric Von" show hosted by African American-radio journalist Eric Von and "The Word Warriors Report," hosted by African-American City Councilman Michael McGee Jr.

In **Houston**, in the execution capital of the country, where 16 executions are scheduled over the summer, anti-death penalty activists were fired up by the strong turnouts at two demonstrations. Outside the criminal courthouse, notorious for sending Shaka Sankofa, Frances Newton and Joseph Nichols to the execu-

tion chambers, demonstrators faced down a phalanx of cops in riot gear, mounted police and undercover cops everywhere that outnumbered the protesters 10-1. "Maybe they thought Mumia was joining us," said one of the organizers.

In the afternoon from 4-6 p.m. there was another militant demonstration and rally, this one showing unity among young and older and Black, Latin@, Asian and white protesters from the Nation of Islam, the National Black United Front, the New Black Panther Party--whose youth distributed almost 600 of the Mumia newspapers--the Anarchist Black Cross, Code Pink, World Can't Wait, gay activist/leader Ray Hill, the Revolutionary Communist Party, Zapatista supporters who just returned from meeting Zapatistas with La Otra Campana across the border, the director of S.H.A.P.E. Center where the Movement to Abolish the Death Penalty is based, the leader of the Venezuela Solidarity Committee and others as every group took the microphone.

In **San Francisco** over 300 people rallied in front of the federal building to demand that Mumia Abu-Jamal be set free, in an action sponsored by the locally-based Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. A broad coalition of students, union members, community activists and prisoner advocates spoke out, including Rudy Corpuz, Jr. and other members of United Playaz, who linked the fight to free Mumia with the everyday reality of repression and racism in the Black and Brown communities of the Bay Area.

Kiilu Nyasha, a local activist and former Black

Panther Party member, delivered a solidarity statement to the crowd on behalf of the San Francisco 8 who are former BPP members and community activists who were arrested this spring and charged with the 1971 killing of a San Francisco policeman. Cristina Gutierrez of Barrio Unido called upon the crowd to unite to "change this system. His freedom is our freedom. His life is our life." Judy Greenspan spoke at the rally representing Workers World Party. Other speakers demanded a new trial and freedom for Mumia.

Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier's statement to Mumia was read from the podium in Milwaukee, Houston and other cities.

*Cihan Celik in Istanbul, Susan Danann, Bob McCubbin, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Gloria Rubac and Judy Greenspan contributed to this article.*



San Francisco

PHOTO: PATRICIA JACKSON



Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey



San Diego

PHOTO: MIRIAM CLARK



Houston

PHOTO: HOUSTON INDIAMEDIA



PHOTO: CIHAN CELIK

## Berkeley commencement supports Mumia

By Brenda Ryan

Leslie Feinberg, who has spent her life fighting for justice for workers and oppressed people and helping to create a modern transgender movement, received an honorary doctorate from the Starr King School for the Ministry.

The school, part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, awarded Feinberg with a letter of humanities doctorate at its commencement ceremonies on May 17. The doctoral diploma recognizes Feinberg as "a champion of justice for all people, organizer, activist, author and historian, who works tirelessly on behalf of workers, the poor, those imprisoned for their beliefs and the transgender community."

"Merging theory with practice, hir work is an example of solidarity across differences and in the intersections of oppressions," the diploma states, using gender-neutral pronouns. "Despite risks to hir personal safety and reputation, ze continues to write, speak and demonstrate hir commitment to countering oppressions and building organizations that insist that in our nation and communities, liberty

and justice must truly be for all.

"By speaking when others were silent, honoring the stories of people who struggle to survive and working to bring them together, ze provides an example of life lived in service to the common good."

Feinberg is renowned for helping to establish language to help understand and fight oppression based on gender and sex and for her books documenting the roots of that oppression. She is a longtime member of Workers World Party and a managing editor of Workers World newspaper.

Feinberg spoke openly as a communist at Starr King's commencement dinner on May 16. She said, "I think what brought us together here tonight is that we each sincerely want to change the world for the better. We may or may not agree on how. But we can meet by bridging conscience and consciousness."

Feinberg told those gathered that Marx's phrase that religion is the "opium of the people" is usually quoted out of context. "Marx was actually writing with great compassion for the suffering of the class that was, and still is, exploited, downtrodden and disenfranchised. Marx wrote,



Some of those who wore Mumia stickers at commencement.

PHOTO: STEVE FISCH

'Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering.' Religion, he explained, 'is the sigh of the oppressed,' it is, 'the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions.' It was in that context that Marx said religion is an opiate for pain and suffering.

"Many of us in this room share this in common—we feel that suffering, hear the sighs and moans around us, struggle to

change the soulless conditions. How can we unite to change those conditions?"

Feinberg noted that the following day people around the world would be in Philadelphia to support political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal at a court hearing to consider his petition for a new trial. Feinberg, who was wearing a sticker reading "New trial now! Free Mumia!" encouraged people to take these stickers and wear

*Continued on page 10*

# Palestine & Lebanon face new crisis

*Continued from page 1*

water have been cut off to the camp and health workers are not permitted in to evacuate the injured.

In the face of these attacks it is more important than ever to increase the support and defense of the Palestinian people and their heroic struggle for sovereignty, self-determination and the full right of return.

Despite decades of occupation and the most extreme use of imprisonment, torture and mass displacement, the Israeli state has been unable to defeat the Palestinian resistance. This present crisis in Gaza is rooted in the U.S./Israeli policy of using every means—military, political and economic—to exacerbate factional differences within the Palestinian movement.

Since the democratic election of a Hamas-led government in Gaza, Israel has attempted to break the national resistance, starve the entire population and sow dissension. The Israelis have stepped up bombing and assassinations in combination with a financial blockade.

By withholding tax revenues and promised funds, they have cut off wages to the Palestine Authority's civil servants, teachers, and security forces. More than one-third of the population in Gaza is dependent on this income for survival. Israel's seizure of Palestinian funds has impacted on schools, hospitals, sanitation, water, electricity and the most basic urban maintenance.

Media reports of military clashes between Hamas and Fatah forces—the two major Palestinian organizations—seem to reflect the same U.S./Israeli divide and rule tactics. Fatah National Security Advisor Mohammed Dahlan initiated the breakdown of the Palestinian Unity Government and provoked the latest round of fighting.

The Bush administration was opposed to the formation of a National Unity Government in Gaza including both groups and opposed to the decision of the president of the Palestine Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, to join the coalition government with Hamas in order to end the crisis in Gaza.

Israel tried to further envenom the divisions and factional clashes by opening a bombing campaign in the midst of the fight between the two Palestinian fac-

tions. Hamas and other resistance forces responded by firing Qassem rockets from Gaza into Israel.

The left secular forces—the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)—have organized joint demonstrations in both northern and southern Gaza demanding national unity and calling on both Hamas and Fatah to end the clashes and “point the guns at the occupation.”

In the face of Israeli bombing, President Abbas and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya of Hamas have agreed to a new ceasefire as of May 22.

## War on defenseless in Lebanon

Meanwhile the Lebanese government has opened attacks on the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp in northern Lebanon. Over 450,000 Palestinian refugees within Lebanon have lived in the most oppressed and impoverished conditions in 13 refugee camps for almost 60 years. The government claims the attack is in response to a bank robbery carried out by an isolated group called Fatah El Islam which lacks popular support and is allegedly linked to Al Qaeda.

This Lebanon army offensive against the most oppressed sector in Lebanese society comes at a time when the shaky and illegitimate Lebanese government is trying to again focus attention and blame on Syria rather than the U.S. and Israel for the continuing crisis in Lebanon.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora's weak, divided government—an ally of U.S. imperialism—is in the midst of a political crisis. The Lebanese Parliament has not met in months. A broad opposition coalition led by Hezbollah and including secular, progressive and some Christian forces has called for the resignation of Siniora's government for nine months. Lebanon's capital, Beirut, has been the scene of ongoing massive political street protests and a giant encampment in front of Parliament that has lasted for months. This opposition is a united force that cannot be politically marginalized or ignored.

Hezbollah, the Lebanese Communist Party and other groups opposing the government have continually warned that Washington and reactionary Lebanese

forces backing the weakened government may try to enflame civil war and sharpen religious, sectarian and national differences in order to break up the progressive opposition.

The attack took place when Washington was again pushing the U.N. Security Council to initiate a war crimes tribunal to charge Syria with the assassination two years ago of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The Bush administration immediately issued messages of support for the Lebanese government's attack. The BBC described the clashes as “Lebanon's bloodiest internal fighting since the country's civil war ended 17 years ago.”

Hezbollah issued a statement on May 22 that said: “We feel that there is someone out there who wants to drag the army to this confrontation and bloody struggle ... to serve well-known projects and aims. We are hearing calls for more escalation and fighting, which will ultimately lead to more chaos and confrontation in Lebanon.” The statement called for a political solution to the crisis.

This crisis is still developing. Little is known of the group under attack. What is known is that U.S. policy in the region has always been to attempt to divide the resistance and enflame the situation when faced with a crisis.

## New understanding of old tactics

The British Empire achieved world domination in the 19th and early 20th century through a sophisticated and cynical policy of divide and rule in every region of its empire. The British Colonial Office's 1917 Balfour Declaration, which opened Palestine to Zionist settlement, was the expression of this policy in the Arab world.

The state of Israel was from the beginning an instrument of British and then U.S. control in Western Asia. In 1948 with the establishment of Israel, British troops were withdrawing and there were no U.S. troops in the region. At the time of the June 1967 Arab/Israel War, there were no U.S. troops or bases in the area. By arming and supplying Israel, U.S. imperialism was able to attack Egypt, Syria, Lebanon,

Iraq and Jordan again and again and set back social and political gains.

A sea change has now developed in the consciousness of the masses. Despite decades of occupation, road blocks, walls and hundreds of check points, Israel was forced to withdraw from Gaza in 2005. The Israelis' many efforts to break and demoralize the Palestinian resistance have also failed in the occupied West Bank despite even more extreme walls, ghettos and land confiscation.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 2006, despite a massive bombardment of the entire country, faced a powerful, well-organized resistance and failed to secure a position even one mile inside Lebanon.

This all means that despite an endless supply of the most high-tech weapons in the Pentagon's arsenal and an endless line of credit, Israel is no longer able to carry out the very tasks for which the U.S. has funded and supported it for decades.

Not only has the Israeli position changed, but U.S. imperialism can no longer rely on Israel to successfully police the region in U.S. interests. Now Washington must send its own forces and become the focus of global hatred.

But the Iraq experience has shown that even this drastic step is no sure solution for Washington. Despite stationing 150,000 troops in Iraq and 100,000 private contractors—that is, mercenaries—tens of thousands of other forces in the region, a whole series of bases and aircraft carriers, the U.S. has been unable to secure control of Iraq. Despite doing all in its power to create and intensify sectarian divisions in the Iraqi population, U.S. imperialism faces an irresolvable disaster in its attempt to occupy Iraq.

The high-tech weapons of the Pentagon are ever more destructive and deadly. But they no longer have the ability to create massive panic and chaotic flight. Their political weapon of division, while still dangerous and combustible, is also losing its impact.

The resistance in Palestine, in Lebanon and in Iraq deserves the full support of all progressive forces who struggle for unity and human solidarity. □

## From Protest to Resistance

The Democrats have caved in  
Congress won't end the war!

**It's up to the people—  
time to take it back to the streets!**

On June 16, from 1 - 5 pm, the Troops Out Now Coalition is hosting an Antiwar Strategy Meeting at the Solidarity Center (55 W. 17th St. 5th Fl, in Manhattan). All progressive organizations, coalitions, individuals—anyone interested in mobilizing to shut down the war—is welcome to join us for the discussion, as we examine and begin planning for the necessary “Surge” of antiwar mass action this Summer and Fall.

Some of the proposed topics for discussion include:

- Assessing the state of the anti-war movement: where do we go from here?
- Congress, Bush and the war funding issue: what's really going on?
- From anti-war to anti-imperialism: making the connections—Iran, Palestine, the Philippines, Cuba, Venezuela, Africa, etc.
- The war at home: Immigrant Rights, Katrina, Anti-racist organizing
- Update on the student movement
- The growing GI anti-war movement

Go to [www.troopsoutnow.org](http://www.troopsoutnow.org) or call 212-633-6646 for more information.

## 'END ALL OCCUPATION!'

The U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and United for Peace and Justice have called for a protest and teach-in on June 10 and a lobby day on June 11 in Washington, D.C., “to protest the 40th anniversary of Israel's illegal military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.”

As events this week so starkly confirm, the crisis in the region is rooted in the creation of the state of Israel and the massive expulsion of the indigenous Palestinian population in 1948. It is essential that actions in solidarity with Palestine address the whole crime and demand an end to all occupation.

The state of Israel could not continue its crimes against the Palestinian people and all the people of the region for one day without massive daily military and economic aid from the U.S. In light of the current attacks, it is vital that all who support the Palestinian struggle participate in the demonstration on June 10 and look for many other ways to build solidarity with Palestine under attack.

Al-Awda Right to Return Coalition has called for Liberation and Return Contingents within the June 10 demonstration. These contingents will address the fundamental issue of the Palestinian right to return to all of its original lands.

The International Action Center will help organize transportation to participate in the march in these contingents.

—S.F.

Call 212-633-6646 for transportation information.



# Dissent spreads through U.S. military ranks

By John Catalinotto

Growing anger over the U.S. war in Iraq and growing understanding that the occupation is a complete failure are spreading through all ranks of the U.S. military. This dissidence shows itself in different ways among the rank-and-file troops and among the lifers and officers. But from an increase of angry letters to anti-war publications like GI Special to an increase of courts-martial, the signs of resistance are growing.

On May 18, Lieutenant Commander Matthew Diaz was sentenced after having been found guilty by a U.S. Navy court-martial of what the Navy considered a serious crime. While he faced a possible 14 years in prison, the 19-year Navy veteran's sentence was six months confinement with pay and removal from the Navy, the officer equivalent of a less-than-honorable discharge.

Diaz was last assigned to investigate alleged abuses of prisoners at Guantánamo, that piece of Cuban territory the U.S. still occupies illegally. Washington has held prisoners of war grabbed in Afghanistan in 2002 and others it considers "terrorists" for the past four-five years at Guantánamo under concentration-camp conditions.

Following orders from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. had flouted international law and refused to release the names of the prisoners. Some legal scholars consider Rumsfeld guilty of war crimes for issuing these orders. Diaz, concerned about this abuse of human rights, sent, along with a Valentine's card in February 2005, a list of the names of those prisoners to civil liberty attorneys in New York.

"My oath as a commissioned officer is to the Constitution of the United States," Diaz said. "I'm not a criminal. I had observed the stonewalling, the obstacles we continued to place in the way of the attorneys," Diaz told the media before his sentencing. "I knew my time was limited. ... I had to do something."

Many, perhaps a majority even here in the U.S., would consider Diaz a hero for doing that something. (See [www.military-project.org](http://www.military-project.org))

Regarding other heroic military resisters, Spc. 4 Agustín Aguilar was recently released from military prison in Germany

and returned to his home in California on May 10. He had been held eight months as a prisoner of conscience after he had gone AWOL as part of his refusal to redeploy to Iraq.

According to the group Courage to Resist ([www.couragetoresist.org](http://www.couragetoresist.org)), Aguilar since May 10, "has shared his story of resistance at community gatherings in Sacramento, Carmel, and San Francisco. Highlights of Agustín's first week as an anti-war activist also included presentations to day laborers, farm workers and their families in Stockton, and high school and college students in Watsonville."

Far from being isolated or ostracized for his anti-war action, Aguilar was welcomed into a community of war resisters that includes Robert Zebala, Pablo Paredes and Camilo Mejia along with many Iraq war veterans who are now speaking out at anti-war gatherings and who get a popular reception.

Another war resister, Lt. Ehren Watada, whose court-martial is still pending after the military unilaterally decided to declare his first trial a mistrial last February, has now had the court-martial postponed once more. At first scheduled for June 23 at Ft. Lewis, the trial is now on hold until it is determined if re-starting the trial would mean that Watada faced "double jeopardy." It is still possible that the Army will be forced to drop charges on Lt. Watada, the first officer to refuse duty in Iraq.

## New trial at Fort Drum

A soldier in the 10th Mountain Division, a unit whose home base is Fort Drum in upstate New York and which is now breaking into homes in Baghdad, is facing a bad conduct discharge and a year in prison for going AWOL. On May 16 the Army announced that Spc. Eugene Cherry's court-martial will begin June 25. Cherry has medical documentation that he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. He says he is being court-martialed because he went home to Chicago for help after the Army failed to provide him with adequate treatment.

"They don't want the liability so they deny I have a problem, and because I tried to help myself, now they want to make me a criminal," Spc. Eugene Cherry said in a telephone interview from Fort Drum with the Associated Press.

## MUNDO OBRERO

# Asesino de la CIA sale libre, provocando indignación mundial

Continúa de página 12

alismo estadounidense: invasión e infiltración, sabotaje y subterfugio, el bloqueo militar y político de Cuba, y los atentados encubiertos para llevar a cabo un "cambio de régimen" después de que el pueblo venezolano escogió a Hugo Chávez para encabezar la Revolución Bolivariana.

Dejando caminar libremente en las calles de Miami a Posada Carriles, que se jacta de sus asesinatos terroristas de civiles, crea una apertura para plantear la lucha para liberar a los Cinco Cubanos—cinco cubanos valientes que infiltraron la red de comandos de la CIA para poner un alto a los ataques terroristas en contra de la isla. Los Cinco Cubanos fueron enjuiciados en Miami, ciudad dominada por la comunidad de exiliados derechistas con conexiones a la CIA.

Mientras Washington y su policía fronteriza y los Minutemen y los medios de comunicación declaran la guerra contra

trabajador@s indocumentad@s, desatando redadas de corte fascista en lugares de trabajo y en domicilios, Posada Carriles puede cruzar la frontera a su voluntad. La hipócrita política migratoria de los EEUU invita a l@s cuban@s a arriesgar sus vidas en el mar en lo que es una manipulación propagandística, mientras que fuerza a l@s haitian@s, quienes huyen del terror auspiciado por los EEUU en su país, a regresar a su patria.

El presidente de Venezuela Hugo Chávez llamó a los EEUU "un imperio terrorista" y agregó, "Hay que denunciar la libertad de este terrorista y hay que demandar con indignación, que se haga justicia".

Esta indignación es una buena oportunidad para intensificar la lucha con un alto grado de unidad.

*Feinberg es una iniciadora de la Solidaridad Arcoiris para los Cinco Cubanos* ([www.freethefiveny.org](http://www.freethefiveny.org))

Cherry told his doctor that during his tour in Iraq as a medic, the most disturbing event he witnessed happened when an Army ordnance team tried to blow up a minivan it found loaded with explosives and flammables. The explosion flattened a three-story apartment building nearby, injuring residents. Cherry tried to help an Iraqi woman he found face down. When he turned her over, he found half her face was blown off. That's when the bad dreams and depression started, Cherry says. (See [www.differentdrummercafe.org](http://www.differentdrummercafe.org))

Horror at the war and U.S. actions aren't the only forces driving military dissidence. There is also the realization that the U.S. is losing the war.

Some U.S. officers in Iraq assigned to work with puppet Iraqi troops have objected to the troops' arresting Iraqi civilians who apparently had committed no crime, nor had they even committed an act that the U.S. occupiers could consider a crime. One U.S. officer was recently reprimanded by a U.S. general when he released 35 prisoners he believed had been arrested without good reason.

Some of these U.S. officers consider the imprisonment of innocent civilians a war crime they want no responsibility for. Plus they consider it counter-productive.

## Even the admiral has misgivings

Some of the top officers, who normally have no trouble ordering strategic bombing strikes that will cause hundreds of thousands of casualties, and who certainly have no moral compunctions about starting a war, are beginning to balk at following Bush administration leadership. An Inter Press Service story released May 19 reports that Admiral William Fallon,

chief of CENTCOM and a Bush appointee himself, expressed "strong opposition in February to an administration plan to increase the number of carrier strike groups in the Persian Gulf from two to three and vowed privately there would be no war against Iran as long as he was chief of CENTCOM, according to sources with access to his thinking."

According to this unnamed source, Fallon said that he was not alone, and that, "There are several of us trying to put the crazies back in the box." This statement, publicized a week after Vice President Dick Cheney threatened war with Iran from the deck of an aircraft carrier in the Gulf off the coast of that country, and about the same time that Iraq war architect Paul Wolfowitz was forced to resign from heading the World Bank, has the ring of truth even if there is no easy way of checking it.

Fallon is a loyal officer of U.S. imperialism, whose class interests and privileges are tied to U.S. military domination of the world. His words—assuming the IPS report is true—reflect the skepticism among the ruling class for the Bush administration's leadership. They reflect the impact of four years of heroic Iraqi resistance that has stalemated the U.S. attempt to dominate that country.

In a different way, the Iraqi resistance has stimulated the honest dissidence and refusal to participate in war crimes expressed by the lower ranking officers and enlisted persons. The signs that this dissidence is growing and spreading in the Armed Forces are the best news for those who want to end the ugly and criminal occupation of Iraq.

E-mail: [jcat@workers.org](mailto:jcat@workers.org)

## SAN FRANCISCO

# Labor activists oppose theft of Iraqi oil



May 15 protest.

PHOTO: BEN TERRALL & BILL CARPENTER

The San Francisco Labor Council on May 15 adopted, by unanimous vote, a resolution denouncing the planned "Iraqi Oil Law." The resolution states, in part:

"Whereas, in the opening days of the 2003 Iraq invasion, U.S. Soldiers were ordered to protect the Oil Ministry, oil fields and refineries while wholesale looting of Iraq's antiquities unfolded ...

"Whereas, giving credence to Iraqi fears, the oil cartel has prepared a new Oil Law which, if enacted by the parliament, will put effective control of Iraq's vast oil resources in the hands of foreign companies. Nationalized since 1975, Iraq's oil was, before the years of U.S. sanctions and invasions, the foundation for a relatively high standard of living, producing more Ph.D.s per capita than the U.S. and a health care system prized as the best in the region ...

"The law would create Oil & Gas Council, on which would sit representatives of Chevron, Exxon-Mobil, Shell, BP, etc. ...

"Whereas, the leadership of the Democratic Party has embraced the draft Oil

Law. ... By doing so, the Democratic leadership becomes complicit in a backdoor effort to privatize Iraq's publicly owned oil reserves—second largest in the world ...

"Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council joins in solidarity with the Oil Workers and Trade Unions of Iraq in opposing the proposed new Oil Law, which is nothing less than a hijack of Iraq's oil by the international oil cartel. ... The Bush Administration and IMF are pressing Iraq to adopt this law. It is unconscionable for the Congress to become partners in trying to shove this law, which will benefit only the rapacious oil companies, down the throats of the Iraqi people."

Earlier on May 15, up to 60 workers held a demonstration at the U.S. Federal Office Building in downtown San Francisco, in solidarity with the oil workers in Iraq planning to strike in opposition to the proposed oil "theft" law that the U.S. government is pushing on the Iraqi parliament. The demonstration was initiated by U.S. Labor Against the War.

—Joan Marquardt



## Portrait of a demagogue

After Rev. Jerry Falwell's infamous gay-baiting of the purple soft stuffed little critter, it's unlikely that Tinky Winky or the rest of the population of Teletubbyland will shed a tear over the death of the founding patriarch of the modern U.S. fundamentalist religious right wing. No progressive person will mourn, either.

Of course Falwell is remembered, and despised, for preaching in the 1980s that "AIDS is the wrath of a just God against homosexuals."

Falwell blamed the 9/11 attacks in part on "the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians," and "he described warnings about global warming as 'Satan's attempt' to turn the church's attention from evangelism to environmentalism." (msnbc.com)

Writing off Falwell as "crazy" or "a nut," inflicts hurt and heaps insult on people who are emotionally disabled and who would never take such reactionary political positions.

Falwell rose to power when U.S. finance capital was marshalling its forces to defeat the Soviet Union. That class war was spurred by the charge of communist "godlessness."

Falwell had been an arch segregationist who used his bully pulpit to preach his fire and brimstone against the civil rights movement and desegregation of the schools in Brown vs. Board of Education. (thenation.com)

He created the Moral Majority, a

decidedly political organization. Falwell is credited with having helped foster and embody the evangelical voter migration from the Democratic to the Republican Party.

That mass migration was the foundation upon which the Southern-based GOP of Ronald Reagan and Karl Rove was built. The Moral Majority claimed a membership of 6.5 million in the 1980s, and reportedly raised \$69 million for right-wing politicians, helping to elect Ronald Reagan to the White House in 1980.

Falwell diverted attention from the lack of the Reagan administration's response to a growing public health emergency by scapegoating people with AIDS.

According to a May 15 MSNBC staff and news service report, "In 1986 Falwell founded the Liberty Foundation as a way to broaden his base. Other victories attributed to his influence include the election of President George H.W. Bush in 1988, several conservative Supreme Court decisions and influencing the creation of the powerful Christian Coalition."

Falwell showed his adaptability by shifting to Islam bashing, in tandem with the U.S. war drive.

Jerry Falwell was a right-wing demagogue, specializing in divide-and-conquer ideology—and he was one of many. Only a fight-back movement steeped in solidarity can defeat that message of hatred and division. □

## Berkley commencement supports Mumia

Continued from page 7

them in solidarity at the commencement ceremony the next day.

"The struggle to free Mumia is a defining case of our era, like the struggle to free the Scottsboro Brothers and the Rosenbergs," Feinberg said. "It is part and parcel of the fight against racism and national oppression, against the prison industrial complex and the death penalty, used as a weapon by today's rulers just as the emperors lined the road to Rome with crucified slaves to warn others against trying to rise up to break their shackles."

"We are modern-day abolitionists, who are organizing to end this system of capitalist economic enslavement and build a society in which each individual can contribute what they can and in return, receive all that they need and desire," Feinberg concluded. "So I leave you with this question: Which side are you on?"

The audience responded by giving Feinberg an enthusiastic standing ovation.

At commencement the following day virtually every graduating student was wearing the Mumia sticker, as well as the president of the seminary, kitchen staff and ushers, who also handed out the stickers.

Mumia was the theme of Feinberg's commencement address. "I raise my voice here for all those the government is trying to silence," she declared. "I raise my voice to demand 'Free Mumia Abu-Jamal' so loudly that I hope this

Black revolutionary journalist can hear me from his death-row cell in Pennsylvania."

Feinberg also spoke out for American Indian Movement warrior Leonard Peltier and the Cuban 5, the peoples of the Middle East and Central Asia, Africa and Latin America, who are fighting for their right to self-determination and sovereignty, for undocumented immigrants, for Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants, and for those in the Black movement demanding reparations from slavery and the right of Katrina survivors to return to their homes.

The crowd again gave Feinberg a standing ovation. And after the reception that followed, a group of about 45 of the students, faculty, staff, alumni and trustees, including the president of the seminary, who had worn "Free Mumia" stickers on their gowns, gathered for a photograph to send to Mumia to show their support.

Mumia has been at the center of a commencement address before. In 2000, the Antioch College graduating class voted Mumia and Feinberg as their joint commencement speakers. The Fraternal Order of Police and the Klan fought the decision but the students prevailed.

The reception by the Star King School was another victory, Feinberg noted. "It's a sign of the deepening and widening understanding of how critical the need for solidarity is to build a powerful movement to transform economic and social life." □

## Defending Barry Bonds

Dear Workers World,

I generally agree with most of the articles on Workers World, as I have recently with those addressing issues such as worker's rights, Bush's War on Iraq, and the reasons for the tragedy at Virginia Tech. But I cannot agree with your assessment of Barry Bonds or Mike Gimbel's article. (www.workers.org/2007/us/letter-0426/) I'm actually surprised that you would print such an article, considering so many of your other stances on social issues.

Not too many years ago, Bonds was a man with extraordinary natural talent and physical abilities, but back then he was never built like the Incredible Hulk. Then, almost overnight, he took on the appearance of a man from another world, and the home runs began popping out of the park like popcorn. How did this extraordinary player, a man who was never a very nice person, as many who have known and dealt with him will agree, become such an over-muscled, overpowering, baseball smashing machine so suddenly. Was it drugs? I can't know that for sure, although I have to suspect that he has done something "unusual" to get the way he is. Sort of reminds many of us of Mark McGuire, who is now generally scorned for his feat of extraordinary power and home run hitting while juiced on steroids, and of Sammy Sosa, also a scorned juicer, who was practically booed out of Wrigley Field the other day.

But if none of this means anything to you, think of this. Hank Aaron, whose record Bonds will most likely break, said of the situation, "I don't want anything to do with it." And neither do I. And so, I'll take Aaron's take on this any day over Bonds. Aaron is a man of character, who broke Ruth's record fair and square, with no superhuman substances to help him get there. Bonds is a hulk, with a bad attitude, who would never be in the place he is in if it hadn't been for "a little extra help."

—Doug California

Hi Doug,

WWP forwarded your message to me.

I'm more than a little surprised by your take on this issue, both in regards to Barry Bonds as well as Sammy Sosa, or even for that matter Mark McGwire and Orlando Palmeiro.

I hope that you noticed that it was John McCain, right wing buddy of the former owner of the Texas Rangers MLB team George W. Bush, who lead the attack on MLB players during the congressional witch hunt where, just like Joe McCarthy, he dragged helpless star MLB players before his "HUAC" type committee, purporting to investigate the use of steroids in MLB baseball while using a turncoat player like Jose Canseco to "name names." The real purpose of that hearing was to give MLB team owners leverage against the MLB players union. The owners, as you are

perfectly aware, have been defeated at every turn by the MLB players union, which was born at the height of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s. The phony steroids issue is being used as a way for the wealthy right-wing owners to gain leverage over the union. The fact that the media has praised the union and management, for the first time, of reaching agreements without a strike or lockout is not an accident. It is the result of the weakened bargaining position of the players.

I'd like you to rethink your reference to Barry Bonds having "a bad attitude". I have a "bad attitude," at least according to the ruling class and company management. Every WWP organizer has a "bad attitude" in relation to the class nature of this country. A "bad attitude" under the circumstances of class society is usually a "badge of honor." Union organizers trying to sign up co-workers are always viewed as individuals with a "bad attitude" by management. Any union organizer without such a "bad attitude" would likely be looked upon with suspicion by his or her co-workers!

In addition you have to take racism into account. The media is white-controlled. The reporters are mostly white. Shouldn't we honor those Black athletes who are "uppity" rather than those who are "nice" and "cooperative" according to the big business media? The slave that accepts their slavery and tries to adapt to their oppression is not the individual that we'd expect to be "role models" for our class. They are the "role models" that the ruling class wants to hold up for the oppressed to imitate. We are obliged to defend players like Barry Bonds and Rickey Henderson, also alleged to have a "bad attitude." Rickey Henderson was one of the greatest players to ever put on a uniform, yet he had to endure constant criticism of his "bad attitude" and charges of "dogging it" when, in fact, he may have been the best all-around player in MLB history when it comes to being outstanding in every offensive and defensive category. When Rickey Henderson played for the Yankees he was constantly in the shadow of media darling Don Mattingly. Mattingly was a very good player, but immeasurably inferior to Henderson, yet Mattingly was placed on a pedestal by the white media, while the media was constantly critical of Henderson's "bad attitude."

One last note: Barry Bonds has never been accused, let alone convicted, of steroid use but Babe Ruth openly and brazenly violated the law in an effort to hit more home runs. Prohibition was the law of the land but Ruth defied the law by drinking beer because Ruth said that he believed that it made him stronger. In addition, in an effort to give himself more strength, Ruth ate sheep's testicles. Do you know what a steroid is? It is a form of testosterone. I'll give you one guess as to what is in sheep's testicles! Yeah, it's testosterone.

Please re-think your position.

—Mike Gimbel

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U.S.-held political prisoners,  
in the order they appear above—

Fernando González, Ramón Labañino,

Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández and

René González—were jailed merely for having

infiltrated CIA-backed right-wing terrorist

commando organizations to monitor and

stop attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

## AIDS quarantine in Cuba:

# Care & prevention, not repression

By Leslie Feinberg

From both a scientific and human standpoint, the AIDS sanatoria health care facilities in Cuba bore no relation to the threat of state quarantine in the U.S.

In the U.S., there was no scientific merit to public proposals to empower the state for surveillance and quarantine of people believed to have AIDS. There was no way to identify how many people out of the vast population had already been exposed. The epidemic was already entrenched. AIDS was not spread through casual contact. And anti-gay and racist scapegoating, laws against same-sex love, immigrant bashing, and laws against IV drug use and prostitution had generated fear of the state, as well as of coming forward for testing or treatment.

So threats of state investigation and forced isolation only drove the epidemic deeper underground. The prohibitive costs of medical care, particularly for those without health insurance, also barred many from seeking health care.

Yet on March 2, 1984, USA Today revealed that California officials were legally pursuing the ability to forcibly quarantine people believed to have AIDS. The same month, the Democratic co-chair of the Connecticut General Assembly's Judiciary Committee introduced broad quarantine legislation after a racist media campaign demonized a Black woman, accused of prostitution and drug addiction, who was reported to have AIDS.

Even as politicians were refusing to allocate the funds necessary to meet this public health emergency, the big-business media were unjustly accusing Haitian immigrants in the U.S. of spreading AIDS.

The late Michael Callen told Workers World at that time that the press for quarantine powers was "not really to protect people but to further certain political goals, to further isolate already disenfranchised people." Callen said that the singling out of a Black woman in Connecticut and allegations without scientific basis that Haiti and Africa were the sources of the epidemic were attempts "to blame all calamity on the Third World." (Workers World, April 5, 1984)

Gay men and bisexuals were blamed for the epidemic for much the same reason that the church hierarchy in the Middle Ages accused Jewish people of creating bubonic plague by "poisoning the wells."

Media in the South and Jerry Falwell's right-wing fundamentalist publication "Moral Majority Inc." editorialized that AIDS was God's "deserved punishments" against homosexuals. (aidsurvivalproject.org)

Far-right columnist Patrick Buchanan titled his commentary: "AIDS Disease: It's Nature Striking Back." (New York Post, May 24, 1983)

That's why the late Bobby Campbell, a San Francisco registered nurse with AIDS, told Workers World on March 25, 1984, how concerned he was about the political abuses of broad quarantine measures in the U.S. He warned, "We would see gay men locked up en masse and it is possible in more backward localities that lesbians could be included in that."

The U.S. government declared war on people with AIDS rather than marshal funds and forces to deal with the epidemic.

### Science, not scapegoating

By contrast, Cuba—an island nation of 11 million that was blockaded by U.S.

imperialism—had prepared its health care system for the epidemic two years before its first diagnosis of an AIDS case. So when AIDS first emerged in the population, it could be easily identified and isolated before being spread to the rest of the people.

In 1986, Cuba opened up 13 sanatoria that provided care for 99 people, only 20 percent of whom were believed to have contracted AIDS through same-sex contact. (Denver Post, Feb. 10, 2003)

Joseph Mutti wrote from Havana in June 1999, "Once a person has tested HIV-positive, attempts are made to trace everyone who had sexual contact with the person. Given Cubans' general openness about their sexuality, and Cuba's cradle-to-grave health care system, it's usually possible to ascertain how and when a person was infected."

"The basic principle of the Cuban public health-care system, widely recognized as the Third World's best," Mutti explained, "is to prioritize the health of the population as a whole instead of focusing exclusively on individual care. This is important for understanding HIV/AIDS policies, including the sanatorium system that earned Cuba an unfair reputation for employing repression to counter the virus." ("Love and Honesty: The Dawn of Gay Rights," Resource Center of the Americas.org)

The newspaper Granma explained Cuba's reasons for using quarantine: "The main usefulness of this measure is to slow down as much as possible the epidemic progression of the disease to allow time for other measures of disease control to have a medium- or long-term effect, such as education (encouraging changes in sexual habits and behavior), until such time as a vaccine and treatment exist, auguring a definitive solution to the problem." ("Cuban Strategy in the Struggle Against AIDS," Granma, Sept. 18, 1988)

When asked about the Cuban approach to AIDS, then-Cuban Deputy Public Health Minister Hector Terry explained in October 1987, "The quarantine center is a sanatorium. We have a very small number of people carrying the virus, and we believe that because of that, we are in a unique situation. We have an opportunity, in epidemiological terms, of controlling the spread of AIDS and preventing it from becoming a major epidemic as it has in other countries, where they don't know how to confront, reduce or eliminate it."

"We are in a situation that permits us to make this kind of decision, and to wait a while because we are not talking about something permanent, for a whole lifetime. We're talking about a dialectical situation."

Terry added, "This aspect [quarantine] is controversial, some groups of scientists disagree with it." He said that the objections were "more from a political than a scientific standpoint. But we believe our country has this epidemiological opportunity and we shouldn't lose it. We are trying to prevent the spread of the virus throughout the country by means of sexual relations that our patients could have with other people who at this point have not been infected with the virus."

"Our country has its own philosophy and the first principle of this philosophy is respect for human dignity. I think that human dignity requires care of the individual. You know that we spare no resources here to make sure that our people have the best health care possible anywhere in the world. And that's part of

what we're trying to maintain in our battle against AIDS." (Interview with Karen Wald, Guardian, Oct. 28, 1987)

### The best care—for free

Cuba provided free health care to its population despite economic obstruction by the U.S. and later the devastating loss of its main trading partner, the Soviet Union. Cuba organized its scarce resources—not just to stem transmission of the epidemic, but to provide humane care.

"Organized like small communities," MEDICC Review wrote, "the sanatoriums are made up of apartment complexes and small houses, plus infirmary, offices and other patient facilities." (Vol. II, No. 1, 2; 2001)

People with AIDS received healthy food, medications and other treatment, air-conditioned housing, exercise and sports, movies, television, videos, rest, and psychological and social services; everything was free except cigarettes.

Cubans with AIDS continued to receive their full paychecks, even if they weren't able to work. Their jobs were held open indefinitely. Terry stressed, "This is very important, so that they have no concern regarding the support of their families."

"What other country in the world would be capable of paying full salary to people with AIDS? Terry asked. "I think that's very linked to the whole question of human rights and the controversies around this. We know there are countries that shout about human rights, such as the U.S. where a person who gets AIDS may die of hunger, lose his job, it's hard to get into a hospital. Treatment there costs an average of \$700 a day."

Terry added that the Cubans' families also received special attention. A working group of psychologists, sociologists and social workers helped the families of people with AIDS deal with their problems, as well. Terry concluded that people with AIDS had greater peace of mind knowing their families were being cared for.

Next: Cuba declared war on AIDS, not on people with AIDS

To read more about Cuba, read parts 86-98 of Lavender & Red at workers.org. E-mail: lfeinberg@workers.org

## Leonard Peltier's letter to Mumia Abu-Jamal



Leonard Peltier is a political prisoner and a leader of the American Indian Movement.

I sadly write from my prison cell. I am sad that you remain unjustly incarcerated on death row for 25 years. I have read that the Court will be addressing further arguments on your case, and I pray that you will finally get the justice you deserve.

I know how frustrating it is for you, as it is for me, to continue to receive negative results in the face of the blatant injustices that have been recognized in our respective cases.

All we have is hope. Hope that finally the right thing will be done and justice will be done. An injustice against any one of us is an injustice against us all, and it is essential that we reach the masses so they will force action before our society is swallowed by the evil forces amongst us.

I applaud those courageous people who have supported us, and, when I feel low and hopeless, I think of them and what they do for us, and refuse to surrender. So, I continue to encourage you to stay strong, and to continue the fight until you are set free.

I want to thank all of you who have dedicated your lives to our freedom. Stay strong and keep Mumia strong. We must not let anyone forget the great injustices that Mumia has suffered.

We must keep strong. We must intensify the fight.

We cannot succumb to the forces in society who seek to keep us quiet and who seek to hide the blatant injustices which keep us penned like animals.

If we are able to unify the masses and stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, we are not only saving the life of the man who speaks for those who are not often heard and whose stories are rarely told, but you are saving all of us who remain unjustly behind bars, saving us from the depths of hopelessness.

**Free Mumia Abu Jamal!**

**In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,  
Leonard Peltier**



Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

## How the U.S. stole Hawai'i



Hawai'i's Queen Lili'uokalani

The Hawai'i Solidarity Committee and the International Action Center sponsored a May 21 forum featuring Kai'opua Fyfe and 'Ehu Kekahu Cardwell representing the Hawaiian Independence Movement at the Solidarity Center in New York City.

Speakers explained how the U.S. government illegally annexed Hawai'i back in 1898. Five years earlier, in 1893, the U.S. overthrew the reigning monarch of Hawai'i, Queen Lili'uokalani, on behalf of big business interests like Dole that wanted to super-exploit Hawai'i's resources, especially sugar cane. This colonial domination laid the basis for the U.S. making Hawai'i the 50th state in 1959.

The film, "We Are Who We Are: From Resistance to Affirmation," presented archival photos and footage of the legal and historic background to the annexation of Hawai'i and how the current independence movement, led by Indigenous people, is carrying out a struggle for self-determination. Go to www.FreeHawaii.info, www.Hawaii-Nation.org and www.HawaiiSolidarityCommittee.org for more information.

—Monica Moorehead

¡Proletarios y oprimidos de todos los países, uníos!

## Manifestantes confrontan a Uribe en Washington, D.C.

Por Calima  
Washington, D.C.

Alrededor de 100 personas el 2 de mayo protestaron la visita a Washington del presidente de Colombia Álvaro Uribe Vélez.

Ésta fue la décima visita de Uribe a los Estados Unidos desde que asumió el poder en el 2002. Esta vez su propósito era el garantizar que el Congreso controlado por los Demócratas aprobara finalmente los acuerdos pendientes: el Plan Colombia y el Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC). Sin embargo, los acuerdos se han estancado debido a la situación crítica de derechos humanos en Colombia y al escándalo más reciente de la "parapolítica". Ocho funcionarios del gobierno colombiano han sido acusados y encarcelados a causa de sus lazos con los paramilitares asesinos.

Tal parece que los políticos del Partido Demócrata están usando el TLC y el Plan Colombia para manipular la opinión

popular a su favor, presentándose como progresistas defensores de los derechos humanos.

Uribe vino aquí para limpiar su reputación de defensor de los grupos paramilitares. Pero en vez de ello, fue sorprendido con una "bienvenida" por un grupo de estudiantes, defensor@s de derechos humanos, refugiad@s y miembr@s de sindicatos con gritos de "asesino", que lo esperaban frente al Centro Americano para el Progreso donde Uribe iba a reunirse con organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONG).

L@s manifestantes vinieron para defender la dignidad y la humanidad del pueblo que lucha en Colombia contra un genocidio brutal fomentado por las fuerzas paramilitares alineadas con el estado. Ya dentro del Centro, activistas y estudiantes se levantaron en medio del salón de conferencias y gritaron "Colombia no está en venta" a la vez que desplegaban una manta con igual consigna. Se pueden ver

los videos de la manifestación en YouTube. com buscando "Uribe in Washington."

Durante un intercambio en la reunión que tuvo lugar en el Centro, Uribe una vez más mostró su irresponsabilidad al llamar a Gerardo Cajamarca, un sindicalista colombiano en exilio en los Estados Unidos, "un terrorista sin camuflaje." Esta etiqueta da una clara señal a los paramilitares colombianos quienes mantienen una lista de nombres de personas que serán blanco de asesinato.

Estos paramilitares aterrorizan comunidades enteras de afrocolombian@s, indígenas y campesin@s.

Un activista colombiano describió el trabajo de estos escuadrones de muerte:

"Como si fuera una especie nueva de fútbol, en los pueblos pequeños donde llegan estos grupos paramilitares, llaman a l@s habitantes y se reúnen con ell@s en la plaza del pueblo. Una vez allí, llaman a una de las familias que vive en la zona. Cinco o seis

seres humanos son llevados al centro de la plaza y en frente del resto de la comunidad, un paramilitar toma a un niño pequeño con una mano y con la otra agarra una motosierra. Él la usa para cortar al niño vivo en pedacitos frente a su familia y el resto de la comunidad. Luego los paramilitares cortan al resto de la familia viva en pedazos y con la cabeza del marido los paramilitares juegan fútbol frente a toda la comunidad.

"Cuando se acaba el partido los paramilitares matan l@s campesin@s a balazos. Esto se llama una masacre. No es una descripción de la última película de Tarantino, "Masacre con motosierra en Tejas". Esto es realidad. Ha sido patrocinada por corporaciones como Chiquita Brands, Drummond, Coca Cola, Nestlé, Monsanto y el resto de las corporaciones internacionales y locales."

*Calima, el escritor de este artículo, es activista en el movimiento de solidaridad internacional con el pueblo colombiano.*

## Asesino de la CIA sale libre, provocando indignación mundial

Por Leslie Feinberg

En los Estados Unidos y en el mundo, manifestantes indignad@s respondieron al llamado de Cuba para salir a las calles el 11 de mayo, día de acciones coordinadas para denunciar la libertad del agente terrorista de la CIA, Luis Posada Carriles.

La juez de Distrito estadounidense, Kathleen Cardone—nombrada para el puesto en el año 2003 por el Presidente George W. Bush—retiró todos los cargos contra Posada Carriles el 8 de mayo, liberándole pocos días antes del juicio que iba a enfrentar por fraude inmigratorio.

Las manifestaciones tuvieron lugar en México, Chile, Perú, Argentina, España y Canadá y en más de una docena de ciudades estadounidenses.

Muchas de las manifestaciones en los Estados Unidos fueron iniciadas por la coalición ANSWER y apoyadas por una amplia gama de fuerzas incluyendo al ex fiscal general de los Estados Unidos, Ramsey Clark, la congresista Cynthia McKinney y la Federación Democrática Internacional de las Mujeres.

Los endosantes de estas y otras acciones incluyeron al Nacional Lawyers Guild, GABRIELA, el Centro de Acción Internacional, Workers World Party/Partido Mundo Obrero, FIST, Nacional Network on Cuba, la Juventud Bolivariana—Miami, CLASE (Proyecto de Apoyo Caribeño y Latinoamericano, Centro de Acción por la Justicia, el Proyecto de Educación Popular para Liberar a los Cinco Cubanos, el Comité de Chicago para Liberar a los Cinco Cubanos, Paz y Justicia de La Luz en N.M., Viajes de Educación sobre Cuba, la Red de Solidaridad con

Venezuela, el Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, los Jóvenes Socialistas y muchos otros grupos e individu@s.

La libertad de Posada Carriles podría marcar un punto importante en la lucha contra el imperialismo, particularmente dentro de los Estados Unidos.

El terrorista anticomunista Luis Posada Carriles pudo haber sido un recurso importante para la CIA durante el cuarto de siglo que la agencia le entrenó como operativo en municiones e invasiones, pero por ahora él es una pesada responsabilidad para la administración de Bush y el capital financiero en general.

El darle la libertad a Posada Carriles, quien ha presumido de sus asesinatos terroristas de civiles, podría exponer a una gran parte de la población en los Estados Unidos y en el mundo, la hipocresía de la "guerra contra el terrorismo" de Washington respecto a su guerra por el imperio en el Medio Oriente y Asia Central, sus guerras sucias contra Cuba y Venezuela, la hipocresía de encarcelar a los Cinco Cubanos por tratar de detener los ataques terroristas y su cínica manipulación de las políticas de inmigración.

### ¡Indignación!

Los Archivos de Seguridad Nacional en la Universidad de George Washington publicaron unos documentos el 18 de mayo del 2005 que decían que "comprobaban sin lugar a equivocación" el papel jugado por Posada Carriles en el bombardeo aéreo en el año 1976 contra un avión de pasajeros de la aerolínea Cubana que mató a 73 personas, muchas de ellas jóvenes.

El artículo principal en la página electrónica de los Archivos dice que "la CIA

tenía información secreta concreta con antelación", desde junio de 1976, de planes por cubanos terroristas en el exilio, para bombardear un avión de Cubana.

"Los Archivos también publicaron otro documento que muestra que el representante del FBI en Caracas tuvo múltiples contactos con uno de los venezolanos que puso la bomba en el avión y le suministraron una visa para los Estados Unidos cinco días antes del bombardeo a pesar de las sospechas de que él estaba envuelto en actividades terroristas bajo la dirección de Luis Posada Carriles. Otro reporte de inteligencia muestra que él también organizó los ataques contra las instalaciones cubanas en Panamá, Colombia y Trinidad en los meses antes de que el vuelo CU-455 fuera bombardeado". (Electronic Briefing Book No. 153)

Venezuela ha pedido oficialmente la extradición de Posada Carriles para procesarlo bajo la acusación de haber dirigido el bombardeo del avión. Cuba lo acusa de estar detrás de una serie de bombardeos en hoteles de la Habana que resultaron en la muerte de un turista italiano. Panamá lo encarceló por un complot de asesinar a Fidel Castro. El agente de la CIA ha sido acusado también de pasar armas de contrabando a mercenarios contrarrevolucionarios nicaragüenses apoyados por los EEUU.

A pesar de todo esto, Washington rehúsa extraditar a Posada Carriles a Venezuela, desde donde se escapó de la cárcel, o hacia Cuba para que enfrente las acusaciones allá. Después de su puesta en libertad, los gobiernos de Cuba y Venezuela renovaron su demanda de que EEUU acabe con la violación del derecho internacional

y reconozca el pedido de extradición de Venezuela.

Posada Carriles ha confesado haber entrado a los EEUU clandestinamente desde México. Claramente todavía tiene amigos en altos puestos; no tuvo que arriesgar su vida cruzando el desierto a pie, o confrontar los cañones de los vigilantes "Minutemen". Su presencia en el bastión político anticomunista de Miami era un secreto a voces.

Cuando un millón de cuban@s se manifestó demandando que EEUU lo extraditara y él salió de su "escondite abierto" para convocar una conferencia de prensa, el agente de la CIA fue detenido en mayo del 2005 y fue acusado de violaciones migratorias menores.

"Procesándolo por infracciones migratorias menores fue una parodia de la justicia y fue calculado para crear la falsa impresión de que el gobierno tomó en serio la prosecución de este hombre", denunció José Pertierra, un abogado basado en Washington que representa la demanda de extradición del gobierno bolivariano venezolano.

Pero la puesta en libertad de este asesino y torturador, conocido alrededor del mundo por haber dirigido ataques terroristas pagados por la CIA en contra de la población cubana, le quita el manto a la "guerra contra el terror" perpetrada por Wall Street.

Crea las bases para una movilización más amplia de conciencia masiva sobre la necesidad de llevar el movimiento anti-guerra a la etapa de resistencia activa. Revela públicamente el medio siglo de guerra no declarada e ilegal del imperio

*Continúa a pagina 9*